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Order QR

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 17.11.2026

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE JUSTICE G.K. ILANTHIRAIYAN

CRL OP No. 31634 of 2026

Case QR

CNR: {HCMA012578412026}

Mannivannan
S/o Muthu,
No.189, 2nd Street,
Sasthri Nagar, Vysarpadi,
Chennai 600 039.

..Petitioner(s)

Vs

Union of India
Represented by Junior Intelligence Officer,
Narcotics Control Bureau,
Chennai Zonal Unit,
Chennai.

..Respondent(s)

PRAYER: To set aside the remand order passed by the Judicial Magistrate Court, Ambattur, Chennai in R.R. No. 48 of 2024 dated 25-10-2024 on the file of respondent and pass such other order or orders as this Honorable Court.

For Petitioner(s): S.Kasirajan

For Respondent: Dr.D.Simon,
Senior Central Government Standing Counsel

O R D E R

This Criminal Original Petition has been filed challenging the order of remand dated 25.10.2024 passed by the learned Judicial Magistrate,

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Ambattur, thereby remanding the petitioner in connection with R.R. No. 48 of 2024 in NCB.F.No.48/1/21/2024-NCB/MDS.

2. The petitioner is arrayed as A2 in NCB.F.No.48/1/21/2024/NCB/MDS, registered for the offences punishable under Sections 8(c) read with 22(c), 23(c), 28 & 29 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (hereinafter referred to as the "NDPS Act"). The allegation against both the accused A1 & A2 is that they were found in possession of 2.7 kgs of methamphetamine, allegedly constituting commercial quantity. Pursuant to the registration of the FIR, both the accused were arrested and remanded to judicial custody. The order of remand is now challenged primarily on the ground that the grounds of arrest were not furnished to the accused.

3. The learned counsel appearing for the petitioner submitted that there is a significant distinction between the expressions "reasons for arrest" and "grounds of arrest". He contended that the reasons for arrest set out in the arrest memo is merely formal and generic in nature, such as preventing the accused from committing any further offence, ensuring proper investigation, preventing the disappearance or tampering of

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evidence, and preventing the arrested person from inducing, threatening or promising any person acquainted with the facts of the case so as to dissuade such person from disclosing those facts to the Court or the investigating officer. He therefore submitted that merely recording such reasons in the arrest memo would not amount to communicating the specific grounds of arrest to the petitioner.

3.1. The learned counsel further submitted that the grounds of arrest must contain the specific facts and particulars available with the investigating officer that necessitated the arrest of the accused. Such grounds must be communicated to the arrested person in writing, setting out the basic facts forming the basis of the arrest, so as to afford him a meaningful opportunity to defend himself against custodial remand and to seek bail. In the present case, though the petitioner was served with the arrest memo, the same did not contain the specific grounds of arrest. Therefore, the learned counsel contended that the arrest of the petitioner and his consequential remand was in violation of Article 22(1) of the Constitution of India and Section 47(1) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023. In support of his contention, he placed reliance upon the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Prabir Purkayastha v. State (NCT of Delhi),*** reported in ***2024 INSC 414,*** wherein the Hon'ble

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Supreme Court held that failure to furnish the grounds of arrest in writing would vitiate the arrest as well as the consequential remand order. He has also submitted that co-accused (A1) was already released on bail by this court by order dated 26.02.2026 in Crl.O.P.No.9226 of 2025.

4. Per contra, the learned Senior Central Government Standing Counsel appearing for the respondent submitted that the petitioner was found in conscious possession of the contraband and was not arrested merely on the basis of the confession statement of a co-accused. Therefore, he had full knowledge of the circumstances that led to his arrest. According to the learned Senior Central Government Standing Counsel, at the time of arrest, the petitioner was orally informed of the reasons for his arrest and was aware of the allegations against him.

4.1. He further contended that the requirement of specifically communicating the grounds of arrest assumes significance in cases where the arrest is based on the confession statement of a co-accused, whereas, in the present case, the petitioner was apprehended in conscious possession of the contraband. He further submitted that the remand report would demonstrate that the reasons and grounds for arrest had been duly communicated to the petitioner and that he was aware of the

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circumstances in which he was arrested and remanded to judicial custody.

