



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

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CRM-M-36643-2025

Date of decision: 15.07.2025

Avtar Singh

.....Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab

.....Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE MANJARI NEHRU KAUL

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

MANJARI NEHRU KAUL, J.

1. The petitioner is seeking the concession of anticipatory bail under Section 482 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 in case FIR No.16 dated 27.06.2025 under Sections 7 & 7-A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, registered at Police Station Vigilance Bureau Unit Bathinda, District Bathinda.

2. The genesis of the present case lies in a complaint submitted by one Soni Singh to the Vigilance Bureau (State Anti-Corruption Helpline). Upon verification, including examination of relevant documents and statements, and an audio recording transcript, the petitioner, Avtar Singh, (Assistant Sub Inspector posted at Police Station City Rampura, District Bathinda), allegedly demanded illegal gratification in the sum of Rs.40,000/- to Rs.50,000/- through co-accused Rajdeep Singh, Member Gram Panchayat Village Rampura.

3. As per the allegations levelled in the FIR (Annexure P-1), on 11.05.2025, the petitioner received a sum of Rs.20,000/- from the



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complainant as part of the illegal demand in exchange for extending undue official favour, specifically, for ensuring the name of the complainant was dropped or omitted from the FIR No.61 of 2025.

4. Learned counsel for the petitioner contends that the petitioner has been falsely implicated in the incident case. It has been argued that no direct evidence exists to show that the petitioner either demanded or accepted the alleged bribe. Particular emphasis has been placed on the fact that the audio recording, relied upon by the investigating agency, contains only a conversation between the complainant and the co-accused, Rajdeep Singh. It has still further been urged that there is an unexplained delay of over six weeks in lodging the FIR, which casts serious doubt on the veracity of the allegations.

5. Notice of motion.

6. On asking of the Court, Mr. H.S. Deol, Sr. DAG, Punjab, accepts notice on behalf of the respondent-State.

7. Learned State counsel has vehemently opposed the prayer and submissions made by the counsel opposite. It has been submitted, on instructions, that there is ample material on record suggesting active complicity of the petitioner in demanding and accepting illegal gratification. It has been asserted by the learned State counsel that the petitioner, a police official, while acting in his official capacity demanded a bribe for facilitating the deletion of the name of the complainant from an FIR he was investigating. The amount of Rs.20,000/- was allegedly received by the petitioner in pursuance of this illegal demand. Learned State counsel, on further instructions, has



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also submitted that the audio recording, along with corroborative material including the transcript and the statements of some witnesses, constitute *prima facie* evidence warranting custodial interrogation of the petitioner.

8. I have heard learned counsel for the parties and perused the relevant material on record.

9. The allegations against the petitioner are of a grave and serious nature. The petitioner, a serving police officer, is alleged to have misused his official position to solicit illegal gratification for subverting the course of an ongoing criminal investigation.

10. The material collected during preliminary verification, including documentary evidence in the form of an audio recording and its transcript, provides a *prima facie* basis for the case of the prosecution. The transaction of Rs.20,000/- on 11.05.2025, allegedly received by the petitioner, cannot be brushed aside at this stage, especially when placed in the context of the larger demand of Rs.40,000 to Rs.50,000/- reportedly made through an intermediary.

11. The contention of the learned counsel for the petitioner that the audio recording pertains only to the co-accused and not to the petitioner, is insufficient to negate the necessity of custodial interrogation, particularly when the allegation involves a conspiracy between the petitioner and the co-accused.

12. This Court is further conscious of the high standards of probity expected from police officers. Allegations of corruption against serving police personnel strike at the root of public trust and the



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integrity of the criminal justice system.

13. In view of the foregoing and considering the seriousness of the allegations, the nature of the offence and the need for thorough investigation which may involve recovery and confrontation, this Court is not inclined to extend the extraordinary concession of anticipatory bail to the petitioner. The instant petition stands dismissed accordingly.

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

15.07.2025

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(MANJARI NEHRU KAUL)
JUDGE

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