

2025:PHHC:025476



IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

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CRM M-52534 of 2024 (O&M)
Date of Decision: 20.02.2025

Narotam @ Nirotam ...Petitioner
Versus
State of Haryana ... Respondent

CORAM : HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE N.S.SHEKHAWAT

Present : Mr. Aman Arora, Advocate, for the petitioner.

Mr. Gurmeet Singh, AAG, Haryana.

Mr. Gurdeep Grewal, Advocate &
Mr. Tanya Mittal, Advocate, for the respondent.

N.S.SHEKHAWAT, J. (Oral)

1. The petitioner has filed the instant petition under Section 483 of the BNSS with a prayer to grant a regular bail in case FIR No.376 dated 13.05.2019 registered under Sections 148, 149, 323, 341, 302, 120-B of IPC (Section 307 IPC added later on) and Sections 25/54 of Arms Act at Police Station Sadar Palwal, District Palwal.
2. The FIR in the present case was registered on the basis of the statement made by Mahesh son of Chander and the same has been reproduced below:-

“To the SHO Police Station Sadar Palwal, Sir, it is requested that I Mahesh S/o Sh. Chander Caste Gurjar R/o Fulwari Tehsil and District Palwal and my father is

having two brothers. Sons of my Uncle Indraj namely Mamraj and Zila Singh, both of them are doing milk work. Approx one year back Nirotam and Tirath sons of Udham Singh R/o Fulwari had an altercation with our kids in which relatives of Nirotam who were from village Nachauli (Faridabad) were also involved. Compromise regarding this altercation has been arrived at in the community. That sons of Udham Singh and family members were nurturing grudge amid this issue. That today on 13.05.2019 Mamraj and Jiley Singh were going to Palwal Railway Station while carrying Milk in the morning at 05.45 hrs upon their Motorcycle No. HR30K-4846. That I was also going just behind them upon my motorcycle. At around 05.50 hrs in the morning when our motorcycle reached in front of Behraula Petrol Pump, a RITZ Car came from behind in which Nirotam s/o Udham Singh was sitting on the front seat and four other persons were sitting in it and they intercepted the motorcycle of Mamraj and forcibly stopped the motorcycle of Mamraj and at the same time one motorcycle stopped which was driven by one young boy and Tirath S/o Udham Singh was sitting behind him. That Tirath after alighting from the Motorcycle started firing bullets with the weapon which he was carrying in his hand and Nirotam also started firing bullets indiscriminately with a weapon which he was carrying in his hand upon Mamraj and Jiley Singh. Mamraj sustained bullet injury in chest and Jiley Singh sustained many bullets in his stomach and the boys who came upon motorcycle inflicted injuries to Mamraj and Jiley Singh with the batons and sticks which they were carrying in their hands. I have eye witnessed everything, that I

stopped passerby persons, sent Jiley Singh for treatment. I called Sudhir S/o Mamraj about this incidence then Sudhir and Sunil and Premraj S/o Indraj came to the spot and we took Mamraj and Jiley Singh for treatment at QRG (Central) Hospital Faridabad where Mamraj died due to sustaining bullets injuries and Jiley Singh is undergoing operation. That Nirotam and Tirath sons of Udham and other five-six boys have eventuated this incidence upon the instance of Sunder S/o Balli R/o Fulwari, that stern legal action may be initiated against them. I have submitted written application at QRG Center Hospital, action may be initiated. SD/-Mahesh.)”

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner contends that the complainant has falsely named the present petitioner, his brother Teerath and his father Udham Singh as accused in the present case. In fact several male members of the family have been falsely roped in the criminal cases by assigning them different roles. Even the complainant had alleged that Teerath brother of the complainant has fired gun shot and his father had instigated the accused, however, during the course of investigation, Teerath as well as Udham Singh were found innocent by the police. Even Polygraph test was conducted on both of them and as per the results, they were not involved in the alleged offence. Still further, It has been falsely alleged that the petitioner had fired the shots, but no weapon was recovered from the petitioner. Even the police recorded two disclosure statements of the petitioner and it was wrongly shown in the second disclosure statement that the petitioner had used the weapon of

Manoj, co-accused. Later on, Manoj was arrested and the weapon, which was used by Manoj in some other case was recovered in the present case also. Learned counsel further contends that out of 36 listed witnesses, only 5 witnesses have been examined so far. The petitioner was arrested in the present case on 12.06.2019 and is in custody for the last more than five years and eight months. Moreover, co-accused Vikash @ Vicky, Manoj and Teka @ Tek Chand have been granted concession of bail by this Court vide orders annexures P-12 to P-14, respectively.

