

2026:PHHC:022879-DB



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

CRA-D-1502-2024 (O&M)
RESERVED ON:12.01.2026
DATE OF DECISION:12.02.2026
Uploaded on: 23.2.2026

KULDEEP SINGH ...APPELLANT(S)
VERSUS

**NATIONAL INVESTIGATION AGENCY THROUGH ITS BRANCH
HEAD, CHANDIGARH** ...RESPONDENT(S)

CRA-D-1504-2024

PARGAT SINGH ...APPELLANT(S)
VERSUS

**NATIONAL INVESTIGATION AGENCY THROUGH ITS BRANCH
HEAD, CHANDIGARH** ...RESPONDENT(S)

CRA-D-1489-2024

RUFAL ...APPELLANT(S)
VERSUS

**NATIONAL INVESTIGATION AGENCY THROUGH ITS BRANCH
HEAD, CHANDIGARH** ...RESPONDENT(S)

CRA-D-1543-2024 (O&M)

SUKHRAJ SINGH @ RAJU ...APPELLANT(S)
VERSUS

**NATIONAL INVESTIGATION AGENCY THROUGH ITS BRANCH
HEAD, CHANDIGARH** ...RESPONDENT(S)

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE N.S.SHEKHAWAT
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE H.S. GREWAL**

Present: Mr. Bhanu Partap Singh, Advocate
for the appellant(s) in
(CRA-D-1489, 1504, 1502-2024)

Mr. Tanheer Singh Bariana, Advocate
for the appellant in CRA-D-1543-2024.

Mr. Sukhdeep Singh Sandhu, NIA
Special Prosecutor for the respondent-NIA.

N.S. SHEKHAWAT, J.

1. This order shall dispose off afore-mentioned four appeals, whereby the appellants in all these appeals have prayed for grant of concession of bail in a trial arising out of FIR No.152 dated 19.10.2018 under Sections 124-A, 153A, 153B & 120-B IPC and registered at Police Station Sultanwind, Amritsar then re-registered as RC-19/2020/NIA/DLI dated 05.04.2020 under Sections 117, 122, 124A, 436, 153B, 120-B IPC under Sections 13, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (for short 'the UAPA') and under Section 25 of the Arms Act. Since all the appeals involve common questions of law and facts, the same are being disposed of simultaneously.

2. Initially, FIR No. 152 dated 19.10.2018, under Sections 124-A, 153-A, 153-B and 120-B IPC was registered at the Police Station Sultanwind, Amritsar with the allegations that on 19.10.2018, Amritsar Police had apprehended Sukhraj Singh @ Raju and Malkeet Singh @ Meetu on the spot, i.e. Kot Mit Singh Flyover, Amritsar, while they were hanging "*Khalistan Jindabad*" and "*Khalistan Referendum 2020*" cloth banners at the pillars of the flyover. During the course of investigation, the other accused, namely Bikramjit Singh @ Vicky, Manjit Singh @ Manga, Jatinder Singh @ Goldy, Harpreet Singh @ Happy, Gurwinder Singh @ Gurpreet Singh @ Gopi, Harmeet Singh @ Raju, Roofel @ Rufal @ Rahul Gill, Sukhmandar Singh @ Gopi and Kuldeep Singh @ Kuldeep Singh @ Keepa

were also arrested by Punjab Police on finding sufficient evidence against them. It was found that the accused had received funds from abroad, sent by the members of “Sikhs for Justice” (SFJ) and the said amount was used for spreading terrorist activities and other preparatory acts i.e. attempts to procure weapons for terror activities in India and to get arms training in Pakistan.

3. Ultimately, since the matter pertained to propagation of secessionist “Khalistan Referendum 2020” movement by affixing posters and banners of “Khalistan Jindabad” and “Khalistan Referendum 2020”, procurement of weapons, efforts for arms training in Pakistan, acts of violence in Punjab and other parts of the country; NIA registered the present case as RC-19/2020/NIA/DLI, dated 05.04.2020 under Sections 124-A, 153-A, 153-B and 120-B IPC and under Sections 17, 18 and 19 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (for short ‘the UAPA’) and took over the investigation in the present case. It requires mention that Punjab Police had already submitted a charge sheet on 16.04.2019 and also two supplementary charge-sheets on 10.07.2019 and 26.08.2019, prior to registration of the case by NIA. Now, the NIA has also filed charge-sheets before the competent court of law and the trial is pending before the Special Judge, NIA, SAS Nagar (Mohali), Punjab.

