



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

**CRM-M-35161-2025 (O&M)
Date of Decision: 08.07.2025**

RICKY @ GHULLA

...Petitioner

V/S

STATE OF PUNJAB

...Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE HARPREET SINGH BRAR

Present: Mr. Ankit Gupta, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Subhash Godara, Addl. AG Punjab.

HARPREET SINGH BRAR J. (Oral)

1. The present petition has been filed under Section 528 of Bhartiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 seeking quashing of the order dated 08.04.2025 (Annexure P-3) passed by learned Judge, Special Court, Hoshiarpur vide which the petitioner has been declared as proclaimed offender in case bearing FIR No. 169 dated 16.08.2023 registered under Section 22 of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (hereinafter to be referred as 'NDPS Act') at Police Station Mukerian District Hoshiarpur.
2. Learned counsel appearing for the petitioner *inter alia* contends that petitioner is a heart patient and on 23.09.2024, he was not feeling well, as such he missed his appearance before the learned trial Court and also failed to inform his counsel regarding the same. Thus, learned trial Court cancelled the bail order of the petitioner vide order dated 23.09.2024 and his bail bonds and surety bonds were forfeited to the State. However, the non-bailable warrants issued to the petitioner were never served and as such, the petitioner was not having knowledge about the issuance of said warrants. Thereafter, learned trial Court vide order dated 08.04.2025 declared the petitioner as proclaimed offender. Learned counsel further contends that petitioner was declared as



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proclaimed person vide the impugned order without following the proper procedure and the impugned order is liable to be set aside on the ground that the mandate of Section 82(1) of Cr.P.C. has not been followed in its letter and spirit by the trial Court as the warrants of arrest were never served to the petitioner.

3. Notice of motion.

4. Mr. Subhash Godara, Addl. AG Punjab, who is present in the Court, accepts notice on behalf of official respondents and supports the order passed by the learned trial Court by contending that the petitioner did not put in appearance before the trial Court intentionally and deliberately and, therefore, having left with no other option, proclamation was issued to secure his presence.

5. I have heard learned counsel for the parties and perused the record of the case with their able assistance and with the consent of parties, the matter is taken up for final disposal.

6. While the scheme of criminal justice system necessitates curtailment of personal liberty to some extent, it is of the utmost importance that the same is done in line with the procedure established by law to maintain a healthy balance between personal liberty of the individual-accused and interests of the society in promoting law and order. Such procedure must be compatible with Article 21 of the Constitution of India i.e. it must be fair, just and not suffer from the vice of arbitrariness or unreasonableness.

7. A perusal of the impugned order reveals that the trial Court issued proclamation without recording reasons of its belief that the petitioner has absconded or is concealing himself. This Court in the judgment passed in



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Major Singh @ Major Vs. State of Punjab 2023 (3) RCR (Criminal) 406; 2023 (2) Law Herald 1506 has held that the Court is first required to record its satisfaction before issuance of process under Section 82 of Cr.P.C. and non-recording of the satisfaction itself makes such order suffering from incurable illegality. In the judgment passed by this Court in *Sonu Vs. State of Haryana 2021 (1) RCR (CrL) 319*, it has been held that the conditions specified in Section 82 (2) Cr.P.C. for the publication of a proclamation against an absconder are mandatory. Any non-compliance therewith cannot be cured as an 'irregularity' and renders the proclamation and proceedings subsequent thereto a nullity.

8. The sole purpose of issuance of non-bailable warrants or issuance of proclamation is to secure presence of the accused before the trial Court.

9. In view of the aforesaid facts and circumstances, the present petition is allowed. The impugned order dated 08.04.2025 (Annexures P-3) vide which the petitioner was declared proclaimed offender, is hereby set aside along with all consequential proceedings arising therefrom. The petitioner is directed to appear before the trial Court within four weeks and on his doing so, he shall be admitted to bail on his furnishing bail bonds and surety bonds to the satisfaction of the trial Court, along with costs of Rs. 10,000/- to be deposited with the **PGIMER Poor Patient Welfare Fund, Chandigarh**, for wasting precious time of the Court.

10. The receipt of payment of costs imposed must be presented before learned trial Court. The learned Court below is directed to grant bail to the petitioner only upon verification of payment of said cost.

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11. If the petitioner fails to approach the Court concerned by filing the appropriate application seeking bail, the interim relief granted to the petitioner vide this order shall be deemed to be automatically vacated.

08.07.2025
Ajay Goswami

(HARPREET SINGH BRAR)
JUDGE

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