



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

CWP-PIL-177-2024

Date of decision : 17.03.2025

Sukhbir Singh

.....Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab and others

.....Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SHEEL NAGU, CHIEF JUSTICE
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUMEET GOEL

Present: Mr. A.P.S. Shergill, Advocate, and
Ms. Shagun Goyal, Advocate,
for the petitioner.

Mr. Anurag Chopra, Addl. Advocate General, Punjab.

Mr. Ravi Kamal Gupta, Advocate,
for respondent No.3 – CBI.

Mr. Satya Pal Jain, Addl. Solicitor General of India, with
Ms. Saigeeta Srivastava, Senior Panel Counsel, UOI,
for respondent No.4.

SHEEL NAGU, CHIEF JUSTICE (Oral)

1. The petitioner, who was working as Clerk in the Arms License Department, Office of Deputy Commissioner, Tarn Taran, and later submitted his resignation, has approached this Court raising the issue of large number of fake arms licenses issued by the competent authority. The prayer made in the petition is as follows :-

*(i) Issue a writ in the nature of mandamus for formally
taking cognizance of Annexure P-25 (Dated*



22.07.2024) especially in view of news items Annexure P-26 (Dated 22.01.2021) and Annexure P-27 (Dated 17.11.2013) relating to the infamous gangster Jagdish Singh Bhola involving thousands of crores of illegal drug trade to the tune of 6000 crores which clearly demonstrates the necessity of filing of the present public interest litigation as the grave issues of security/welfare of the common man and grave national importance and also the security welfare of the common man in the State of Punjab and citizens of the District of Tarn Taran and other border districts of Punjab and this document clearly substantiates all the averments of the present civil writ petition in the form of a public interest litigation as the security of not only the State of Punjab but at that of the Union of India is at stake due to serious lapses which led to the issuance of thousands of illegal fake arms licenses in District Tarn Taran which directly threaten the security integrity of the State of Punjab and the Union of India;

- (ii) Issue a writ in the nature of mandamus, or any other appropriate writ or order or direction thereby so that proper re-verification of the arms licenses of the district of Tarn Taran and of all those licenses created using documentation of district Tarn Taran takes place immediately to weed out fake arm licenses and appropriate legal action on all those responsible in this process by registering of first information reports and the appropriate sections of criminal law;
- (iii) Issue a writ in the nature of mandamus, or any other appropriate writ or order or direction thereby to further aid the course of the ends of justice in the said matter so as to bring Annexure P-16 (FIR No. 243 of 2015 Dated 29.08.2015 P.S. City Tarn Taran U/s 419/420/465/468/471 and 120-B IPC), Annexure P-17



(FIR No. 36 of 2016 Dated 26.10.2016 P.S. City Tarn Taran U/s 436/175/201/202 and 120-B IPC), Annexure P-18 (FIR No. 293 of 2020 Dated 23.11.2020 P.S. City Tarn Taran U/s 409/419/467/468/471/473 and 120-B IPC), Annexure P-19 (FIR No. 14 of 2021 Dated 07.02.2021 P.S. City Sadar Patti U/s 465/468/471 and 120-B IPC), Annexure P-20 (FIR No. 101 of 2024 Dated 11.06.2024 P.S. Gate Hakima (Police Commissionerate Amritsar) U/s 417/420/177/465/467/468/471 and 120-B IPC), Annexure P-21 (FIR No. 80 of 2024 Dated 06.07.2024 P.S. Sadar Tarn Taran U/s 318 (4)/336 (2)/336 (3)/340 (2) and 61 (2) BNS 2023 in order to ensure their logical conclusion to ensure that the Rule of Law prevails in the area of the revenue District of Tarn Taran and adjoining border areas is restored and to beseech implore this Hon'ble Court to kindly immediately intervene in the matter, to provide security to the petitioner and his family from some central agency like the CRPF in case the need arises in order to safeguard his life and liberty and that of the family from the imminent threats being directly or indirectly aimed at the petitioner and his family;

- (iv) Issue a writ in the nature of mandamus, or any other appropriate writ or order or direction thereby directing investigation of the above mentioned FIRs by an independent agency like respondent No.3 (CBI) to ensure fair and proper investigation and restoration of Rule of Law and Justice in this matter as the respondents and the state authorities have turned a blind eye on account of political influence and direct influence of hardcore gangsters criminals drug mafia the petitioner has been facing the persistent threat to his life and property by acting as a whistleblower who*



is taking extreme risk upon his life and property and that of his family by bringing forefront the corrupt practices and unfettered illegal acts of the respondents No.8 to 0 who have influenced directly and indirectly slow pace of investigation and issuance of fake arms licenses done on such a large scale who have taken the law and order in their hands and hence the petitioner is doing his moral duty for a larger public good;

