



IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH

205

CRM-M-7076-2025

DATE OF DECISION: 23.05.2025

GOBIND

...PETITIONER

Versus

STATE OF HARYANA

... RESPONDENT

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANDEEP MOUDGIL

Present: Ms. Himani Anand, Advocate for the petitioner(s).
Ms. Mayuri Lakhanpal Kalia, DAG, Haryana.

SANDEEP MOUDGIL, J (ORAL)**1. Prayer**

This petition has been filed under Section 483 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, for grant of regular bail to the petitioner Gobind, in case bearing FIR No. 420 dated 16.12.2024 under section 22(C)/29 of NDPS Act 1985 registered at Police Station Sadar Pehowa, District Kurukshetra, Haryana (Annexure P-1);

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

‘Sir, copy of the complaint is as follows: To The SHO, Police Station Sadar Pehowa, Jai Hind, Today on 16-12-2024 at about 12.30 PM, I, ASI Pawan Kumar No. 757/Kurukshetra, Anti-Narcotic Cell, Kurukshetra, along with my fellow officers ESI/HC Jagpal Singh No. 258/KKR, Head Constable Pradeep Kumar No. 1039/ Kurukshetra, HC Sunil Kumar No. 135/ Kurukshetra and SPO Sanjay Kumar No. 201/KKR, along with government vehicle No. HR-07-GV-2487 labelled Bolero, driven



by HC Praveen Kumar No. 486/Kurukshetra, along with laptop, printer and IO kit, are present near drain bridge NH-152, Pehowa, in search of the criminal. That secret informer met with me ASI and gave secret information that Deepan @ Deepak son of Balraj Singh is a resident of village Syonsar district Kurukshetra and Deepan @ Deepak above-mentioned sells the intoxicating tablets (banned medicines) and today also Deepan @ Deepak will go on foot from SIS Academy Pehowa towards Urnaye to sell intoxicating tablets. If immediately a blockade is done on the road coming from SIS Academy a little before NH-152, then Deepan @ Deepak can be caught and if the above-mentioned Deepan @ Deepak is searched, a large quantity of intoxicating tablets (banned medicines) can be recovered. The information is reliable. On information notice under section 42 (2) NDPS Act was prepared separately and sent to SO Police Station Sadar Pehowa through ESI/HC Jagpal Singh No. 258/KKR. On the basis of information, it was found that the offence under section 22-61-85 NDPS Act was committed. After writing the complaint SPO Sanjay Kumar No. 201/KKR is being sent to Police Station Sadar Pehowa for registering the case. After registering the case, the FIR Number be marked and informed and a special report of the case should be sent to the higher authorities and another investigating officer should be sent to the spot. After informing the fellow officers about the information, I ASI along with fellow employees HC Pradeep Kumar No. 1039/KKR and HC Sunil Kumar No. 135/KKR, left in a government vehicle number HR-07-GV-2487 brand Bolero driven by HC Praveen Kumar No. 486/KKR along with the secret informer, for the blockade a little before NH-152 on the road coming from the SIS Academy. Today: Near Drain Bridge NH-152 Pehowa (ASI Pawan Kumar No. 757/KKR) Anti-Narcotics Cell, Kurukshetra Date 16-12-2024 Time 01.00 PM. Today, on receipt of the above-mentioned complaint, FIR No. 420 dated 16.12.2024 under sections 22-61-85 NDPS Act,



Police Station Sadar Pehowa was registered and an officer was sent to investigating officer by handing over the original complaint along with the copy. For the second investigating officer, Kurukshetra Anti-Narcotics Cell was informed through telephone, who informed that SI Mahendra 76/A was sent to the spot for further investigation. The computerized copy of the FIR was sent to higher authorities as a special report. The record was entered as per procedure. Note- As ASI Pawan Kumar 757/Kurukshetra did not have CCTNS ID, the CCTNS ID of SI NARESH 424/KKR Kurukshetra was used. Note- This FIR was registered in the presence of SI NARESH 424/KKR.'

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. He submits that the petitioner was not named in the FIR and was implicated in the present case on the basis of the disclosure statement made by co-accused Deepan @ Deepak from whose possession 112.8 grams of Alprazolam was allegedly recovered which is marginally over and above the commercial quantity i.e. 100 grams. He has further argued that the antecedents of the petitioner are clean. Moreso, the investigation in this case is complete as challan stands presented on 22.04.2025 charges are yet to be framed 12 prosecution witnesses have been cited, which is sufficient to infer that the conclusion of trial is likely to take considerable time, therefore, prays for grant of regular bail to the petitioner.

**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.

Learned State Counsel on instructions from the Investigating Officer opposes the prayer for grant of regular bail stating that the quantity of the said contraband falls under the category of commercial quantity, hence, Section 37 of NDPS Act would create a bar for granting the bail to the petitioner.

4. Analysis

From the above discussion, it can be culled out that the petitioner has suffered incarceration i.e. 5 months and 2 days, nothing has been recovered from the present petitioner; the recovered contraband is marginally over the above the commercial quantity; though the custody undergone is on lesser side but the antecedents of the petitioner are clean, meaning thereby he is not a habitual offender, 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 22.04.2025 charges are yet to be framed 12 prosecution witnesses have been cited, which is sufficient 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 basic and 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 “**Balwinder Singh versus State of Punjab and Another**”, **SLP (Crl.) No.8523/2024**. Relevant paras of the said judgment reads as under:-

“7. An accused has a right to a fair trial and while a hurried trial is frowned upon as it may not give sufficient time to prepare for the defence, an inordinate delay in conclusion of the trial would infringe the right of an accused guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution.

8. It is not for nothing the Author Oscar Wilde in “The Ballad of Reading Gaol”, wrote the following poignant lines while being incarcerated:

*“I know not whether Laws be right,
Or whether Laws be wrong;*

*All that we know who be in jail
Is that the wall is strong;
And that each day is like a year,
A year whose days are long.”*

5. **Relief**

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

23.05.2025
anuradha

<i>Whether speaking/reasoned</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
<i>Whether reportable</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>