



IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH

220

CRM-M-53818-2024
DATE OF DECISION: 05.11.2024

SARUKH

...PETITIONER

Versus

STATE OF HARYANA

... RESPONDENT

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANDEEP MOUDGIL

Present: Mr. Gautam Dutt, Advocate and
Ms. Mehtab Kamboj, Advocate for the petitioner(s).

Mr. B.S.Virk, Sr. DAG, Haryana.

SANDEEP MOUDGIL, J (ORAL)

1. Relief Sought

This petition has been filed under Section 483 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 for grant of regular bail to the petitioner in case FIR No. 0047 dated 20.01.2023 under Sections 302, 34 IPC and Section 12(1), 12(5) of The Haryana Prevention of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act 2022, registered at Police Station Sector-58, District Faridabad.

2. Prosecution story set up in the present case as per the version in the FIR reads as under :-

‘To the SHO Police Station Sector 58. Sir, Respectfully submits that I, Sumit Yadav son of Yaad Ram Yadav am resident of Village Sultanpur, Amethi, Police Station Gauriganj, District Amethi, Uttar Pradesh, presently residing at H.No.504, Shiv Mandir Wali Gali, Rajiv Colony, Police Station Sector 58. I do



labour work. We are five sisters and brothers. My sister's name is Twinkle, aged 24 years. A boy whose name is Shahrukh s/o Sattar, resident of Mewat, presently residing at Gali No.7, Shiv Mandir Wali Gali, Rajiv Colony, with him my sister fell into his trap three years ago and by going against the wishes of the family, solemnized marriage with him and my sister has two children. One is boy, who is 2 years old and another is a daughter, aged one month. My sister had been repeatedly beaten up and tortured for the last three years on the pretext of bringing dowry from her family and forcefully fed my sister with wrong things i.e. meat and put pressure on her to change her religion. Due to which, beatings were given to my sister every day. But today on 20.01.2023, we came to know from Shahrukh Khan's neighbours that our daughter was badly beaten up and our daughter is admitted in Pawan Hospital. After that we immediately reached at Pawan Hospital at about 02:00 PM and on reaching there, we came to know that our sister is dead. I inquired about my sister from the staff of Pawan Hospital that where is my sister but they misled me by stating that my sister is admitted in B.K. Hospital. I stood at Pawan Hospital and sent two of my acquaintances to B.K. Hospital. I remained stood at Pawan Hospital. After some time, the staff of Pawan Hospital took out my sister's body from the hospital, whereas the management of Pawan Hospital concealed the fact from us that my sister is not here. Hence, it is my humble request to the administration that stern proceeding be initiated against Pawan Hospital and Shahrukh Khan, his father and mother who after killing my sister, hanged her and they have murdered my sister. It is my humble request to the administration that strict action may be taken against the accused persons and an inquiry should be conducted against Pawan Hospital. It would be very kind of you. Thanking you. Sumit, 9515135121.'

3. **Contentions**

On behalf of the petitioner

Learned counsel for the petitioner has argued that the

petitioner has been falsely implicated in the present case and the



prosecution story is highly improbably and has been concocted by the complainant in connivance with the police officials. He submits that the complainant-Sumit Yadav, his brother Suraj Yadav and Raj Kumar have been examined as PW-1, PW-2 and PW-3 and they have turned hostile. He further submits that co-accused namely Sattar and Sameena have also been granted concession of regular bail vide orders dated 26.02.2024 and 27.05.2024 passed in CRM-M-63892-2023 and CRM-M-16986-2024. He further submits that no fruitful purpose would be served by keeping the petitioner behind the bars as conclusion of trial would take long time as out of total 23 Prosecution Witnesses, only 5 PWs have been examined so far.

On behalf of the State

On the other hand, learned State Counsel appearing on advance notice, accepts notice on behalf of respondent-State and has filed the custody certificate of the petitioner, which is taken on record. According to which, the petitioner is behind bars for 1 year, 9 months and 14 days.

Learned State Counsel on instructions from the Investigating Officer opposes the prayer for grant of regular bail stating that the petitioner is involved in one more FIR, meaning thereby he is a habitual offender but is not in a position to controvert the submissions made by counsel for the petitioner. He informs the Court that in the present FIR challan stands presented on 09.12.2023 and charges stands framed on 08.04.2024.

4. Analysis

Be that as it may, from the above discussion, it can be culled out that the petitioner has already suffered sufficient incarceration i.e. 1



year, 9 months and 14 days, similarly situated co-accused has already been granted concession of bail by this Court, the complainant has turned hostile, therefore, possibility of his acquittal cannot be denied and as per the principle of the criminal jurisprudence, no one should be considered guilty, till the guilt is proved beyond reasonable doubt, whereas in the instant case, challan stands presented on 09.12.2023 and charges stands framed on 08.04.2024, out of 23 prosecution witnesses, only 5 PWs have been examined so far which is sufficient for this Court to infer that the conclusion of trial is likely to take considerable time and therefore, detaining the petitioner behind the bars for an indefinite period would solve no purpose.