- (v) Issue a writ in the nature of mandamus, or any other appropriate writ or order or direction further directing affixation of responsibility on all the government officials involved in the issuance of fake arms licenses including gun houses so that the truth can see the light of the day;*
- (vi) Issue a writ in the nature of mandamus, or any other appropriate writ or order or direction directing the respondents to immediately suspend and question the licenses issued in District Tarn Taran or created using documentation done in District Tarn Taran pending verification of authenticity;*
- (vii) Issue a writ in the nature of mandamus, or any other appropriate writ or order or direction directing the respondents to implementation of a stringent verification process for the issuance of arms licenses ensuring thorough background check against all legal procedures so that such a situation does not arise in future;*
- (viii) Issue a writ in the nature of mandamus, or any other appropriate writ or order or direction directing the law enforcement agencies to conduct the district wide operation to seize all questionable firearms so as to ensure that such arms are not used to create a law and Order problem in the revenue District of Tarn Taran and the other Border districts of the State of Punjab;*



- (ix) *Issuance of any other necessary appropriate orders or directions by this Hon'ble Court to the State of Punjab for curbing the large scale scam in the issuance of fake arms licenses in District Tarn Taran and other border districts for upholding the rule of law in border district of Tarn Taran so that the main scam does see the light of the day and is taken to task as per law;*
- (x) *Issue a writ in the nature of mandamus, or any other appropriate writ or order or direction to ensure that in case any need arises in the personal security and welfare of the petitioner and his family members then in that case appropriate directions directing the respondent State of Punjab to provide personal security to the petitioner under any central agency preferably CRPF as the petitioner has put his life/liberty at risk and is facing a bleak future at the hands of respondent no. 8 to 10 who have been actively involved in the scam being the area MLA's who have been indirectly threatening the petitioner and his family with life threats and dire consequences, as petitioner has inadvertently exposed the role of said respondents in the fake arms licenses issuance scandal in the Revenue District of Tarn Taran for which the petitioner has filed the representation dated 15.03.2021 vide Annexure P-5 and representation dated 16.03.2021 vide Annexure P-6, but unfortunately no response to the above mentioned representations has been received till date which clearly shows the pathetic state of affairs and degraded dismissal of rule of law in the area.*



2. In the short reply dated 18.11.2024 filed on behalf of Union of India, it has been stated that the Government of India is undertaking all necessary measures to address the issue of illegal firearms.

3. During pendency of this petition, several affidavits have been filed on behalf of the State of Punjab. The latest affidavit dated 17.02.2025, *inter alia*, reveals that the then Deputy Commissioner, Tarn Taran, vide order dated 22.07.2024, constituted a Committee comprising of following officers :

- (1) Assistant Deputy Commissioner (G) Tarn Taran;
- (2) Superintendent of Police (Headquarter), Tarn Taran;
- (3) Superintendent (General), Grade-2, DC Office Tarn Taran; and
- (4) Senior Assistant, Arms Branch, Tarn Taran.

The above committee enquired into the allegations of issuance of fake arms licenses and on verification, 3010 arms licenses were found to be issued in accordance with law. However, further enquiry is being conducted by the said committee and report thereof is awaited.

4. In view of the above, it is obvious that the Government machinery has been set into motion pursuant to the constitution of a Committee by Deputy Commissioner, Tarn Taran. This Court, therefore, does not deem it appropriate to keep this petition pending.

5. Accordingly, with the hope and expectation that the pending enquiry would be conducted and concluded, as expeditiously as possible, in a free and fair manner, this petition is disposed of with following directions :

- (i) The Committee so constituted by the Deputy Commissioner, Tarn Taran, is directed to submit monthly report before Registry of this Court, the first being on or before 30.04.2025 and, thereafter, once every month; and



- (ii) In case, anything amiss is found in the said reports or if the report is not submitted within time prescribed, the Registry is directed to place the said matter before the appropriate Bench for appropriate directions.

6. Learned counsel for the petitioner has expressed threat perception to the petitioner due to pending enquiry. Since prayer has been made in this regard, the petitioner is directed to submit appropriate representation before the Director General of Police, Punjab, which if done within a period of 30 days from today along with a copy of this order shall be considered and decided by passing a speaking order without being influenced by the petitioner having approached this Court. The Director General of Police is expected to decide the representation within 15 days of submission of the same, after assessing the threat perception in accordance with law.

(SHEEL NAGU)
CHIEF JUSTICE

March 17, 2025
narotam

(SUMEET GOEL)
JUDGE

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