4.2. In support of his submissions, the learned Senior Central Government Standing Counsel relied upon the judgment dated ***23.01.2026*** passed by the High Court of Delhi in ***Karan Singh v. State (NCT of Delhi),*** in ***W.P. (Crl.) No.4203 of 2025.*** In the said judgment, upon relying on the decisions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, the Delhi High Court observed that the alleged procedural lapse had been raised belatedly, i.e., after more than one year and nine months from the date of arrest, and that no prejudice had been shown to have been caused to the accused, who had been represented by counsel from the very beginning.

4.3. The learned Senior Central Government Standing Counsel also relied upon the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in ***State of Karnataka v. Sri Darshan,*** *reported in* ***2025 SCC OnLine SC 1702,*** wherein it was held that, while compliance with Section 50 of the Cr.P.C is mandatory, the consistent judicial approach has been to apply a prejudice-oriented test while examining alleged procedural lapses. It was further observed that the mere absence of written grounds of arrest does not ipso facto render the arrest illegal, unless such omission results in

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demonstrable prejudice by denying the accused a fair opportunity to defend himself.

4.4. He further submitted, in the present case the petitioner had failed to demonstrate the prejudice caused to him by the alleged failure to furnish the reasons and grounds of arrest in writing. He further contended that, since the petitioner was allegedly found in conscious possession of the contraband, he was fully aware of the circumstances that led to his arrest and remand to judicial custody. On these grounds, the learned Senior Central Government Standing Counsel sought dismissal of the Criminal Original Petition.

5. Heard the learned counsel appearing on either side and perused the materials placed before this Court.

6. On perusal of the records, it is evident that the sole ground raised by the petitioner in the present petition is that the specific grounds of arrest were not furnished to him at the time of his arrest, thereby rendering the order of remand violative of the constitutional safeguards guaranteed under Article 22(1) of the Constitution of India. The records reveal that the petitioner was served with arrest memo stating that he had

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been arrested for the illegal possession of contraband substances, which constituted the basis for his arrest under the NDPS Act. The said information was also communicated to his respective relatives.

7. As rightly pointed out by the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner, there is a significant distinction between the expressions "reasons for arrest" and "grounds of arrest". The reasons for arrest, as recorded in the arrest memo, are merely formal and generic in nature, such as preventing the accused from committing any further offence; ensuring proper investigation of the offence; preventing the disappearance of or tampering with evidence; and preventing the arrested person from making any inducement, threat or promise to any person acquainted with the facts of the case, so as to dissuade such person from disclosing those facts to the Court or the investigating officer. These general reasons are distinct from the specific grounds of arrest, which must disclose the factual basis necessitating the arrest of the accused.

8. These reasons are commonly applicable to any person arrested on a criminal charge. In contrast, the "grounds of arrest" must contain the specific facts and particulars available with the investigating officer that necessitated the arrest of the accused. The grounds of arrest,

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when communicated in writing, must convey to the arrested person the basic facts forming the basis of the arrest, thereby enabling him to effectively oppose custodial remand and seek bail. Thus, the "grounds of arrest" are necessarily specific to the individual accused and cannot be equated with the "reasons for arrest", which are general in nature.

9. At the same time, the communication of the fact of arrest is entirely distinct from furnishing the grounds of arrest and serving the arrest memo. An arrest memo ordinarily contains the name and address of the petitioner, particulars of the FIR and the provisions of law invoked, the place, date and time of arrest, the name of the arresting officer, and the name, address and telephone number of the person to whom the information regarding the arrest has been conveyed. These particulars are merely procedural details pertaining to the arrest and do not, by themselves, disclose the specific grounds on which the arrest has been effected or the reasons necessitating such arrest. Therefore, mere communication of the fact of arrest or service of the arrest memo cannot be construed as compliance with the constitutional requirement of furnishing the grounds of arrest to the accused. Failure to furnish such grounds would amount to a violation of the fundamental right guaranteed under Article 22(1) of the Constitution of India.

