

CRM-M-21349-2025

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

CRM-M-21349-2025

Decided on: 13.05.2025

Aarti

...Petitioner

Versus

U.T. Chandigarh

...Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ANOOP CHITKARA

Present: Mr. Jasbir Singh Dadwal, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Alankrit Bhardwaj, Addl. PP, UT Chandigarh.

ANOOP CHITKARA, J.

FIR No.	Dated	Police Station	Sections
1	02.01.2025	ANTF, Maloya, UT Chandigarh	21 of NDPS Act (Sections 20, 22, 29 of NDPS Act added subsequently) and 111 of BNS

1. The petitioner incarcerated in the FIR captioned above had come up before this Court under Section 483 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, [BNSS], seeking regular bail.
2. In paragraph 13 of the bail petition accused stated that one case was pending against her and now she has been acquitted in that case, therefore except the present FIR, no other FIR is pending against her.
3. The facts and allegations are taken from the reply filed by the State. On 02.01.2025 based on secret information, the Police seized 30 grams of heroin from petitioner’s possession. The Investigator claims to have complied with all the statutory requirements of the NDPS Act, 1985, and CrPC, 1973.
4. The petitioner's counsel on instructions submits that petitioner shall not indulge herself in the offence involving commercial or 50% of intermediate quantity and other offence u/s 19/24/27A of NDPS Act and if she does so, she has no objection if this Court cancels the bail. Counsel further submits that if the petitioner involves herself in the offence where sentence is more than seven years, she has no objection if the State files an



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application for cancellation of bail. Counsel further prays for bail by imposing any stringent conditions and contends that further pre-trial incarceration would cause an irreversible injustice to the petitioner and their family.

5. The State's counsel opposes bail and refers to the reply.

6. It would be appropriate to refer to the following portions of the reply, which read as follows:

"Role of the petitioner

10. That the petitioner/accused is drug paddler and she is actively involved in the sale and purchase of the drugs and is spoiling the career/lives of young generation by pushing them into the vicious cycle of drug abuse and addiction."

REASONING:

7. Given the quantity the rigors of S. 37 of the NDPS Act do not apply in the present case.

8. Section 2 (vii-a) of the NDPS Act defines commercial quantity as the quantity greater than the quantity specified in the schedule. Section 2 (xxiii-a) defines a small quantity as a quantity less than the quantity specified in the table of the NDPS Act. The remaining quantity falls in an undefined category, generally called an intermediate quantity. All sections in the NDPS Act specify an offence and mention the minimum and maximum sentence, depending upon the quantity of the substance. The commercial quantity mandates a minimum sentence of ten years of imprisonment and a minimum fine of Rupees One hundred thousand, and bail is subject to the riders mandated in S. 37 of the NDPS Act. When the quantity is less than commercial, the restrictions of Section 37 of the NDPS Act will not attract, and the factors for bail become similar to the offence regular statutes.

9. The prolonged incarceration, generally militates against the most precious fundamental right guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution and in such a situation, the conditional liberty must override the statutory embargo created under Section 37(1)(b)(ii) of the NDPS Act¹.

10. The pre-trial incarceration should not be a replica of post-conviction sentencing. There is sufficient prima facie evidence connecting the petitioner with the alleged crime. However, per paragraph 14 of the bail petition, the petitioner has been in custody since

¹ Supreme Court of India, in Rabi Prakash v. The State of Odisha, SLP (Crl) 4169-2023, Para 4, decided on 13 July 2023

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06.01.2025. Per the custody certificate dated 13.05.2025 the petitioner’s total custody in this FIR is 04 months & 08 days. Given the penal provisions invoked viz-a-viz pre-trial custody, coupled with the primafacie analysis of the nature of allegations, and the other factors peculiar to this case, there would be no justifiability for further pre-trial incarceration at this stage, subject to the compliance of terms and conditions mentioned in this order.

11. Without commenting on the case's merits, in the facts and circumstances peculiar to this case, and for the reasons mentioned above, the petitioner makes a case for bail. This order shall come into force from the time it is uploaded on the official webpage of this Court.

CONDITIONS:

12. Given above, provided the petitioner is not required in any other case, the petitioner shall be released on bail in the FIR captioned above subject to furnishing bonds to the satisfaction of the concerned Court and due to unavailability before any nearest Ilaqa Magistrate/duty Magistrate. Before accepting the surety, the concerned Court must be satisfied that if the accused fails to appear, such surety can produce the accused.

13. While furnishing a personal bond, the petitioner shall mention the following personal identification details:

1.	AADHAR number	
2.	Passport number (If available) and when the attesting officer/court considers it appropriate or considers the accused a flight risk.	
3.	Mobile number (If available)	
4.	E-Mail id (If available)	

14. This order is subject to the petitioner’s complying with the following terms.
15. The petitioner shall abide by all statutory bond conditions and appear before the concerned Court(s) on all dates. The petitioner shall not tamper with the evidence, influence, browbeat, pressurize, induce, threaten, or promise, directly or indirectly, any witnesses, Police officials, or any other person acquainted with the facts and circumstances of the case or dissuade them from disclosing such facts to the Police or the Court.
16. Given the background of allegations against the petitioner, it becomes paramount to protect the members of society, detection squad and incapacitating the accused would be one of the primary options until the filing of the closure report or discharge, or acquittal. Consequently, it would be appropriate to restrict the possession of firearms. [This restriction is being imposed based on the preponderance of the evidence of probability and not of evidence of certainty, i.e., beyond a reasonable doubt; and as such,



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it is not to be construed as an intermediate sanction]. Given the nature of the allegations and the other circumstances peculiar to this case, the petitioner shall surrender all weapons, firearms, and ammunition, if any, along with the arms license to the concerned authority within fifteen days of release from prison and inform the Investigator of the compliance. However, subject to the Indian Arms Act, 1959, the petitioner shall be entitled to renew and reclaim them in case of acquittal in this case, provided otherwise permissible under the concerned rules. Restricting firearms would instill confidence in the victim(s), their families, and society; it would also restrain the accused from influencing the witnesses and repeating the offense.

17. **This bail is conditional, and the foundational condition is that if the petitioner indulges in any offence involving commercial or 50% of intermediate quantity or the offence u/s 19/24/27 A of NDSP Act, this Court shall cancel the bail. It is also the condition that if the petitioner involves her in the offence where sentence is more than seven years, the State may file an application for cancellation of this bail before the Sessions Court, which shall have the liberty to cancel this bail.**

18. Any observation made hereinabove is neither an expression of opinion on the case's merits nor shall the trial Court advert to these comments.

19. A certified copy of this order would not be needed for furnishing bonds, and any Advocate for the Petitioner can download this order along with case status from the official web page of this Court and attest it to be a true copy. If the attesting officer wants to verify its authenticity, such an officer can also verify its authenticity and may download and use the downloaded copy for attesting bonds.

20. **Petition allowed** in terms mentioned above. All pending applications, if any, stand disposed of.

(ANOOP CHITKARA)
JUDGE

13.05.2025
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Whether speaking/reasoned: Yes
Whether reportable: No.