4. On the other hand, learned State counsel has vehemently opposed the submissions made by learned counsel for the petitioner on the ground that the petitioner is the main accused and he alongwith other co-accused had fired indiscriminately on Manoj, who succumbed to the firearm injuries. Even, the petitioner may influence the witnesses of the prosecution.

5. I have heard learned counsel for the parties and perused the record.

6. It has been held by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter of **“Ranjan Dwivedi Vs. CBI, through the Director General, 2012(8) SCC 495; 2012 (4) RCR (Criminal) 880”** as follows:-

“14. In Kartar Singh v. State of Punjab, (supra), another Constitution Bench considered the right to speedy trial and opined that the delay is dependent on the

circumstances of each case, because reasons for delay will vary. This Court held :

"84. The right to a speedy trial is a derivation from a provision of Magna Carta. This principle has also been incorporated into the Virginia Declaration of Rights of 1776 and from there into the Sixth Amendment of the Constitution of United States of America which reads, "In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial...". It may be pointed out, in this connection, that there is a Federal Act of 1974 called 'Speedy Trial Act' establishing a set of time-limits for carrying out the major events, e.g., information, indictment, arraignment, in the prosecution of criminal cases. [See Black's Law Dictionary, 6th Edn. page 1400].

85. The right to a speedy trial is not only an important safeguard to prevent undue and oppressive incarceration, to minimise anxiety and concern accompanying the accusation and to limit the possibility of impairing the ability of an accused to defend himself but also there is a societal interest in providing a speedy trial. This right has been actuated in the recent past and the courts have laid down a series of decisions opening up new vistas of fundamental rights. In fact, lot of cases are coming before the courts for quashing of proceedings on the ground of inordinate and undue delay stating that the invocation of this right even need not await formal indictment or charge.

86. *The concept of speedy trial is read into Article 21 as an essential part of the fundamental right to life and liberty guaranteed and preserved under our Constitution. The right to speedy trial begins with the actual restraint imposed by arrest and consequent incarceration and continues at all stages, namely, the stage of investigation, inquiry, trial, appeal and revision so that any possible prejudice that may result from impermissible and avoidable delay from the time of the commission of the offence till it consummates into a finality, can be averted. In this context, it may be noted that the constitutional guarantee of speedy trial is properly reflected in Section 309 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.*

87. *This Court in Hussainara Khatoon v. Home Secretary, AIR 1979 Supreme Court 1360, State of Bihar while dealing with Article 21 of the Constitution of India has observed thus: (SCC p. 89, para 5)*

"No procedure which does not ensure a reasonably quick trial can be regarded as 'reasonable, fair or just' and it would fall foul of Article 21. There can, therefore, be no doubt that speedy trial, and by speedy trial we mean reasonably expeditious trial, is an integral and essential part of the fundamental right to life and liberty enshrined in Article 21. The question which would, however, arise is as to what would be the consequence if a person accused of an offence is denied speedy trial and is sought to be deprived of his liberty by imprisonment as a result of a long

delayed trial in violation of his fundamental right under Article 21. Would he be entitled to be released unconditionally freed from the charge levelled against him on the ground that trying him after an unduly long period of time and convicting him after such trial would constitute violation of his fundamental right under Article 21."

See also (1) Sunil Batra v. Delhi Administration (I), (2) Hussainara Khatoon (I) v. Home Secretary, State of Bihar, (3) Hussainara Khatoon (IV) v. Home Secretary, State of Bihar, Patna, (4) Hussainara Khatoon (VI) v. Home Secretary, State of Bihar, Govt. of Bihar, Patna, (5) Kadra Pahadia v. State of Bihar (II), (6) T.V. Vatheeswaran v. State of T.N., and (7) Abdul Rehman Antulay v. R.S. Nayak.