Submissions in CRA-1502-2024 (Kuldeep Singh Vs NIA)

4. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the appellant argued that the appellant was not named in the FIR and even during the course of investigation, no incriminating evidence could be collected against him. Still further Manjit Singh alias Manga, who is the real brother of the appellant,

has been granted the concession of regular bail by this court vide order dated

19.07.2024 (Annexure A-2). Learned counsel further argued that in the present case, after the presentation of challan, charge has been ordered to be framed by the trial Court on 09.11.2021. However, the trial Court has been able to record the statements of only 31 prosecution witnesses and 86 prosecution witnesses are yet to be examined by the trial court. Still further, the appellant was arrested in the present case on 26.11.2018 and there are no allegations that he had funded any terrorists or terror activities. Even no arms and ammunitions have been recovered from the present appellant. He further contended that, Hon'ble the Supreme Court has held in catena of judgments, that long custody of an accused, even in the cases of UAPA would be a good ground to entitle him to grant of bail by invoking Article 21 of the Constitution of India. Thus, the appellant may be ordered to be released on bail.

5. On the other hand, learned counsel appearing on behalf of respondent-NIA submitted that the investigation had established that the appellant was a member of terrorist gang formed by US-based Gurpatwant Singh Pannu for carrying out illegal activities and terrorist acts in India. The appellant was in direct contact with Nihal Singh, who had emerged as kingpin of conspiracy hatched in the present case. On the directions of Nihal Singh, the appellant had pasted posters of "Khalistan Referendum 2020" at various public places in Patiala, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, and many other places in Punjab and Red Fort of Delhi along with Bikramjit Singh @ Vicky. Even the said fact has been proved by the CDR analysis of Kuldeep Singh @ Keepa, appellant and Bikramjit Singh @ Vicky. Bikramjit Singh @ Vicky was recruited to the terrorist gang by the appellant and both of them were

and 402 of the IPC, and Section 25 of the Arms Act, Police Station, Passian, District Patiala. The appellant received approximately Rs.1,22,550/- in his name from “SFJ’s proxies in South Africa in the year 2017-18. Out of these funds, an amount of Rs.72,550/- was sent by the same entities to Sukhraj Singh, Harmeet Singh and Pargat Singh, all co-accused, indicating that they were all members of the same terrorist gang, working for SFJ (Sikhs for Justice). Still further, he also received funds in the accounts of his relatives and acquaintances. He received a sum of Rs.50,000/- in the name of one Kamaljit Singh through MTSS channels, which was sent by Tauseef Ahamed, a Pakistani national through an Indian national, based in UAE. Additionally, Manjit Singh had also received a sum of rupees 17,000/- from a Pakistani National in the same manner. Even Harmeet Singh @ Raju had received a sum of Rs1,00,000/- in the same manner. Learned counsel next contends that it was established during investigation that the appellant was in direct contact with Nihal Singh @ Fatih Singh of ‘SFJ’ through mobile phone of the appellant. Even charge has been framed against the appellant under Sections 117, 120-B and 436 of IPC and Sections 13, 17, 18, 19 and 20 of the UAPA.

6. Learned counsel for respondent further argued that from the production cum seizure memo of six transaction receipts through which the appellant received an amount of Rs.72,500/- via Muthoot Finance and it also showed that he had received a sum of Rs.50,000/- from an Indian National based in Dubai. Even he had CDR connectivity with Bikramjit Singh @ Vicky and other accused in the present case. Apart from that, the CDR analysis of the appellant established that he and Bikramjit Singh @ Vicky

had visited Patiala on several occasions for their court hearings and had

pasted Khalistani posters at public places. Even the petitioner was in touch with the other accused as well. The statement of protected witness X6 has been already registered, which sufficiently proves the involvement of the appellant in the crime.

Submission in CRA-D-1489-2024 (Rufal Vs NIA)

7. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the appellant has vehemently argued that the appellant was not initially named in the FIR and no incriminating recovery has been effected from him so far. The appellant was arrested in the present case 23.11.2018 and no purpose will be served by keeping him behind bars. Learned counsel further contends that even charge-sheet has been presented against him. He belongs to Christian community and had nothing to do with the “Khalistani Referendum 2020” and is not involved in any other crime.

