

2026:PHHC:075061



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

CRM-M-24553-2026

Sandeep Panjeta @ Sandeep Kumar

....Petitioner

versus

State of Haryana

....Respondent

Date of Decision: May 13, 2026

Date of Uploading: May 13, 2026

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUMEET GOEL

Present: Mr. Kiran Pal Singh, Advocate for the petitioner.

Ms. Mahima Yashpal Singla, Senior DAG Haryana.

Mr. Bijender Dhankhar, Advocate for the complainant.

SUMEET GOEL, J. (Oral)

Present petition has been filed under Section 482 of Bharatiya
Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (hereinafter to be referred as 'the BNSS')
(erstwhile Section 438 of the Cr. P.C.) for grant of anticipatory bail to the
petitioner, in case bearing FIR No.129 dated 21.04.2026, registered for the
offences punishable under Section 108 of the BNS, 2023 (Sections 333,
351(2), 61(2) and 318(4) of the BNS added later on), at Police Station
Ladwa, District Kurukshetra.

2. The gravamen of the allegations against the petitioner is that on
10.04.2026, the complainant stated that one of his relatives, namely Sandeep
Panjeta (*petitioner herein*), approached him with a request to enter into an

agreement in order to evade income tax liabilities. Pursuant thereto, on 03.10.2025, the petitioner transferred an amount of ₹45,00,000/- into the complainant's bank account. Thereafter, an agreement to sell pertaining to 7 Kanal of land was executed between the parties, whereby the complainant ostensibly agreed to sell the said land to the petitioner. However, the complainant alleged that after withdrawing the entire amount of ₹45,00,000/- from his account, he handed over the same in cash to the petitioner and that the agreement to sell was executed merely as a security document, without any intention to actually transfer the land. It is further alleged that subsequently the petitioner started threatening and pressurizing the complainant to execute the sale deed in his favour. Owing to the continuous pressure and harassment allegedly caused by the petitioner, the complainant consumed some poisonous substance on 06.04.2026. He was initially admitted to Verma Hospital, Ladwa, and was thereafter referred to PGI, Chandigarh for further treatment. The complainant alleged that he attempted to commit suicide due to the mental pressure created by the petitioner. The complainant died during treatment.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner has iterated that a bare perusal of the FIR itself shows that allegations leveled against the petitioner are concocted, improbable and devoid of any merit. Learned counsel has further iterated that the petitioner has been falsely implicated into the FIR. Learned counsel has further iterated that an agreement to sell was effected between the complainant (since deceased) and wife of the petitioner, namely, Raj Rani, whereby, the complainant agreed to sell his land in question to Raj Rani, and date for registry was fixed for 02.03.2026. Learned counsel has submitted that total amount of Rs.40,00,000/- was transferred

into the account of the complainant on different occasions. Thereafter, an amount of Rs.5,00,000/- was also paid to the complainant on 09.01.2026 on the insistence of the complainant. Learned counsel has further submitted that on 02.03.2026, wife of the petitioner was present in the office of Tehsildar, but the complainant did not appear. Later, complainant requested for a short period to do the needful, but he unfortunately expired on 21.04.2026. Learned counsel has submitted that the FIR in question has been registered with an ulterior motive to grab the hard earned money of the petitioner. Learned counsel has asserted that no offence under Section 108 of the BNS has been made out against the petitioner. Learned counsel has further asserted that there is an unexplained delay of 11 days in lodging the FIR in question.

3.1. Learned counsel asserts that the police have not conducted a fair and impartial investigation and the inquiry conducted so far is not only incomplete, but also tainted with bias. Learned counsel has asserted that nothing is to be recovered from the petitioner. Moreover, the custodial interrogation should not be used as a punitive measure and is justified only when absolutely necessary for the recovery of material evidence. Furthermore, the petitioner is ready to join the investigation and, hence, no useful purpose would be served by sending him behind the bars. On the aforesaid submissions, the grant of anticipatory bail is entreated for.

4. *Per contra*, learned State counsel, while raising submissions in tandem with the reply by way of an affidavit dated 08.05.2026 (already on record) has opposed the grant of anticipatory bail to the petitioner by arguing that the offence committed by the petitioner is serious in nature. Relevant of the said status report reads as under:

- “13. The role/evidence of the present petitioner is as under: -
- a) That as per investigation there is CCTV footage dated 03.04.2026, which shows that the present petitioner entered the house of the complainant and threatened the daughter of the complainant. The statement of the mother to this effect was recorded and is Annexed as Annexure R-4.
 - b) That as per investigation, there are more accused in the present case and till date no arrest has been made.
 - c) That the present petitioner threatened the deceased and pressurized him to get the registry of the land done in his favour. Under the pressure, on 06.04.2026 the complainant consumed some poisonous substance.”