88. Thus this Court by a line of judicial pronouncements has emphasised and re-emphasised that speedy trial is one of the facets of the fundamental right to life and liberty enshrined in Article 21 and the law must ensure 'reasonable, just and fair' procedure which has a creative connotation after the decision of this Court in Maneka Gandhi."

The Court further observed :

"92. Of course, no length of time is per se too long to pass scrutiny under this principle nor the accused is called upon to show the actual prejudice by delay of disposal of cases. On the other hand, the court has to adopt a balancing approach by taking note of the possible prejudices and disadvantages to be suffered by the accused

by avoidable delay and to determine whether the accused in a criminal proceeding has been deprived of his right of having speedy trial with unreasonable delay which could be identified by the factors - (1) length of delay, (2) the justification for the delay, (3) the accused's assertion of his right to speedy trial, and (4) prejudice caused to the accused by such delay. However, the fact of delay is dependent on the circumstances of each case because reasons for delay will vary, such as delay in investigation on account of the widespread ramification of crimes and its designed network either nationally or internationally, the deliberate absence of witness or witnesses, crowded dockets on the file of the court etc."

7. Hon'ble the Supreme Court in **Gudikanti Narasimhulu and others v. Public Prosecutor, AIR 1978 SC 429** has held as under:-

"Bail or Jail"- at the pre-trial or post-conviction stage - largely hinged on judicial discretion. The learned Judge held that personal liberty was too precious a value of our constitutional system recognised under Article 21 that the crucial power to negate it was a great trust exercisable not casually but judicially, with lively concern for the cost to the individual and the community. It was further held that deprivation of personal freedom must be founded on the most serious considerations relevant to the welfare objectives of society specified in the Constitution. The learned Judge quoted Lord Russel who had said that bail was not to be withheld as a

punishment and that the requirements as to bail were merely to secure the attendance of the prisoner at trial. According to V.R. Krishna Iyer, J., the principal rule to guide release on bail should be to secure the presence of the applicant to take judgment and serve sentence in the event of the Court punishing him with imprisonment. After holding that it makes sense to assume that a man on bail has a better chance to prepare and present his case than one remanded in custody the learned Judge observed that if public justice is to be promoted mechanical detention should be demoted.

8. In **Gurbaksh Singh Sibbia etc Vs The State of Punjab, AIR 1980 SC 1632**, Hon'ble the Supreme Court has observed as under:-

*“Judges have to decide cases as they come before them, mindful of the need to keep passions and prejudices out of their decisions. The Court has also observed that in which case bail should be granted and in which case it should be refused is a matter of discretion. The court found it interesting to note that as long back as in 1924 it was held by the High Court of Calcutta in Nagendra Vs. King Emperor, AIR 1924 Calcutta 476, that the object of bail was to secure the attendance of the accused at the trial, that the proper test to be applied in the solution of the question whether bail should be granted or refused was whether it was probable that the party would appear to take his trial and that it was indisputable that bail was not to be withheld as a punishment. The Supreme Court also referred to the observation of the Allahabad High Court in **K.N. Joglekar Vs. Emperor, AIR 1931 Allahabad 504**, that Section 498 of the Old Code which*

*corresponds to Section 439 of the New Code, conferred upon the Sessions Judge or the High Court wide powers to grant bail which were not handicapped by the restrictions in the preceding Section 497 which corresponds to the present Section 437. The Allahabad High Court had also observed that there was no hard and fast rule and no inflexible principle governing the exercise of the discretion conferred by Section 498 and that the only principle which was established was that the discretion should be exercised judiciously. The Supreme Court referred also the decision of the Allahabad High Court in **Emperor Vs. H.L. Hutchinson, AIR 1931 Allahabad 356**, wherein it was held that the principle to be deduced from the various sections in the Cr.P.C. was that grant of bail is the rule and refusal is the exception, that as a presumably innocent person, the accused person is entitled to freedom and every opportunity to look after his own case and to establish his innocence and that an accused person who enjoys freedom is in a much better position to look after his case and to properly defend himself than if he were in custody. The High Court had also held that it would be very unwise to make an attempt to lay down any particular rules which would bind the High Court, having regard to the fact that the legislature itself left the discretion of the Court unfettered. According to the High Court, the variety of cases that may arise from time to time cannot be safely classified and it is dangerous to make an attempt to classify the cases and to say that in particular classes bail may be granted but not in other classes. The Supreme Court apparently approved the*