8. On the other hand, learned counsel appearing on behalf of NIA, respondent submits that the appellant was a member of a terrorist gang “Sikhs for Justice”, which was formed on the directions of Gurpatwant Singh Pannu for carrying out unlawful activities or the terrorist acts. The appellant was part of a larger conspiracy to carry out terrorist acts for executing target killings, aimed to disrupt peace and for creation of a separate State “Khalistan”. Even all the accused in the present case were members of a terrorist gang. As per the investigation, the appellant was involved with Sukhmandar Singh and was involved in planning and conspiracy for killing a Delhi-based lady, namely, Paramjit Kaur, which could not be executed. One .32 bore country-made pistol along with four live cartridges were recovered from Rufal, which was bought by

the appellant, incriminating photographs of weapon were recovered, which indicated his inclination towards violence and weapons. It was also found from the CDR analysis that he was in touch with Sukhmandar Singh and Harmeet Singh @ Raju. Learned Counsel also submitted that in case the appellant is released on bail, he would run away from the process of law and may also threaten the witnesses.

Submissions in CRA-D-1504-2024 (Pargat Singh Vs NIA)

9. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the appellant vehemently argued that he was arrested on 22.06.2020 and is in custody since then. Neither he was named in the FIR initially, nor any other incriminating material was collected against him during the course of investigation. He further contends that co-accused Manjit Singh @ Manga has already been granted the concession of bail by this court vide order dated 19.07.2024 (Annexure A-2). Even the appellant had never funded any terrorist or violent activity and no incriminating material either in the forms of arms and ammunition or any other such material has been recovered from the appellant. Learned counsel further submits that the long custody of the appellant even in a UAPA case would itself entitle him to grant of bail by invoking Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

10. On the other hand, learned counsel appearing on behalf of NIA, respondent submits that during investigation, it was revealed that the appellant was member of a terrorist gang "Sikhs for Justice" and he was in direct contact with Nihal Singh alias Fateh Singh, who was the kingpin of the conspiracy hatched in the present case, which was aimed at disrupting the peace in the State of Punjab for creation of separate Sikh State,

collect the stencils of “Khalistan Jindabad Referendum 2020” from a location shared by Nihal Singh. Sukhraj Singh collected the same and made impressions of “Khalistan Jindabad Referendum 2020” at various places in Amritsar. The investigation also established that the appellant himself made impressions of “Khalistan Jindabad Referendum 2020” on the walls of the government schools and water-works at village Tarmala. He also clicked the pictures and recorded the video of impressions and sent it to SFJ operatives. In lieu of this unlawful activity, he received Rs.6000/- through SFJ operatives in South Africa. Now, charges have been framed against him under Sections 117, 120-B, 124-A and 436 of the IPC, and Sections 13, 17, 19 and 20 of UAPA on 09.12.2021. Even the appellant had received a sum of Rs.3,000/- from Archary Union, resident of South Africa on 27.02.2018 and also received a sum of Rs.3000/- again on 15.01.2018. Even the statements of X-3, X-7 and X-12 (protected witnesses) were recorded and they had highlighted the involvement of the appellant in the crime.

Submissions in CRA-D-1543-2024 (Sukhraj Singh alias Raju Vs. NIA)

11. Learned counsel for the appellant vehemently argued that the appellant was arrested in the present case on 23.10.2018. He further submitted that the appellant was never involved in any other criminal activity and no recovery was effected from him. It has been wrongly alleged that the appellant had received a sum of Rs.798/- through different sources. Still further, he was in custody for almost 8 years and this itself was a ground for granting concession of bail as the trial is progressing at snail's pace.

12. On the other hand, learned counsel appearing on behalf of NIA - respondent vehemently argued that during the course of trial, the statements

of X-5, X-6 and X-8 witnesses were recorded and their statements *prima facie* indicated the involvement of the appellants in the crime. Even Sukhraj Singh, appellant, was recruited to a terrorist gang by Pargat Singh, who introduced him with SFJ/Nihal Singh, a close associate of Gurpatwant Singh Pannu and was in the process of hanging cloth banners with "Khalistan Jindabad" and "Khalistan Referendum 2020", written on them at the pillars of Kot Mit Singh Flyover, Amritsar. Apart from that, the appellant carried out a number of unlawful activities including painting Khalistan slogans at public places and burning liquor shops with Bikramjit Singh @ Vicky and received funds from abroad via MTSS and also received funds in the bank accounts of his acquaintances. Even the scrutiny of call detail records was conducted by NIA, which specifically showed his proximity with other accused in the present case.

