



CWP-6462-2026 (O&M)

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

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CWP-6462-2026 (O&M)

Date of decision: 24.03.2026

Manjeet Singh

....Petitioner

Vs.

State of Punjab and others

....Respondents

CORAM : HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE HARSH BUNGER

Present: Mr. J.S. Bhandohal, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Harpreet Singh, AAG, Punjab.

HARSH BUNGER J. (Oral)

1. Petition herein is, *inter alia*, seeking a writ in the nature of Certiorari, for setting aside the order dated 15.01.2026 (Annexure P-3) passed by learned Administrative Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayats, Punjab.

2. Mr. D.S. Virk, Advocate appears and files Power of Attorney on behalf of respondent No.5 in Court today, which is taken on record, subject to all just exceptions.

3. Heard.

4. Here it would be apposite to refer to Section 20(4) of the Punjab Panchayati Raj Act, 1994, which reads as under:-

“The Director at any time, and the Deputy Commissioner or the District Development and Panchayat Officer during the course of an enquiry, may suspend a Sarpanch or Panch for any of the reasons for which he can be removed.”



4.1 A perusal of the aforesaid provision makes it clear that the learned District Development and Panchayat Officer is empowered to suspend a Sarpanch or Panch (as the case may be), only during the course of an enquiry.

5. Coming to the case in hand, the operative part of the impugned order dated 15.01.2026 (Annexure P-3) passed by learned Administrative Secretary reads as under:-

“Arguments heard. After hearing the parties it has been found that the appellant was suspended by District Development and Panchayat officer, Patiala on account of illegal possession on panchayat land and the appellant has preferred appeal against the suspension order. The said order has been passed by District Development and Panchayat Officer, Patiala after taking the report from Block Development and Panchayat Officer, Patiala Rural. Hence, it is clear that the appellant has not been suspended during the pendency of the inquiry as required u/s 20 (4) of Punjab Panchayati Raj Act, 1994. Therefore while keeping the suspension intact the case is remanded to Director, Rural Development and Panchayats to pass the orders in accordance with law in three months.

The appellant is asked to appear before Ld. Director for getting the adjudication done.”

5.1 A perusal of the aforesaid order would show that a categorical finding has been returned by the learned Administrative Secretary that the petitioner has not been suspended during the pendency of the inquiry as envisaged under Section 20(4) of the Punjab Panchayati Raj Act, 1994.

6. In view of the aforesaid categorical finding, there was no occasion for learned Administrative Secretary to have kept the suspension of

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the petitioner intact and at the same time remanded the matter to the learned Director, Department of Rural Development and Panchayats, Punjab, to pass appropriate orders.

7. Keeping in view the above, the order dated 15.01.2026 (Annexure P-3) passed by the learned Administrative Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayats, Punjab, to the extent whereby the suspension of the petitioner has been kept intact, is hereby set aside.

8. Resultantly, the present writ petition is, accordingly partly allowed and disposed of in the aforestated terms.

9. All the pending application(s), if any, shall also stand closed.

24.03.2026
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(HARSH BUNGER)
JUDGE

Whether speaking/reasoned:
Whether reportable:

Yes/No
Yes/No