

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

2026 PHHC 072404



CRA-S-1081-2026 (O&M)
Date of Decision: 08.05.2026.

Ajay Kumar @ Ajay

....Petitioner.

VERSUS

State of Punjab

....Respondent.

CORAM: HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE SUKHVINDER KAUR

Present: Mr. Amandeep Singh, Advocate,
for the appellant.

Mr. Navdeep Singh, DAG, Punjab.

SUKHVINDER KAUR, J. (Oral)

1. By way of this appeal, the appellant has challenged the judgment of conviction dated 22.12.2025 and order of sentence dated 23.12.2025 passed by learned Judge, Special Court, Ludhiana, vide which the appellant was sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for a period of three years along with fine of Rs.10,000/- for the offence punishable under Section 22 of NDPS Act and in default of payment of fine to further undergo Rigorous imprisonment for a period of 01 month, in case FIR No.10 dated 08.01.2023, under Section 22 of NDPS Act registered at Police Station Division No.7, Ludhiana.

2. Today, the case was listed for hearing, only on the application for suspension of sentence i.e. CRM-17201-2026. However, on oral prayer

made by learned counsel for the applicant-appellant, the main appeal i.e. CRA-S-1081-2026, which stands admitted vide order dated 01.04.2026 passed by this Court, is taken on board today itself for hearing.

3. Brief facts of this case are that the aforesaid FIR was registered against the appellant when he was apprehended by the police officials and 30 grams heroin was recovered from him. He failed to produce any license regarding the conscious possession of the same. The investigation was completed and challan was presented. After trial, the appellant was convicted and sentenced as stated above by the trial Court, hence this appeal has been filed by the appellant, challenging his conviction and sentence.

3. Learned counsel for the appellant has submitted that he does not want to challenge the conviction of the appellant on merits but as far as sentence part is concerned, he prays that the same may be reduced to that of already undergone by the appellant. He has submitted that the present FIR pertains to the year 2023 and the appellant has already undergone the actual sentence of 04 months and 24 days of the total awarded sentence of 03 years by the trial Court. He has submitted that as such a lenient view be taken and the sentence awarded be reduced to that of already undergone.

4. Per contra, learned counsel for the respondent State submitted that he has no objection if the main appeal is taken up on board for hearing today itself. However, he contended that well-reasoned judgment has been passed by the Court below, based on correct appreciation of evidence available on record and the applicant-appellant does not deserve any leniency.

5. Learned counsel for the parties have been heard and the record has been meticulously examined with their able assistance.

6. Since the appellant has not challenged the judgment of conviction on merits, as such the said issues are not being gone into at this stage and it is being restricted to the issue pertaining to sentencing and quantum of punishment. The recovery of 30 grams of heroin in the present case falls within the intermediate quantity and the awarded sentence of rigorous sentence of three years apparently seems on the higher side. So, it will be in the interest of justice if the sentence is modified.

7. The Hon'ble Supreme Court, in ***Pramod Kumar Mishra Vs. State of UP (2023) 9 SCC 810***, observed that punishment must not be viewed as an act of vengeance but as a means of reformation and reintegration of the offender into society. It was further held that an appropriate sentence must be determined by considering a range of factors, including the nature and circumstances of the offence, the offender's background, age, mental and emotional condition, potential for rehabilitation, prior criminal record, and the deterrent needs of the community. Sentencing, the Court noted, involves a delicate exercise of judicial discretion where multiple social, psychological, and moral factors must be balanced to ensure that justice serves both societal protection and individual redemption.

8. Hon'ble Supreme Court again reiterated in ***Ravada Sasikala v. State of AP reported as AIR 2017 SC 1166***, that law in this regard is well settled that opportunities of reformation must be granted and such discretion is to be exercised by evaluating all attending circumstances of

each case by noticing the nature of the crime, the manner in which the

crime was committed and the conduct of the accused to strike a balance between the efficacy of law and the chances of reformation of the accused. In order to determine the quantum of sentence, Courts should bear in mind the principle of proportionality as awarding punishment is not merely retributive but also reformative.

9. The perusal of impugned judgment reveals that there is no perversity and evidence on record has been appreciated in the right perspective, but as observed above, the counsel for the appellant has not challenged the conviction on substantive grounds and while limiting his plea solely to modification of the quantum of sentence to one already undergone.

10. Learned State counsel has produced the custody certificate of the applicant-appellant, as per which the applicant-appellant has already undergone custody of 04 months and 24 days out of awarded substantive sentence of three years.

11. Taking into consideration the facts noticed above that the appellant has faced the rigors of a long criminal prosecution; in the facts and circumstances of the present case it would be in the interest of justice, if sentence awarded to the appellant is reduced to the period already undergone by her.

12. Therefore, in view of the discussion above, the present appeal is disposed of in the following terms :-

“The judgment of conviction dated 22.12.2025 passed by learned Judge, Special Court, Ludhiana is upheld and order of sentence dated 23.12.2025 is modified to the extent that the sentence of the applicant-appellant is

reduced to the period of sentence already undergone by her.”

13. With the above said observations, the appeal stands disposed of.

14. The concerned jail authorities are directed to release the appellant immediately, if not required in any other case.

15. Pending miscellaneous application(s), if any, shall also stand disposed of.

16. The application bearing CRM-17201-2026 for suspension of sentence has been rendered infructuous as the sentence has been reduced to already undergone.

08.05.2026
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(SUKHVINDER KAUR)
JUDGE

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