



IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

226

CRM-M-42644-2025
Date of Decision : 18.11.2025

REKHA DEVI ALIAS REKHA RANI

...Petitioner

VERSUS

STATE OF PUNJAB AND ANOTHER

...Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE AARADHNA SAWHNEY

Present: Mr. Jatinder Nagpal, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Gautam Thapar, Sr. DAG, Punjab.

AARADHNA SAWHNEY, J. (ORAL)

1. This is the second petition for grant of bail under Section 483 BNSS, filed by petitioner, an accused in case bearing FIR No.141 dated 12.10.2023 registered against her at Police Station Kotwali, Nabha, Patiala, at the instance of Surjeet Singh (complainant), for the commission of offences punishable u/s 302, 201, 120-B of IPC.

2. Relevant facts as emerging from the documents on record be noticed hereinbelow:-

Surjeet Singh, son of Harbans Singh, resident of Ram Nagar Basti, opposite Railway Station, Sangrur, set the criminal law in motion by filing a complaint, the contents of which are reproduced as under:

“Statement of Surjit Singh's son of Harbans Ram, resident of Ram Nagar Basti Opposite Railway Station Sangrur Age about 24 years Mobile Number 62833-45663, declared that I am a resident of



the said address and do hard labour. We are five brothers and sisters in total. In which there are four sisters, my sister Paramjit Kaur who is younger than my elder two sisters, whose age is about 25 years, whose marriage was solemnized on 09.11.2021 with Nimma Ram son of Jagga Ram r/o Bajigar Basti Aloharan Gate Nabha. Sometime after the marriage, my sister Paramjit Kaur was harassed by her husband Nimma Ram, mother-in-law Rekha Devi, mother-in-law Jagga Ram, sister-in-laws Anju and Sapna and started demanding dowry only after the marriage. My sister Paramjit Kaur used to tell us about this but we used to beg and explain to my sister's-in-laws that they are poor and not in such capacity. Now my sister's in-laws pressurized us and asked for money from us to buy a Tempo for my brother-in-law Nimma Ram, for which we had paid ₹50,000/- (INR. Fifty Thousand only) in cash to them about two months ago according to our ability. As my sister Paramjit Kaur was not having a child, due to which my sister Paramjit Kaur was being harassed by her husband Nimma Ram and his family and had threatened to kill her several times, which my sister told me and my father over the phone, but we used to pacify the situation that everything will be okay. Today at around 4 o'clock in the evening, I received a call from my sister Paramjit Kaur's uncle, father-in-law MC Kashmir Singh, who called and told me that your sister Paramjit Kaur had died in the night, her body is lying cold and asked us to come to Nabha alongwith your elders, I immediately took my nephew Sunny s/o Ajay Kumar, Baru s/o Joginder Singh @ Pappu Ram r/o Ram Nagar Basti Sangrur along with me on my motorcycle but when I reached my sister's house at Nabha, her both sister-in-laws namely Anju and Sapna were sitting with two other women, I asked Anju and Sapna about my sister, who told me that your sister has been taken to our home hospital, when I inquired from the village, I came to know that my sister has passed away and her in-laws have taken my sister to crematorium ground, Nabha for her cremation. I immediately reached crematorium ground, Aloharan Gate with my friends and



saw that my sister's body was set on fire, when I asked my brother-in-law Nimma Ram what happened to my sister, how she died and why we were not informed about it. Given, what have you done? who are cremating my sister without telling us, then Nima Ram started folding his hands in front of me and at times other relatives also started making supplications in front of us and we all three together started put off the fire on the clothes of my sister, where a man of the village caught me and stopped me from putting out the fire and we took buckets of water to put out the fire, then my sister's in-laws took the buckets from us and for some time later all the men slipped from there and I and my nephews continued to put out the fire together. In the meantime, Fire Brigade came at the spot and with the help of Fire Brigade, we put off the fire and dead body of his sister was taken out. It was only a chance, but the fire brigade also came and with the help of the fire brigade, we extinguished the fire and took out the half-burnt body of my sister, which was under planned conspiracy of my sister Paramjit Kaur in-laws i.e. by her husband Nimma Ram s/o Jagga Ram, mother-in-law Rekha Devi w/o Jagga Ram, mother-in-law Jagga Ram s/o Sona Ram Pradhan, sister-in-laws Anju and Sapna daughters of Jagga Ram and Kashmir Singh s/o Sona Ram Pradhan, resident of Bajigar Basti Alohran Gate Nabha District Patiala with an intention to kill her on the middle night of 11/12/10/2023 without informing us and cremated my sister's body on fire with the plan of his uncle Kasmir Singh. The evidence of attempted murder has been destroyed. My sister's body is more than half burnt. Because my sister Paramjit Kaur did not have a child, her husband and in-laws killed her and tried to cremate her body by burning it to destroy the evidence of murder. Appropriate action should be taken against them.”

On the basis of said complaint formal case vide FIR No.141 dated 12.10.2023, u/s 302, 201, 120-B of IPC was registered. The investigating officer



sent the half burnt body of the deceased to the Mortuary, Civil Hospital, Nabha and half burnt wooden pieces were also taken into possession.

Medical board constituted for the purpose of postmortem examination, opined as follows:-

“As the body is more than half burnt so need forensic expert opinion for the same. Body has been referred to higher center (RHP) for detailed examination to know the cause of death.”

Thereafter, the dead body was taken to Rajindra Hospital, Patiala, where board of doctors gave their opinion as follows:-

“Cause of death in this case in our opinion is due to head injury described, which is antemortem in nature and is sufficient to cause of death in ordinary course of nature. However, viscera is kept for chemical examination.”

