



**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH**

Sr. No.102+202

**CRM-34905-2025 in/and
CRM-M-33060-2025 (O&M)**

Date of Decision: 03.09.2025

Sukhdev Vashist

.... Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab

... Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE TRIBHUVAN DAHIYA

Present: Mr. Manish Bansal, Advocate, and
Mr. Ankur Bali, Advocate, for the petitioner.

Mr. Chanchal K. Singla, Additional Advocate General, Punjab,
assisted by Ms. Kavita Joshi, Advocate.

TRIBHUVAN DAHIYA, J. (ORAL)

CRM-34905-2025

The application is allowed, and the head note as well as the prayer clause of the petition are ordered to be amended as prayed for.

Registry is directed to do the needful accordingly.

CRM-M-33060-2025

The petition has been filed under Section 483 BNSS, 2023, seeking grant of regular bail in FIR No.23 dated 14.05.2025, registered under Sections 7 and 7(a) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 2018 [Sections 61(2), 238, 308(2), 336(2)(3), 338 and 340(2) BNSS have been added subsequently] at P.S. Vigilance Bureau Range Jalandhar, District Jalandhar.

2. The FIR has been lodged on a complaint, dated 14.05.2025, made by the President and members of the Engineer's and Building Designer Association, Jalandhar, to the Vigilance Bureau, alleging demand of bribe by Assistant Town Planner (ATP) Sukhdev Vashist, employed with



Municipal Corporation, Jalandhar. He had been intentionally keeping files pending with him regarding grant of approval of site plans. Whenever any member of the Association used to visit him to enquire about the pending files, he would demand bribes for approving the same. When the ATP visited the sites, he would threaten people that their premises would be sealed and buildings demolished. He demanded ₹30,000 from a member of the Association to clear the file bearing no.210025. After registration of the FIR, the ATP was arrested on the same day.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner has contended that it is a case of false implication as the FIR has been lodged against the petitioner without there being any evidence of demand or acceptance of bribe by him. During interrogation, he statedly suffered a disclosure statement that he himself had never demanded or accepted bribe from anyone; that whatever he had been doing, was at the instance of co-accused, Raman Arora, who is an MLA from Jalandhar Central constituency. The prosecution case is based upon this self-inculpatory statement which has no evidentiary value. It is also contended that there is no material on record even to *prima facie* establish that the gold and silver jewellery recovered from the petitioner's house were purchased with the ill-gotten money. He is a married man, and the jewellery belonged his mother, widowed sisters and wife. Besides, the allegations are vague as no specific date, time or place of the alleged demands has been mentioned, nor has any money been recovered from him. He is in custody for over three months; investigation is already over as challan in the case has been presented, and charges have not been framed.

4. Learned State counsel has not disputed that the petitioner is in custody since 14.05.2025; that after investigation challan has been presented in the Court on 12.07.2025, and charges are still to be framed. It has, however, been contended that the petitioner is closely connected and has



been acting at the behest of the co-accused/Raman Arora, who is an MLA. He would threaten the witnesses if released on bail. However, learned State counsel has not been able to point out any material indicating that any of the witnesses has been threatened by the petitioner or someone else on his behalf.

5. Submissions advanced by learned counsel for the parties have been considered.

6. The petitioner is in custody for over three months, and the investigation is complete as challan/final report *qua* him already stands presented in the Court. His culpability is a matter of trial which will take some time to conclude as charge is still to be framed. The State has not been able to establish on the basis of any credible material that he has threatened the witnesses.

7. Considering the totality of facts aforementioned, this Court is of the view that no useful purpose will be served by keeping the petitioner behind bars any longer. Accordingly, the petition is allowed, and he is directed to be released on bail subject to his furnishing bail and surety bonds to the satisfaction of the trial Court/Duty Magistrate concerned.

8. In case the petitioner attempts to influence or threaten the witnesses, tampers with the evidence, hampers or delays the trial in any manner, the State will be at liberty to seek cancellation of his bail.

(TRIBHUVAN DAHIYA)
JUDGE

03.09.2025
Maninder

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