



IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH

233 CRM-M-4131-2025
DATE OF DECISION: 05.02.2025

JAGDEV SINGH ...PETITIONER

Versus

STATE OF PUNJAB AND ANR ... RESPONDENTS

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANDEEP MOUDGIL

Present: Mr. Ashok Bhardwaj, Advocate for the petitioner(s).

Mr. Rubal Pawar, AAG Punjab

SANDEEP MOUDGIL, J (ORAL)

1. Relief Sought

This second petition has been filed under Section 483 of the Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, praying for the grant of concession of Regular Bail in case FIR No. 91 dated 19.04.2024 registered at Police Station Tripari, District Patiala for offences punishable under Sections 406, 420, 467, 468, 471 and 120-B of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

2. Brief facts of the case are that the present FIR has been registered on the basis of complaint made by Harinderpal Kaur and her son Sartaj Singh to the effect that Harinderpal Kaur had agreed to sell 5500 sq.yards of land with Jagtar Singh on 13.5.2018 and as per agreement, sale deeds were executed in favour of Jarnail Singh, Vishu and Jagdev Singh and possession was delivered to them as per site plan attached with the sale deeds. Ritik Bansal had purchased 250 sq.yards of land from Jarnail Singh and he intends to take forcible possession of land

belonging to Harinderpal Kaur. Perusal of police file reveals that as per inquiry report, Harinderpal Kaur had executed an agreement to sell dated 31.5.2018 to sell land measuring 5500 sq.yards with Jagdev Singh at the assurance of applicant Baljinder Singh and received cheques of Rs.50.00 Lac as earnest money. Jagdev Singh had got executed different sale deeds of land measuring 3870 sq.yards in favour of different persons and he executed an affidavit regarding remaining 1650 sq.yards of land, but he has not got executed sale deed as per his affidavit. It has also come in the inquiry report that Jagdev Singh and Baljinder Singh have submitted forged agreement to sell of land measuring 6200 sq. yards with Municipal Corporation, Patiala for regularization of colony, whereas, Harinderpal Kaur had not executed any such agreement dated 4.3.2017 with Jagdev Singh and Jagdev Singh had appended forged signatures of Harinderpal Kaur on said agreement. It has also come in the inquiry report that Jagdev Singh by submitting forged documents got passed colony for land measuring 6200 sq.yards instead of 5500 sq.yards. It has also come in the inquiry report that Harinderpal Kaur had executed sale deeds in favour of different persons at the instance of Jagdev Singh and Baljinder Singh was attesting witness of said sale deeds, but Jagdev Singh has not given balance payment of Rs.6188000/- of said sale deeds. Even Baljinder Singh had taken one cheque amounting to Rs.One Lac from complainant on the pretext that he will get cleared balance payment of 6188000/- from Jagdev Singh, but he did not do so and thus Jagdev Singh had committed cheating with complainant in connivance with Baljinder Singh.

3. **Contentions**

On behalf of the petitioner

Learned counsel for the petitioner has argued that the

petitioner has been falsely implicated in the present case and no offence is made out against him as he has not forged any document and complainant while using her influence has given a criminal shape to a civil dispute. He further submits that neither any land nor any money has been transferred in the name of the petitioner. He contends that the present FIR was arisen out of an agreement dated 04.03.2017 which is alleged to be forged. He has placed reliance upon an order dated 16.01.2025 passed in CRM-M-267-2025 vide which co-accused has already been granted the concession of bail and claims parity.

On behalf of the State

On the other hand, learned State Counsel appearing on advance notice, accepts notice on behalf of respondent-State and has filed the custody certificate of the petitioner, which is taken on record. According to which, the petitioner is behind bars for 4 months and 7 days.

Learned State Counsel on instructions from the Investigating Officer is not in a position to controvert the submissions made by learned counsel for the petitioner.

4. Analysis

Be that as it may, from the above discussion, it can be culled out that the petitioner has already suffered sufficient incarceration i.e. 4 months and 7 days, the present FIR is a result of some civil dispute which has been turned into criminal liability, and as per the principle of the criminal jurisprudence, no one should be considered guilty, till the guilt is proved beyond reasonable doubt, whereas in the instant case, challan stands presented on 20.12.2024, charges are yet to be framed and total 23 prosecution witnesses are to be examined, which is sufficient for this Court to infer that the conclusion of trial is likely to take considerable

time and therefore, detaining the petitioner behind the bars for an indefinite period would solve no purpose.