Petitioner-accused, who was arrested on 14.11.2023, during interrogation confessed to her involvement in the commission of offence and disclosed that her daughter-in-law late Paramjit Kaur was not able to conceive. They had asked for money from her parents, who did not do the needful, on which account, they all were very upset. On 12.10.2023, before-noon, she (petitioner) and her daughters on a verbal altercation with Paramjit, who also abused them, on which she (p) lost her control and thrashed Paramjit, whose head hit against the wall. Resultantly, she fell down and did not wake up. In the afternoon, Nimma Ram @ Nirmal Singh (son of petitioner and husband of deceased) returned back to house and saw Paramjit lying in unconscious condition having an injury mark to her left side of head, on which point in time he (Nirmal Singh) strangled Paramjit. Later all the family members, without telling the parents of the



deceased, rushed to cremation ground and disclosed neighbours that Paramjit had died a natural death. When they were in the process of cremating Paramjit, her brothers arrived and raised the dispute, thereafter, they all fled away.

3. An application for grant of bail under Section 483 BNSS was filed by the present petitioner. The same was dismissed by the learned Additional Sessions Judge, Patiala, in terms of order dated 16.12.2024. Aggrieved of the same, the present petition has been filed.

4. Learned counsel for petitioner submits that petitioner, the stepmother-in-law of the deceased has been falsely implicated in the present case. A bare perusal of FIR reveals that no specific allegations have been levelled against her. Brother of the deceased in his complaint given to the police authorities levelled vague allegations of petitioner and other accused demanding money from the father of the deceased, but there is nothing to suggest that any complaint to this effect had ever been moved in the past. Continuing further, learned counsel contends that petitioner, her husband and her daughters were residing separately from deceased and her husband, though they all were in the same house. Petitioner and her husband had no concern with the matrimonial life of the deceased. It is further the submission of learned counsel that on the day the incident occurred, petitioner, a contractual employee in the Committee, was not present in her house.

Attention of the Court has been drawn to the order dated 08.07.2025 passed by the co-ordinate Bench of this Court in CRM-M-55994-2024 (Annexure P-5), vide which taking note of the entire facts and circumstances of the case, unmarried daughters of the petitioner were granted concession of bail. Learned counsel submits that similar treatment be meted to the present petitioner, who has



been unnecessarily roped in as an accused by complainant and his family members, only with a view to harass her and to extract illegal monetary benefit from her and her family members.

Learned counsel further contends that complainant, the star witness of the prosecution story, has since been examined by the learned trial Court. A bare perusal of his testimony would reveal that no offence is made out against petitioner. In fact, there was a matrimonial discord between deceased and her husband on account of ill health of the deceased, who died a natural death.

The last leg of submission raised by learned counsel is that petitioner a middle aged lady, who was arrested on 14.11.2023, deserves a lenient view to be taken in her favour, for even though complainant has been examined but 28 prosecution witnesses still remain to be examined, thus, the likelihood of completion of trial in the near future is quite remote and further incarceration of petitioner in custody would not serve any useful purpose. Accordingly, it has been prayed that she be extended the concession of bail.

5. *Per contra*, learned State counsel while vehemently opposing the present petition for grant of bail, contends that the fact that a young woman, aged about 25 years, who was married in November, 2021 to Nirmal Singh (step-son of present petitioner) died an unnatural death in her matrimonial home, shifts the burden upon her husband and his family members to explain as to how she died. The fact that neither the petitioner nor her other family members intimated the family of the deceased about her death, further raises a suspicion against them.

Further the plea of the petitioner that deceased died a natural death stands falsified in view of the report of the Board of doctors, so constituted at Rajindra Hospital, Patiala, who opined as follows:-



“Cause of death in this case in our opinion is due to head injury described, which is antemortem in nature and is sufficient to cause of death in ordinary course of nature. However, viscera is kept for chemical examination.”

Learned State counsel further contends that at the time of marriage family members of the deceased were not aware that petitioner is the stepmother of the husband of the deceased. In any case, all the family members including deceased and petitioner were residing in one home. There being nothing on record to suggest that petitioner had totally disassociated herself with deceased and her husband, or that she was not on talking terms with them. Further though learned counsel for the petitioner raised an argument that petitioner was not present at home, she being a contractual employee of the Committee, but no document to this effect has also been placed on the case file. In the present case, the half charred body of the deceased was picked up from funeral pyre by her brother i.e. the complainant, who suspected foul play in her death. His suspicion was later confirmed in the postmortem examination, when doctors opined that the deceased had suffered a serious ante-mortem head injury and had died as a consequence thereof. Petitioner had a verbal altercation with the deceased, which was followed by a scuffle, when she (p) hit head of the deceased against the wall, as a consequence of which, the young girl fell down and did not wake up. Petitioner did not even extend the basic courtesy of intimating other family members or rushing the deceased to the nearby clinic/hospital. Thus, when appreciated in totality simply because she (p) has been in custody since 14.11.2023 cannot a ground in itself to grant her the concession of bail in view of the homicidal death of deceased in her matrimonial home.



5. I have heard the learned counsel for the parties and with their able assistance, perused the record available on record.

6. In view of the submissions advanced by learned State counsel, but without adverting to the merits of the case, no case for grant of bail is made out in favour of the petitioner.

7. Resultantly, no case for grant of bail to the petitioner is made out and the present petition is hereby dismissed. In the meanwhile, learned trial Court is directed to make earnest efforts to conclude the trial expeditiously.

(AARADHNA SAWHNEY)
JUDGE

18.11.2025
Nisha Yadav

Whether Speaking/reasoned	Yes/No
Whether Reportable	Yes/No