It has been, thus, argued that given the severity of the offence, there exists a substantial likelihood that the petitioner may abscond or tamper with the evidence, if he is enlarged on bail. Learned State counsel has iterated that the custodial interrogation of the petitioner is imperative for the purpose of effective and fair investigation and to unearth the case of the prosecution. On these submissions, dismissal of the present petition is entreated for.

4.1. On the other hand, learned counsel for the complainant, while raising submissions in tandem with the submissions of learned State counsel, has opposed the petition in hand by arguing that there are serious allegations against the petitioner. Learned counsel has argued that it is due to the continuous pressure and threats, the petitioner consumed some poisonous substance, which later resulted into his death. Learned counsel has submitted that, in case, the petitioner is granted the concession of anticipatory bail, there is all likelihood that he may abscond from the process of justice as also interfere/ intimidate the prosecution witnesses/ evidence. On the strength of these submissions, dismissal of the petition in hand is entreated for.

5. I have heard the learned counsel for the rival parties and have gone through the available record of the case.

6. As per the prosecution case and material available on record, it is borne out that serious allegations have been leveled against the petitioner. It has been further borne out that an amount of ₹45,00,000/- was transferred from the account of the petitioner into the account of the complainant. Learned Court below, while declining the anticipatory bail plea of the petitioner, observed that whether the said amount was subsequently returned by the complainant to the petitioner in cash, as alleged, is a matter which can only be unearthed during the course of investigation and through the disclosure made by the petitioner. It has been further noted that although certain documents, including the agreement to sell and related records, are available on file, the true nature and intention behind the said transaction can only be ascertained after custodial interrogation of the petitioner. It has been observed by the Court below that investigation is still in progress and has presently reached a standstill due to the death of the complainant, as a result of which the investigating agency is left with limited documentary evidence and factual material. Therefore, the custodial interrogation of the petitioner is indispensably required to uncover the complete chain of events and to bring the true facts before the investigating agency.

6.1. Furthermore, the petitioner is stated to be involved in other FIR(s), as reflected from the reply filed by the State, which clearly demonstrates his tendency to indulge in criminal activities.

7. No cause *nay* plausible cause has been shown, at this stage, from which it can be deciphered that the petitioner has been falsely implicated into the present FIR.

8. It is befitting to mention here that while considering a plea for grant of anticipatory bail, the Court has to equilibrate between safeguarding

individual rights and protecting societal interest(s). The Court ought to reckon with the magnitude and nature of the offence; the role attributed to the accused; the need for fair and free investigation, as also the deeper and wide impact of such alleged iniquities on the society. It is imperative that every person in the Society can expect an atmosphere free from foreboding & fear of any transgression. At this stage, there is no material on record to hold that *prima facie* case is not made out against the petitioner. The material which has come on record and preliminary investigation, appear to be established a reasonable basis for the accusations. Thus, it is not appropriate to grant anticipatory bail to the petitioner, as it would necessarily cause impediment in effective investigation. In ***State v. Anil Sharma, (1997) 7 SCC 187 : 1997 SCC (Cri) 1039***, the Supreme Court held as under : (SCC p. 189, para 6)

“6. We find force in the submission of CBI that custodial interrogation is qualitatively more elicitation-oriented than questioning a suspect who is well-ensconced with a favourable order under Section 438 of the Code. In a case like this, effective interrogation of a suspected person is of tremendous advantage in disinterring many useful informations and also materials which would have been concealed. Success in such interrogation would elude if the suspected person knows that he is well protected and insulated by a pre-arrest bail order during the time he is interrogated. Very often interrogation in such a condition would reduce to a mere ritual. The argument that the custodial interrogation is fraught with the danger of the person being subjected to third-degree methods need not be countenanced, for, such an argument can be advanced by all accused in all criminal cases. The Court has to presume that responsible police officers would conduct themselves in a responsible manner and that those entrusted with the task of disinterring offences would not conduct themselves as offenders.”

9. In view of the seriousness and gravity of allegations and the role attributed to the petitioner, this Court finds no compelling ground to extend the benefit of discretionary relief to the petitioner. Granting bail, at this stage, would not only undermine the administration of justice but may also embolden the accused and pose a threat to the safety and well-being of the victim and other witnesses.

10. In view of above, this Court is of the considered opinion that the petitioner does not deserve the concession of anticipatory bail in the factual matrix of the case in hand. Moreover, the investigation is still underway and custodial interrogation of the petitioner is being sought for effective investigation and to unearth the larger conspiracy and involvement of other co-accused persons. The petition is, thus, devoid of merits and is hereby **dismissed**.

11. Nothing said hereinabove shall be deemed to be an expression of opinion upon merits of the case/investigation.

12. Pending application(s), if any, shall also stand disposed off.

(SUMEET GOEL)
JUDGE

May 13, 2026

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Whether speaking/reasoned: Yes/No

Whether reportable: Yes/No