13. We have heard the submissions made by learned counsel for the parties and perused the records carefully.

14. In the cases in hand, learned counsel for both the parties have referred to Section 43-D (5) of the NIA Act and the relevant extract of the same has been reproduced below.

“Notwithstanding anything contained in the Code, no person accused of an offence punishable under Chapters IV and VI of this Act shall, if in custody, be released on bail or on his own bond unless the Public Prosecutor has been given an opportunity of being heard on the application for such release. Provided that such accused person shall not be released on bail or on his own bond if the Court, on a perusal of the case diary or the report made under section 173 of the Code is of the opinion that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the accusation against such person is *prima facie* true.”

15. While interpreting the provisions of Section 43-D(5) of the UAPA in *SLP (Crl.) No.10047 of 2023 titled as 'Gurwinder Singh Vs. State of Punjab and another'* Hon'ble the Supreme Court held as follows:-

16. *The source of the power to grant bail in respect of non-bailable offences punishable with death or life imprisonment emanates from Section 439 CrPC. It can be noticed that Section 43D(5) of the UAP Act modifies the application of the general bail provisions in respect of offences punishable under Chapter IV and Chapter VI of the UAP Act.*

17. *A bare reading of Sub-section (5) of Section 43D shows that apart from the fact that Sub-section (5) bars a Special Court from releasing an accused on bail without affording the Public Prosecutor an opportunity of being heard on the application seeking release of an accused on bail, the proviso to Sub-section (5) of Section 43D puts a complete embargo on the powers of the Special Court to release an accused on bail. It lays down that if the Court, 'on perusal of the case diary or the report made under Section 173 of the Code of Criminal Procedure', is of the opinion that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the accusation, against such person, as regards commission of offence or offences under Chapter IV and/or Chapter VI of the UAP Act is prima facie true, such accused person shall not be released on bail or on his own bond. It is interesting to note that there is no analogous provision traceable in any other statute to the one found in Section 43D(5) of the UAP Act. In that sense, the language of bail limitation adopted therein remains unique to the UAP Act.*

18. *The conventional idea in bail jurisprudence vis-à-vis ordinary penal offences that the discretion of Courts must tilt in favour of the oft-quoted phrase - 'bail is the rule, jail is the exception' – unless circumstances justify otherwise - does not find any place while dealing with bail applications under UAP Act. The 'exercise' of the general power to grant bail under the*

UAP Act is severely restrictive in scope. The form of the words used in proviso to Section 43D (5)– ‘shall not be released’ in contrast with the form of the words as found in Section 437(1) CrPC - ‘may be released’– suggests the intention of the Legislature to make bail, the exception and jail, the rule.

19. *The courts are, therefore, burdened with a sensitive task on hand. In dealing with bail applications under UAP Act, the courts are merely examining if there is justification to reject bail. The ‘justifications’ must be searched from the case diary and the final report submitted before the Special Court. The legislature has prescribed a low, ‘prima facie’ standard, as a measure of the degree of satisfaction, to be recorded by Court when scrutinising the justifications [materials on record]. This standard can be contrasted with the standard of ‘strong suspicion’, which is used by Courts while hearing applications for ‘discharge’. In fact, the Supreme Court in Zahoor Ali Watali 2 (2019) 5 SCC has noticed this difference, where it said:*

“In any case, the degree of satisfaction to be recorded by the Court for opining that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the accusation against the accused is prima facie true, is lighter than the degree of satisfaction to be recorded for considering a discharge application or framing of charges in relation to offences under the 1967 Act.”

20. *In this background, the test for rejection of bail is quite plain. Bail must be rejected as a ‘rule’, if after hearing the public prosecutor and after perusing the final report or Case Diary, the Court arrives at a conclusion that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the accusations are prima facie true. It is only if the test for rejection of bail is not satisfied – that the Courts would proceed to decide the bail application in accordance with the ‘tripod test’ (flight risk, influencing witnesses, tampering with evidence). This position is made clear by Sub-section (6) of Section 43D, which lays down that the restrictions, on granting of bail specified in Sub-section (5), are*

in addition to the restrictions under the Code of Criminal Procedure or any other law for the time being in force on grant of bail.