above views and observations and held (vide paragraph 30) as follows :

"It is thus clear that the question whether to grant bail or not depends for its answer upon a variety of circumstances, the cumulative effect of which must enter into the judicial verdict. Any one single circumstance cannot be treated as of universal validity or as necessarily justifying the grant or refusal of bail."

9. At this stage, it is observed that the object of the bail is to secure the presence of the accused at the trial only. It is also observed that the object of bail is neither punitive nor preventive and deprivation of liberty must be considered a punishment, unless it is required to ensure that an accused person will stand his trial when called upon. Hon'ble the Supreme Court has observed in catena of judgments that when a person is punished by denial of bail in respect of any matter upon which he has not been convicted it would be contrary to the concept of personal liberty enshrined in the Constitution except in cases where there is reason to believe that he may influence the witnesses. It is appropriate to say that pre-conviction detention should not be resorted to, except in cases of necessity to secure attendance at the trial or upon material that the accused will tamper with the witnesses if left at liberty.

10. From the allegations levelled in the present FIR, it is apparent that serious allegations have been levelled against the petitioner in the present case, however, the petitioner cannot be kept

behind bars for an indefinite period. The petitioner was arrested in the present case on 12.06.2019 and it was the duty of the prosecution to complete the prosecution evidence expeditiously. Any delay in conducting the trial on the part of the prosecution violates the right to life, which is guaranteed to every citizen under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. Even the learned State counsel has failed to prove on record that the trial proceedings have been delayed by the present petitioner in any manner.

11. In view of the above, without commenting any further on the merits, the present petition is allowed and the petitioner is ordered to be released on bail on his furnishing bail bonds/surety bonds to the satisfaction of the learned trial Court/Duty Magistrate/CJM concerned subject to the following conditions:-

(i) The petitioner shall not directly or indirectly make any inducement, threat or promise to any person acquainted with the facts of the case, so as to dissuade him to disclose such facts to the Court or to any other authority.

(ii) The petitioner shall remain present before the Court on the dates fixed for hearing of the case.

(iii) The petitioner shall not absent himself from the Court proceedings except on the prior permission of the Court concerned.

(iv) The petitioner shall surrender his passport, if any, (if already not surrendered), and in case he is not holder of the same, he shall swear an affidavit to that effect.

(v) The petitioner shall also file his affidavit before the concerned Court, mentioning his ordinary place of

residence and number of mobile phone, which shall be used by him during the pendency of the trial. In case of change of place of residence/mobile number, he shall share the details with the concerned Court/learned Trial Court.

(vi) In case, the petitioner gets involved in any other criminal activity, during the pendency of the trial, the prosecution shall be at liberty to move an appropriate application for cancellation of bail granted to the present petitioner.

(vii) The concerned Court may insist two heavy local surties and may also impose any other condition, in accordance with law, while accepting the bails bonds and surety bonds of the petitioner.

(viii) The petitioner shall report every 1st Monday in English calander month before the concerned SHO till the conclusion of the trial and SHO shall mark his presence by making an entry in the Rojnamcha. In case, he does not report on every 1st Monday before the concerned SHO, it shall be viewed seriously and the concession granted to him shall be liable to be cancelled and the State of Punjab shall be at liberty to move an appropriate application in this regard.

12. All pending applications, if any, are disposed off, accordingly.

20.02.2025
amit rana

(N.S.SHEKHAWAT)
JUDGE

Whether reasoned/speaking
Whether reportable

Yes/No
Yes/No