



IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

Sr.No.245

CRM-M-16801-2026
Decided on : 07.05.2026

Lovepreet Singh

..... Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab

..... Respondent

CORAM : HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE RUPINDERJIT CHAHAL

Present : Mr. Arjun Kapur, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Rahul Jindal, AAG, Punjab
for the respondent-State.

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.59 dated 26.06.2025, registered under Sections 22 and 29 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 and Section 25 of the Arms Act, 1959, at Police Station Kotwali Nabha, District Patiala.

2. Brief facts of the present case, as per the prosecution, are that on 26.06.2025 ASI Balwinder Singh along with his fellow police officials acting upon secret information spotted a vehicle and apprehended the petitioner and co-accused. Upon search, they were found in conscious possession of 900 loose intoxicant tablets. Upon further search one pistol



was recovered below the driver seat and one Kirpan, 02 iron knives, 02 iron datars (blade) and 01 iron rod was recovered from the boot space of the car.

Hence, the present FIR.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner contends that the petitioner is innocent and has been falsely implicated in the present case. He further contends that the allegations levelled against the petitioner are false and he has no concern with the said offence. Learned counsel contends that the mandatory provisions of the NDPS Act were not complied with at the time of alleged search and seizure. He further contends that the recovery of alleged contraband has already been effected. Learned counsel submits that the co-accused Sukhdarshan Singh has already been granted the concession of regular bail by this Court vide order dated 10.03.2026, passed in CRM-M-2853-2026. The petitioner is in custody since 26.06.2025. The investigation in the case is complete, however, charges are yet to be framed. He further submits that the trial will take a long time to conclude and no useful purpose would be served by keeping the petitioner behind bars. Therefore, it is urged that the present petition be allowed.

4. Learned State counsel has filed the status report as well as the custody certificate which are taken on record. He has vehemently opposed the prayer for grant of bail by submitting that the offence committed by the petitioner is serious in nature. He has further submitted that the petitioner is also involved in multiple other cases of similar nature meaning thereby he is a habitual offender.

5. 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 10 months and 05 days; the co-accused has already



been granted the concession of regular bail by this Court; the investigation in this case is complete; challan stands presented; charges are yet to be framed and the fact that trial may take a long time to conclude, no useful purpose would be served by detaining the petitioner in further custody. His continued detention without the prospect of the trial being concluded in near future would be violative of his rights under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

6. Reliance in this regard is placed upon a judgment of Hon'ble Supreme Court 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 bars, till his guilt is proved, for an indefinite period amounts to infringement of his 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*".

7. As regards the submission of learned State counsel that petitioner is involved in other/one more criminal case(s), reference is placed upon the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Maulana Mohd. Amir Rashadi Vs. State of U.P. and another, 2012 (2) SCC 382*** in which, it is held that the facts and circumstances of the present case are to be seen while deciding a bail application and the bail application of the petitioner cannot be rejected solely on the ground that the petitioner is involved in other/another case(s). The relevant portion of the said judgment is reproduced herein-below:-

"As observed by the High Court, merely on the basis of criminal antecedents, the claim of the second respondent cannot be rejected. In other words, it is the duty of the Court to find out the role of the accused in the case in which he has been charged and other circumstances such as possibility of fleeing away from the jurisdiction of the Court etc."



8. In view of the above, the present petition is allowed and the petitioner is ordered to be released on bail on his 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.

07.05.2026
mamta

(RUPINDERJIT CHAHAL)
JUDGE

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



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.305 dated 21.12.2022, registered under Sections 22(C), 27-A and 29 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 and Sections 420, 468, 471, 120-B, 34 IPC, at Police Station A Division, District Amritsar.**
 2. Brief facts of the present case as per the prosecution are that on 21.12.2022, Inspector Rajwinder Kaur alongwith her fellow police officials on the basis of secret information, apprehended co-accused Nishan Sharma, who was found in conscious possession of 29,920 intoxicant tablets. Initially the FIR was registered against the said co-accused.
 3. Learned counsel for the petitioner contends that the petitioner is innocent and has been falsely implicated in the present case. He further contends that neither the petitioner was present at the spot nor was named in the FIR, therefore, he has no concern with the said offence. It has also been contended that the petitioner was nominated as an accused on the basis of disclosure statement made by the co-accused Manoj Kumar Sahoo. 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 his custodial interrogation is not admissible. He has submitted that the co-accused Nadeem Ahmed, Usman Rehman, Rajiv Kumar alias Gaurav alias Mannu, Rishi Kumar, Manoj Kumar Sahoo and Nishan Sharma have already been granted the concession of anticipatory bail as well as regular bail by a Coordinate Bench as well as by this Court (Annexures P-3 to P-8). No recovery is to be effected from the petitioner.
- The petitioner is in custody since 28.10.2025. The investigation in this case



is complete; challan stands presented and charges are yet to be framed. He further submits that trial will take a long time to conclude and no useful purpose would be served by keeping the petitioner behind bars. Therefore, it is urged that the petition deserves to be allowed.

Notice of motion.

5. Learned State counsel, who has appeared on advance notice of the petition, filed the custody certificate of the petitioner, which is taken on record.

4. Learned State counsel has filed the status report as well as custody certificate which are taken on record. She has vehemently opposed the prayer for grant of bail by submitting that the offence committed by the petitioner is serious in nature. She has submitted that the recovery of alleged contraband effected from the co-accused in the present case falls under the commercial quantity. She has further submitted that the petitioner is also involved in one more case of similar nature meaning thereby he is an habitual offender./**However, he has not controverted the fact that the complainant and other material witnesses have turned hostile and that the petitioner is first time offender as he is not involved in any other case.**

5. A query was raised by this Court to learned State counsel as to whether apart from the disclosure statement, any material has been found during investigation to connect the petitioner with the recovered contraband, to which he answered that there is nothing else to connect the petitioner with the offence.

6. 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".

7. More recently, the Hon'ble Supreme Court in a judgment titled as '**Smt. Najmunisha, Abdul Hamid Chandmiya @ Ladoo Bapu Vs. State of Gujrat, 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).

8. 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 '**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."

9. The petitioner is sought to be arrayed solely on the basis of disclosure statement of co-accused. Suffice to say there is no other material available to connect the petitioner with the recovered contraband. The veracity of the disclosure statement made by the co-accused will be subject to comprehensive scrutiny during the course of the trial and same cannot be a ground to decline the concession of regular bail to the petitioner.

10. 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; the co-accused have already been granted the concession of anticipatory bail as well as regular bail by a Coordinate Bench as well as by this Court; the investigation in this case is complete; challan stands presented; charges are yet to be framed and the fact that trial may take a long time to conclude, no useful purpose would be served by detaining the petitioner in further custody. His continued detention without the prospect of the trial being concluded in the near future would be violative of his rights under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

11. 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 bars, till his guilt is proved, for an indefinite period amounts to infringement



of India and is against the principle “*bail is a rule*” and “*jail is an exception*”.

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13. In view of the above, the present petition is allowed and the petitioner is ordered to be released on bail on his 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.