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10. In the case on hand, the petitioner was served only with the arrest memo, which merely conveyed the particulars of his arrest. Therefore, mere communication of the fact of arrest would not amount to furnishing the specific grounds of arrest. The failure to communicate the grounds of arrest in writing to the petitioner at the time of arrest or immediately thereafter would vitiate the arrest and the subsequent remand, as held by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in ***Prabir Purkayastha vs. State (NCT of Delhi),*** reported in ***2024 INSC 414***. The aforesaid legal position was subsequently reaffirmed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Vihaan Kumar vs. State of Haryana,*** reported in ***2025 INSC 162***, wherein it reiterated that furnishing the arrest memo or communicating the fact of arrest would not satisfy the constitutional mandate under Article 22(1). The same principle was further reiterated in ***Mihir Rajesh Shah vs. State of Maharashtra and Another*****,** reported in ***2025 INSC 1288***, wherein the Hon'ble Supreme Court emphasised that the grounds of arrest must be communicated in writing to the arrestee in a language understood by him and that non-compliance with this requirement would render the arrest and the consequential remand illegal.

11. On perusal of the arrest memo, it is evident that it had been prepared in a template format and contain a statement to the effect that

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the arresting officer had explained the grounds of arrest to the accused before his arrest. However, the grounds of arrest were not furnished to the petitioner in writing. Therefore, the mere assertion that the grounds of arrest were orally explained to the accused cannot, by itself, establish compliance with the guidelines issued by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. In view of the failure to furnish the grounds of arrest in writing, the impugned order of remand cannot be sustained and is liable to be set aside.

12. Accordingly, the order of remand dated 25.10.2024 passed by the learned Judicial Magistrate, Ambattur in RR.No.48 of 2024 in NCB NCB.F.No.48/1/21/2024-NCB/MDS, is hereby set aside. The petitioner shall deposit a sum of Rs.25,000/-(Rupees twenty five thousand only), directly to the Tamil Nadu Mediation and Conciliation Center, Madras High Court, Chennai, as non-refundable deposit and that the receipt of such payment shall be produced before the concerned Magistrate/Trial Court at the time of executing the bond. On such deposit the petitioner is ordered to be released on bail on executing a bond for a sum of Rs.25,000/- (Rupees twenty-five thousand only), with two sureties for a like sum each, of whom one shall be a blood relative, to the satisfaction of the learned II Additional Special Judge for NDPS Act

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Cases, Chennai, subject to the following further conditions:

[a] the sureties shall affix their photographs and Left Thumb Impression in the surety bond and the Magistrate may obtain a copy of their Aadhar card or Bank pass Book to ensure their identity.

[b] the petitioner shall report before the respondent police daily at 10.30 a.m., until further orders.

[c] the petitioner shall not abscond either during investigation or trial.

[d] the petitioner shall not tamper with evidence or witness either during investigation or trial.

[e] On breach of any of the aforesaid conditions, the learned Magistrate/Trial Court is entitled to take appropriate action against the petitioner in accordance with law as if the conditions have been imposed and the petitioner released on bail by the learned Magistrate/Trial Court himself as laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in **P.K.Shaji vs. State of Kerala [(2005) AIR SCW 5560].**

[f] If the accused thereafter abscond, a fresh FIR can be registered under Section 229A IPC.

13. With the above directions, the Criminal Original Petition stands allowed.

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Index: Yes/No
Speaking/Non-speaking order
Neutral Citation: Yes/No
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Note: Issue order copy on or before 25.11.2026

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G.K. ILANTHIRAIYAN, J

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To

1.The II Additional Special Judge for NDPS Act cases,
Chennai.

2. The Junior Intelligence Officer,
Narcotics Control Bureau,
Chennai Zonal Unit,
Chennai 600 077.

3.The Superintendent,
Central Prison,
Puzhal.

4.The Judicial Magistrate,
Ambattur.

5.The Public Prosecutor,
High Court of Madras,
Chennai.

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