



IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

225

CRM-M No.55449 of 2025 (O&M)

Date of Decision: 02.12.2025

Manpreet Singh @ Mani

.....Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab

..... Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE SURYA PARTAP SINGH

Present: Mr. Sumeet Puri, Advocate for the petitioner.
(through hybrid mode).

Mr. Rohit Bansal, Sr. DAG Punjab.

SURYA PARTAP SINGH, J. (Oral):

For the commission of offence punishable under Sections 21, 21-B, 29, 61, 85 of Narcotic Drugs & Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, the FIR No.33 dated 01.03.2025, has been lodged in Police Station Sadar Ludhiana, District Ludhiana. The petitioner has been arrested in the above mentioned case as an accused. Since the petitioner is in custody, he has filed the present petition for the benefit of bail. This is first petition for bail under Section 483 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.

2. Briefly stating the facts emerging from record are that the FIR of this case came into being when a police party headed by ASI 'Dharminder Singh', deputed on patrolling duty at Lalto Kalan, spotted 4 persons standing by the side of the road. As per prosecution, the moment they sensed the presence of police party each of them picked up envelopes from the respective pockets of their trousers threw the same followed by attempt to sneak away.

As per prosecution in view of above mentioned suspicious behaviour they



were apprehended. It is the case of the prosecution that when contents of the above mentioned envelope were examined it was found that each packets was containing 20 grams of 'Heroin' (total 80 grams).

3. It is the case of the prosecution that pursuant to above mentioned recovery of contraband the requisite formalities with regard to seizure and sealing of contraband, lodging of FIR and arrest of accused were undertaken and further investigation taken up.

4. The learned State Counsel has filed custody certificate of the petitioner and status report by way of affidavit of Assistant Commissioner of Police (South), Police Commissionerate Ludhiana. The same be taken on record. No formal reply has been filed by the State. However, the learned State counsel has orally opted to oppose the present petition.

5. Heard. The record has been perused carefully.

6. A perusal of the record shows that following are the relevant factors which are required to be taken into consideration for the purpose of decision of present petition:-

- i) that the quantity of contraband recovered from the possession of petitioner is a non-commercial quantity;
- ii) that the petitioner is already in custody for a period of 8 months and 27 days;
- iii) that the co-accused of the petitioner has already been afforded the benefit of bail;
- iv) that nothing is left to be recovered from possession of petitioner;



- v) that the trial of the case is not likely to be concluded in near future;
- vi) that detention of the petitioner in judicial lock-up is not likely to serve any purpose;
- vii) that there is nothing on record to show that if released on bail, the petitioner is likely to tamper with the evidence, or influence the witnesses;
- viii) that there is nothing on record to show that if petitioner is released on bail, he will not participate/co-operate in the trial.

7. In the present case, the principles of law laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of 'Dataram versus State of Uttar Pradesh and another', (2018) 3 SCC 22, are also relevant, wherein it has been observed that "a fundamental postulate of criminal jurisprudence is the presumption of innocence, meaning thereby that a person is believed to be innocent until found guilty. However, there are instances in our criminal law where a reverse onus has been placed on an accused with regard to some specific offences but that is another matter and does not detract from the fundamental postulate in respect of other offences. Yet another important facet of our criminal jurisprudence is that the grant of bail is the general rule and putting a person in jail or in a prison or in a correction home (whichever expression one may wish to use) is an exception. Unfortunately, some of these basic principles appear to have been lost sight of with the result that more and more persons are being incarcerated and for longer periods. This does not do any good to our criminal jurisprudence or to our society. There is no doubt that the grant or denial of



bail is entirely the discretion of the judge considering a case but even so, the exercise of judicial discretion has been circumscribed by a large number of decisions rendered by this Court and by every High Court in the country. Yet, occasionally there is a necessity to introspect whether denying bail to an accused person is the right thing to do on the facts and in the circumstances of a case”.

8. The principles laid down by the Hon’ble the Supreme Court of India in the case of ‘Satender Kumar Antil v. Central Bureau of Investigation’ (2022) 10 SCC 51 are also relevant in this case. In the abovementioned case, it has been observed that “the rate of conviction in criminal cases in India is abysmally low. It appears to us that this factor weighs on the mind of the Court while deciding the bail applications in a negative sense. Courts tend to think that the possibility of a conviction being nearer to rarity, bail applications will have to be decided strictly, contrary to legal principles. We cannot mix up consideration of a bail application, which is not punitive in nature with that of a possible adjudication by way of trial. On the contrary, an ultimate acquittal with continued custody would be a case of grave injustice”.

9. Recently, in the case of ‘Tapas Kumar Palit Vs. State of Chhattisgarh’, 2025 SCC Online SC 322, the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India has observed that “if an accused is to get a final verdict after incarceration of six to seven years in jail as an undertrial prisoner, then, definitely, it could be said that his right to have a speedy trial under Article 21 of the Constitution has been infringed”. It has also been observed by the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India in the abovementioned case that “delays are bad for the accused and ex-



tremely bad for the victims, for Indian society and for the credibility of our justice system, which is valued. Judges are the masters of their Courtrooms and the Criminal Procedure Code provides many tools for the Judges to use in order to ensure that cases proceed efficiently”.

10. Therefore, to elucidate further, this Court is conscious of the basic and fundamental principle of law that right to speedy trial is a part of reasonable, fair and just procedure enshrined under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. This constitutional right cannot be denied to the accused as mandated by Hon’ble Apex court in ‘Balwinder Singh versus State of Punjab and another’ 2024 SCC Online SC 4354.

11. Taking into consideration the cumulative effect of all the aforesaid factors, it is hereby held that the petitioner is entitled for the concession of bail and that the present petition deserves to be allowed.

12. Accordingly, without commenting anything on the merits of the case, the present petition is hereby **allowed**. The petitioner is hereby ordered to be released on bail on his furnishing personal bond and surety bond(s) to the satisfaction of learned trial Court, subject to the following conditions:-

- i) that 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 from closing such facts to the Court or to any other authority;
- ii) that the petitioner shall at the time of execution of bond, furnish the address to the Court concerned and shall notify the change in address to the trial Court, till the final decision of the trial;



and

iii) that the petitioner shall not leave India without prior permission of the trial Court.

13. In case, the petitioner violates any of the conditions mentioned above, it shall be viewed seriously and the concession of bail granted to him shall be liable to be cancelled and the prosecution shall be at liberty to move an application in this regard.

(SURYA PARTAP SINGH)
JUDGE

02.12.2025
Manoj Bhutani

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