Reliance can be placed upon the judgment of the Apex Court rendered in “***Dataram versus State of Uttar Pradesh and another***”, **2018(2) R.C.R. (Criminal) 131**, wherein it has been held that the grant of bail is a general rule and putting persons in jail or in prison or in correction home is an exception. Relevant paras of the said judgment is reproduced as under:-

“2. A fundamental postulate of criminal jurisprudence is the presumption of innocence, meaning thereby that a person is believed to be innocent until found guilty. However, there are instances in our criminal law where a reverse onus has been placed on an accused with regard to some specific offences but that is another matter and does not detract from the fundamental postulate in respect of other offences. Yet another important facet of our criminal jurisprudence is that the grant of bail is the general rule and putting a person in jail or in a prison or in a correction home (whichever expression one may wish to use) is an exception. Unfortunately, some of these basic principles appear to have been lost sight of with the result that more and more persons are being



incarcerated and for longer periods. This does not do any good to our criminal jurisprudence or to our society.

3. There is no doubt that the grant or denial of bail is entirely the discretion of the judge considering a case but even so, the exercise of judicial discretion has been circumscribed by a large number of decisions rendered by this Court and by every High Court in the country. Yet, occasionally there is a necessity to introspect whether denying bail to an accused person is the right thing to do on the facts and in the circumstances of a case.

4. While so introspecting, among the factors that need to be considered is whether the accused was arrested during investigations when that person perhaps has the best opportunity to tamper with the evidence or influence witnesses. If the investigating officer does not find it necessary to arrest an accused person during investigations, a strong case should be made out for placing that person in judicial custody after a charge sheet is filed. Similarly, it is important to ascertain whether the accused was participating in the investigations to the satisfaction of the investigating officer and was not absconding or not appearing when required by the investigating officer. Surely, if an accused is not hiding from the investigating officer or is hiding due to some genuine and expressed fear of being victimised, it would be a factor that a judge would need to consider in an appropriate case. It is also necessary for the judge to consider whether the accused is a first-time offender or has been accused of other offences and if so, the nature of such offences and his or her general conduct. The poverty or the deemed indigent status of an accused is also an extremely important factor and even Parliament has taken notice of it by incorporating an Explanation to section 436 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. An equally soft approach to incarceration has been taken by Parliament by inserting section 436A in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.

5. To put it shortly, a humane attitude is required to be adopted by a judge, while dealing with an application for remanding a suspect or an accused person to police custody or judicial custody. There are several reasons for this including maintaining the dignity of an



accused person, howsoever poor that person might be, the requirements of Article 21 of the Constitution and the fact that there is enormous overcrowding in prisons, leading to social and other problems as noticed by this Court in In Re-Inhuman Conditions in 1382 Prisons, 2017(4) RCR (Criminal) 416: 2017(5) Recent Apex Judgments (R.A.J.) 408 : (2017) 10 SCC 658

6. *The historical background of the provision for bail has been elaborately and lucidly explained in a recent decision delivered in Nikesh Tara chand Shah v. Union of India, 2017 (13) SCALE 609 going back to the days of the Magna Carta. In that decision, reference was made to Gurbaksh Singh Sibbia v. State of Punjab, (1980) 2 SCC 565 in which it is observed that it was held way back in Nagendra v. King-Emperor, AIR 1924 Calcutta 476 that bail is not to be withheld as a punishment. Reference was also made to Emperor v. Hutchinson, AIR 1931 Allahabad 356 wherein it was observed that grant of bail is the rule and refusal is the exception. The provision for bail is therefore age-old and the liberal interpretation to the provision for bail is almost a century old, going back to colonial days.*

7. *However, we should not be understood to mean that bail should be granted in every case. The grant or refusal of bail is entirely within the discretion of the judge hearing the matter and though that discretion is unfettered, it must be exercised judiciously and in a humane manner and compassionately. Also, conditions for the grant of bail ought not to be so strict as to be incapable of compliance, thereby making the grant of bail illusory.”*

Therefore, to elucidate further, this Court is conscious of the fundamental principle of law that right to speedy trial is a part of reasonable, fair and just procedure enshrined under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. This constitutional right cannot be denied to the accused as is the mandate of the Apex court in “Hussainara Khatoon and ors (IV) v. Home Secretary, State of Bihar, Patna”, (1980) 1 SCC

98. Besides this, reference can be drawn upon that pre-conviction period



of the under-trials should be as short as possible keeping in view the nature of accusation and the severity of punishment in case of conviction and the nature of supporting evidence, reasonable apprehension of tampering with the witness or apprehension of threat to the complainant.

As far as the pendency of other cases and involvement of the petitioner in other cases is concerned, reliance can be placed upon the order of this Court rendered in CRM-M-25914-2022 titled as **“Baljinder Singh alias Rock vs. State of Punjab”** decided on 02.03.2023, wherein, while referring Article 21 of the Constitution of India, this Court has held that no doubt, at the time of granting bail, the criminal antecedents of the petitioner are to be looked into but at the same time it is equally true that the appreciation of evidence during the course of trial has to be looked into with reference to the evidence in that case alone and not with respect to the evidence in the other pending cases. In such eventuality, strict adherence to the rule of denial of bail on account of pendency of other cases/convictions in all probability would land the petitioner in a situation of denial of the concession of bail.

5. Decision:

In view of the aforesaid discussions made hereinabove, the petitioner is directed to be released on regular bail on his furnishing bail and surety bonds to the satisfaction of the trial Court/Duty Magistrate, concerned.

However, it is made clear that anything stated hereinabove shall not be construed as an expression of opinion on the merits of the case.

The petition in the aforesaid terms stands allowed.

(SANDEEP MOUDGIL)
JUDGE

05.11.2024
anuradha

Whether speaking/reasoned	Yes/No
Whether reportable	Yes/No