

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

2026:PHHC:057071



**CRA-S-1192-2026 (O&M)
Date of Decision: 16.04.2026**

**MANPREET SINGH @ MANNA ... APPELLANT
VERSUS
STATE OF PUNJAB AND ANOTHER ... RESPONDENTS**

CORAM : HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE H.S.GREWAL

Present:- Mr. L.S.Sekhon, Advocate with
Mr. Rajdeep Singh Gill, Advocate for the appellant.

H.S. GREWAL, J. (ORAL)

1. This appeal has been filed under Section 14-A of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, challenging the order dated 18.03.2026 passed by the Court of learned Additional Sessions Judge, Tarn Taran, whereby the application for grant of regular bail filed by the appellant has been dismissed in FIR No. 546 dated 23.12.2023 under Sections 302, 307, 506, 148, 149 IPC, (103, 109, 351 (3), 190, 191(3) Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita) Sections 25, 27 of Arms Act and Section 3 (2) (V) of the SC&ST Act registered at Police Station Sri Goindwal Sahib, District Tarn Taran.

2. The case of the prosecution is that on 23.12.2023, the complainant-Lakhbir Singh along with his father Balwinder Singh and others were standing near the bridge of water canal minor. At that time, an i20 car arrived at the spot, from which appellant who was armed with a pistol, alighted along with two unidentified persons. Petitioner along with others is alleged to have fired open shots at the complainant and his father with an intention to kill them. One of the shots struck Balwinder Singh

(father of the complainant) in the chest, as a result of which he fell on the ground and was subsequently declared dead. In the said incident, the complainant along with others also received gun shot injuries.

3. Learned counsel for the appellant submits that the appellant is innocent and has been implicated falsely in the present case. The complainant appeared as PW1 and stated that he could not identify the accused who had murdered his father and the accused present in the Court were not the persons who had murdered his father. The appellant is in custody for the last 02 years, 02 months and 29 days.

4. Notice of motion.

5. Mr. Rohit Hans, D.A.G., Punjab accepts notice on behalf of the State and vehemently opposes the prayer for grant of regular bail to the appellant on the ground of gravity of allegations. Learned State counsel has filed the custody certificate in Court, which is taken on record. As per the custody certificate, the appellant is in custody for the last 02 years, 02 months and 29 days and is involved in four other cases. He further submits that out of total 33 cited prosecution witnesses, only four have been examined so far.

6. I have heard the learned counsel for the parties and perused the record.

7. After hearing the rival contentions of the learned counsel for the parties and keeping in view the facts and circumstances of the case that the complainant has not deposed against the appellant; the appellant is in custody for the last 02 years, 02 months and 29 days; out of total 33 prosecution witnesses, only four have been examined so far; no specific allegation attracting the provisions of the SC/ST Act has been levelled

against the appellant; the conclusion of trial is likely to take a long time and continuous detention of the appellant would not serve the ends of justice. Accordingly, this Court deems it fit to set aside the order dated 18.03.2026 passed by the learned Addl. Sessions Judge, Tarn Taran and to grant the concession of regular bail to the appellant during the pendency of the trial.

8. Reference can be made to the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of *Pardeep Kumar @ Banu versus State of Punjab*, bearing Criminal Appeal No.1341/2026 (arising out of SLP(Cri.) No.18775/2025), decided on 13.03.2026, wherein it has been categorically held that where the accused has remained in custody for a considerable period and the trial has not even commenced, or is not likely to conclude in the near future, therefore, continued incarceration would amount to punishment without trial. In such circumstances, further detention pending trial is not necessary and the accused is entitled to be released on bail.

9. Therefore, without expressing any opinion on the merits of the case, the instant appeal is allowed. The appellant is ordered to be released on regular bail on his furnishing requisite bail bonds, surety bonds to the satisfaction of the trial Court/Duty Magistrate/Chief Judicial Magistrate concerned.

10. It is clarified that while on bail so granted through the instant order, in case the appellant indulges in any other criminal case, it shall be open to the State to move an application for cancellation of his bail.

(H.S.GREWAL)
JUDGE

16.04.2026
Janki

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