



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

105

CRM-M-29918-2026**Date of decision: 22.05.2026**

HARWINDER SINGH SANDHU

.....Petitioner

VERSUS

STATE OF PUNJAB

.....Respondents

CORAM : HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE VINOD S. BHARDWAJ*********

Present: - Mr. Ketan Chopra, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Mohit Kapoor, Senior DAG, Punjab.

***********VINOD S. BHARDWAJ, J. (Oral)**

The petitioner has filed the instant first petition under Section 482 of the BNSS, 2023, for the grant of pre-arrest bail in case bearing FIR No. 0073 dated 22.04.2026, registered under Section 318(4) of the BNS, 2023, at Police Station City Sangrur, District Sangrur.

2. The present FIR was registered at the instance and on the complaint moved by the complainant Avtar Singh, wherein he submitted that he is retired from the Indian Army and is the owner in possession of one Scorpio S 11 model bearing registration number PB-08E-0047. He has known Mandeep Singh for the last two years, and Mandeep Singh took his vehicle for one or two days and then returned it. On 22.06.2025, Mandeep Singh took his vehicle for four days. On 26.06.2025, Mandeep Singh

deposited Rs. 44,000/- in the complainant's account without any intimation. He also told him that he had further given his vehicle on rent to an NRI for some days and deposited the rent in his account. After a few days, when he asked Mandeep Singh for his vehicle, the latter did not give any proper response and did not pick up his calls thereafter. Whenever the complainant went to Mandeep Singh's house, he was not found. Once or twice, when he was found at home, he told the complainant that he was ill and that he would bring back the complainant's vehicle when he recovered. The complainant had a hunch that Mandeep Singh had either sold his vehicle or committed some wrongdoing. Allegedly after carrying out investigation and as per the prosecution case itself, the vehicle thereafter changed several hands in the chain of business transactions related to self-drive rental arrangements, namely from Mandeep Singh to Sahil @ Aman Sahil Kamboj, thereafter to Yusuf Ali @ Lucky, and only thereafter it is alleged to have reached the present petitioner Harwinder Singh Sandhu and based on these allegations, the present FIR was registered at Police Station City Sangrur, District Sangrur against the petitioner.

3. Learned Counsel appearing on behalf of the petitioner contends that the present FIR has been registered based on an application moved by the complainant Avtar Singh alleging that he had voluntarily handed over the Scorpio Car bearing registration number PB-08E-0047 to the accused Mandeep Singh on a self-drive basis on 22.06.2025. It is contended that, as per the case of the prosecution itself, the vehicle changed multiple hands in the chain of business transactions relating to self-driving rental arrangements from Mandeep Singh to Sahil @ Aman Sahil Kamboj and thereafter to Yusuf Ali @ Lucky and then to the petitioner herein. He contends that the

aforesaid chain of events nowhere shows that the petitioner had in any way lured the complainant for the investment in question. In the absence of any link *inter se* between the petitioner and complainant, his participation in the case is unlikely.

4. Learned Counsel appearing on behalf of the respondent-State, however, contends that the petitioner-accused has formed a cartel and that, in the standard modus operandi adopted by the petitioner along with the other co-accused, they hire cars on rent from operators and thereafter usurp the same or cause them to go missing. It is contended that there are as many as 06 other FIRs, all in a similar fashion, where cars were taken on rent in self-drive mode, and thereafter, missing reports thereof have been lodged. He contends that such instances are not a mere coincidence and reflect an orchestrated crime run by the accused, wherein they either dismantle the vehicle or prepare new documents and sell the vehicle. It is contended that in crimes of such magnitude, the custodial interrogation of the petitioner would be required so that the entire nexus and all other people involved in the commission of the offence and in the chain of events can be identified and the vehicles be got recovered. It is contended that an FIR bearing No. 131 of 2025 for offences under Section 111 of BNS, 2023, i.e., organized crime, has also been registered against the petitioner herein. Hence, he is not just any other person in the chain of events, but is a part of a group that is actively involved in usurping the properties in such a manner.

5. I have heard learned Counsel appearing on behalf of the petitioner and have gone through the documents appended along with the present petition.

6. At the outset, the factum of six other cases having been registered against the petitioner in which the modus operandi is identical and that such detail had not been disclosed by the petitioner, notwithstanding the requirement to make such disclosure in the High Court Rules and Orders, reflects vastly on the petitioner's conduct. The petitioner thus attempted to secure an interim relief for himself by concealing essential information that was required to be disclosed. Further, in so far as the contention of the petitioner that there is no nexus and that he is only one person in the chain of events is concerned, I find that the very fact that all the persons including the petitioner are involved in multiple cases of identical nature shows that it is an organized crime which is being similarly operated by the petitioner as in other cases, hence, the absence of a direct nexus would thus not enure in favour of the petitioner herein. The cases of this nature and of such magnitude require custodial interrogation of the petitioner so as to bust the entire network and facilitate the recovery of the vehicles that have been misappropriated/usurped in such fashion.

Finding no merit, the present petition is dismissed.

(VINOD S. BHARDWAJ)
JUDGE

MAY 22, 2026
Vishal Sharma

Whether speaking/reasoned	:	Yes/No
Whether Reportable	:	Yes/No