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**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH**

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Date of Decision: 22.04.2026

Vartika Aggarwal

....Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab

....Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE RUPINDERJIT CHAHAL

Present: Dr. Anmol Rattan Sidhu, Sr. Advocate with
Mr. Pratham Sethi, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Ms. Amrit Kaur Mahir, AAG, Punjab.

RUPINDERJIT CHAHAL, J (ORAL)

1. Prayer in the instant petition filed under Section 483 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 is for grant of regular bail to the petitioner in case FIR No.221 dated 18.08.2025 registered under Section 22 and 25 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (Section 29 of the NDPS Act added later on), at Police Station Anti Narcotics Force, District SAS Nagar.

2. Brief facts of the present case are that on 18.08.2025, ASI Paramjit Singh, along with his fellow police officials was on patrolling duty and on the basis of secret information, apprehended one person, namely, Ramesh Kumar, who was found in conscious possession of 12000 Alprazolam tablets. Initially, the FIR in question was registered against the

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said co-accused Ramesh Kumar.

3. Learned senior counsel for the petitioner has submitted that the petitioner has been falsely implicated in the present case and she has no concern with the said offence. He argued that the petitioner was neither present at the spot nor was named in the FIR. It has also been contended that the petitioner was nominated as an accused on the basis of disclosure statement made by co-accused Mohd. Hasan. Apart from the disclosure statement, there is no other evidence to connect the petitioner with the offence in question and it is a trite law that disclosure statement of co-accused during her custodial interrogation is not admissible. He further submits that admittedly the petitioner was in relation with said co-accused Mohd. Hasan and therefore there are numerous calls between them, which can't be linked with the trade of narcotics. He argued that the petitioner was roped in the case only on the ground that she has deposited Rs.1,60,000/- in the account of Gautam Pharmaceuticals on 12.12.2024, however, the said amount was deposited much prior to the incident. He argued that recovery of alleged contraband has already been effected from co-accused and nothing is to be recovered from the petitioner. The petitioner is in custody since 07.10.2025. The investigation in the case is complete and challan stands presented but charges are yet to be framed. He further submitted that the trial will take a long time to conclude and no useful purpose would be served by keeping her behind bars. Therefore, it is urged that the petition deserves to be allowed.

4. On the other hand, learned State counsel has already filed the status report in the matter and while referring to the same, she has



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vehemently opposed the prayer for grant of bail by submitting that the offence committed by the petitioner is serious in nature. She argued that the recovery effected in the present case falls under the commercial quantity. However, she has not controverted the fact that the petitioner is a first time offender as she is not involved in any other case.

5. As far as the argument of learned counsel for the petitioner regarding nomination of accused on the basis of disclosure statement is concerned, it would be apposite to refer herein to a judgment passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court titled as '**Tofan Singh vs. State of Tamil Nadu, AIR 2020 Supreme Court 5592**', relevant whereof reads as under:

"155. We answer the reference by stating: (i) That the officers who are invested with powers under section 53 of the NDPS Act are "police officers within the meaning of section 25 of the Evidence Act, as a result of which any confessional statement made to them would be barred under the provisions of section 25 of the Evidence Act, and cannot be taken into account in order to convict an accused under the NDPS Act (ii) That a statement recorded under section 67 of the NDPS Act cannot be used as a confessional statement in the trial of an offence under the NDPS ACT".

6. More recently, the Hon'ble Supreme Court in a judgment titled as '**Smt. Najmunisha, Abdul Hamid Chandmiya @ Ladoo Babu Vs. State of Gujarat, Narcotics Control Bureau' 2024 INSC 290**', has reiterated the ratio decidendi of the judgment of Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of Tofan Singh (supra).

7. The Hon'ble Supreme Court while dealing with a plea for grant of anticipatory bail in a case under NDPS Act, 1985; in a judgment titled as



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‘Vijay Singh vs. The State of Haryana, bearing Special Leave to Appeal (Crl.) No.(s)1266/2023 decided on 17.05.2023’ has held as under:

"The petitioner is alleged to have committed offences under Sections 15 and 29 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (hereinafter called the NDPS Act". His application for anticipatory bail was rejected by the High Court. The allegations in the FIR are that 1.7 Kg of Poppy Straw (Doda Post) was recovered from the co-accused. The petitioner concededly was not present at the spot but was named by the co-accused. That apart there is no other material to implicate the petitioner. The prosecution urges that another case with allegations of commission of offence under the NDPS Act are pending against the petitioner. It is not denied that in those proceedings he was granted bail. Having regard to these circumstances, the petitioner is directed to the enlarged on anticipatory bail, subject to such terms and conditions as the trial Court may impose. The petition is allowed. All pending applications are disposed of."

8. Having heard learned counsel for the parties at length and after perusing the record of the case, it is evident that the petitioner is in custody for the last more than 06 months; investigation is complete, challan stands presented, charged are yet to be framed; the complicity of the petitioner is a matter of trial, and will take a long time to conclude. Thus, no useful purpose would be served by detaining her in further custody. Her continued detention without the prospect of the trial being concluded in the near future would be violative of her rights under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

9. Reliance is placed upon a judgment in the case of ***Dataram Singh vs. State of Uttar Pradesh & Anr. 2018(2) R.C.R. (Criminal) 131***, wherein Hon'ble Apex Court has held that keeping somebody behind the

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bars, till her guilt is proved, for an indefinite period amounts to infringement of her right to life and liberty, as enshrined under Article 21 of Constitution of India and is against the principle “*bail is a rule*” and “*jail is an exception*”.

10. In view of the above, the present petition is allowed and the petitioner is ordered to be released on bail on her furnishing bail bonds/surety bonds to the satisfaction of the learned trial Court/Duty Magistrate/CJM concerned. It is clarified that nothing stated herein shall be construed as an expression of opinion on the merits of the case.

(RUPINDERJIT CHAHAL)
JUDGE

22.04.2026*D.Bansal*

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