Reliance can be placed upon the judgment of the Apex Court rendered in “***Dataram versus State of Uttar Pradesh and another***”, **2018(2) R.C.R. (Criminal) 131**, wherein it has been held that the grant of bail is a general rule and putting persons in jail or in prison or in correction home is an exception. Relevant paras of the said judgment is reproduced as under:-

“2. 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.

3. 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.

4. While so introspecting, among the factors that need to be considered is whether the accused was arrested during investigations when that person perhaps has the best opportunity to tamper with the evidence or influence witnesses. If the investigating officer does not find it necessary to arrest an accused

person during investigations, a strong case should be made out for placing that person in judicial custody after a charge sheet is filed. Similarly, it is important to ascertain whether the accused was participating in the investigations to the satisfaction of the investigating officer and was not absconding or not appearing when required by the investigating officer. Surely, if an accused is not hiding from the investigating officer or is hiding due to some genuine and expressed fear of being victimised, it would be a factor that a judge would need to consider in an appropriate case. It is also necessary for the judge to consider whether the accused is a first-time offender or has been accused of other offences and if so, the nature of such offences and his or her general conduct. The poverty or the deemed indigent status of an accused is also an extremely important factor and even Parliament has taken notice of it by incorporating an Explanation to section 436 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. An equally soft approach to incarceration has been taken by Parliament by inserting section 436A in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.

*5. To put it shortly, a humane attitude is required to be adopted by a judge, while dealing with an application for remanding a suspect or an accused person to police custody or judicial custody. There are several reasons for this including maintaining the dignity of an accused person, howsoever poor that person might be, the requirements of Article 21 of the Constitution and the fact that there is enormous overcrowding in prisons, leading to social and other problems as noticed by this Court in *In Re-Inhuman Conditions in 1382 Prisons*, 2017(4) RCR (Criminal) 416: 2017(5) Recent Apex Judgments (R.A.J.) 408 : (2017) 10 SCC 658*

*6. The historical background of the provision for bail has been elaborately and lucidly explained in a recent decision delivered in *Nikesh Tara chand Shah v. Union of India*, 2017 (13) SCALE 609 going back to the days of the Magna Carta. In that decision, reference was made to *Gurbaksh Singh Sibbia v. State of Punjab*, (1980) 2 SCC 565 in which it is observed that it was held way back in *Nagendra v. King-Emperor*, AIR 1924 Calcutta 476 that bail is not to be withheld as a punishment. Reference was also made to*

Emperor v. Hutchinson, AIR 1931 Allahabad 356 wherein it was observed that grant of bail is the rule and refusal is the exception. The provision for bail is therefore age-old and the liberal interpretation to the provision for bail is almost a century old, going back to colonial days.

7. However, we should not be understood to mean that bail should be granted in every case. The grant or refusal of bail is entirely within the discretion of the judge hearing the matter and though that discretion is unfettered, it must be exercised judiciously and in a humane manner and compassionately. Also, conditions for the grant of bail ought not to be so strict as to be incapable of compliance, thereby making the grant of bail illusory.”

Therefore, to elucidate further, this Court is conscious of the 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 is the mandate of the Apex court in “**Hussainara Khatoon and ors (IV) v. Home Secretary, State of Bihar, Patna**”, (1980) 1 SCC 98. Besides this, reference can be drawn upon that pre-conviction period of the under-trials should be as short as possible keeping in view the nature of accusation and the severity of punishment in case of conviction and the nature of supporting evidence, reasonable apprehension of tampering with the witness or apprehension of threat to the complainant.

5. Decision:

In view of the aforesaid discussions made hereinabove, the petitioner is directed to be released on regular bail on his furnishing bail and surety bonds to the satisfaction of the trial Court/Duty Magistrate, concerned.

However, it is made clear that anything stated hereinabove

shall not be construed as an expression of opinion on the merits of the case.

The petition in the aforesaid terms stands allowed.

(SANDEEP MOUDGIL)
JUDGE

05.02.2025
Meenu

<i>Whether speaking/reasoned</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
<i>Whether reportable</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>