21. *On a textual reading of Section 43 D(5) UAP Act, the inquiry that a bail court must undertake while deciding bail applications under the UAP Act can be summarised in the form of a twin-prong test :*

1) Whether the test for rejection of the bail is satisfied?

1.1 Examine if, prima facie, the alleged ‘accusations’ make out an offence under Chapter IV or VI of the UAP Act

1.2 Such examination should be limited to case diary and final report submitted under Section 173 CrPC;

2) Whether the accused deserves to be enlarged on bail in light of the general principles relating to grant of bail under Section 439 CrPC (‘tripod test’)?

On a consideration of various factors such as nature of offence, length of punishment (if convicted), age, character, status of accused etc., the Courts must ask itself :

2.1 Whether the accused is a flight risk?

2.2. Whether there is apprehension of the accused tampering with the evidence?

2.3 Whether there is apprehension of accused influencing witnesses?

22. *The question of entering the ‘second test’ of the inquiry will not arise if the ‘first test’ is satisfied. And merely because the first test is satisfied, that does not mean however that the accused is automatically entitled to bail. The accused will have to show that he successfully passes the ‘tripod test’.*

Test for Rejection of Bail: Guidelines as laid down by Supreme Court in Watali’s Case

23. *In the previous section, based on a textual reading, we have discussed the broad inquiry which Courts seized of bail applications under 14 Section 43D(5) UAP Act r/w Section 439 CrPC must indulge*

in. Setting out the framework of the law seems rather easy, yet the application of it, presents its own complexities. For greater clarity in the application of the test set out above, it would be helpful to seek guidance from binding precedents. In this regard, we need to look no further than Watali's case which has laid down elaborate guidelines on the approach that Courts must partake in, in their application of the bail limitations under the UAP Act. On a perusal of paragraphs 23 to 29 and 32, the following 8-point propositions emerge and they are summarised as follows:

Meaning of 'Prima facie true' [para 23]: *On the face of it, the materials must show the complicity of the accused in commission of the offence. The materials/evidence must be good and sufficient to establish a given fact or chain of facts constituting the stated offence, unless rebutted or contradicted by other evidence.*

Degree of Satisfaction at Pre-Chargesheet, Post Chargesheet and Post Charges – Compared [para 23]: *Once charges are framed, it would be safe to assume that a very strong suspicion was founded upon the materials before the Court, which prompted the Court to form a presumptive opinion as to the existence of the factual ingredients constituting the offence alleged against the accused, to justify the framing of charge. In that situation, the accused may have to undertake an arduous task to satisfy the Court that despite the framing of charge, the materials presented along with the chargesheet (report under Section 173 CrPC), do not make out reasonable grounds for believing that the accusation against him is prima facie true. Similar opinion is required to be formed by the Court whilst considering the prayer for bail, made after filing of the first report made under Section 173 of the Code, as in the present case.*

Reasoning, necessary but no detailed evaluation of evidence [para 24]:

The exercise to be undertaken by the Court at this stage--of giving reasons for grant or non-grant of bail--is markedly different from discussing merits or demerits of the evidence. The elaborate

examination or dissection of the evidence is not required to be done at this stage.

•Record a finding on broad probabilities, not based on proof beyond doubt [para 24]: *“The Court is merely expected to record a finding on the basis of broad probabilities regarding the involvement of the accused in the commission of the stated offence or otherwise.”*

•Duration of the limitation under Section 43D(5) [para 26]: *The special provision, Section 43-D of the 1967 Act, applies right from the stage of registration of FIR for the offences under Chapters IV and VI of the 1967 Act until the conclusion of the trial thereof.*

Material on record must be analysed as a ‘whole’; no piecemeal analysis [para 27]: *The totality of the material gathered by the investigating agency and presented along with the report and including the case diary, is required to be reckoned and not by analysing individual pieces of evidence or circumstance.*

Contents of documents to be presumed as true [para 27]: *The Court must look at the contents of the document and take such document into account as it is.*

Admissibility of documents relied upon by Prosecution cannot be questioned [para 27]: *The materials/evidence collected by the investigation agency in support of the accusation against the accused in the first information report must prevail until contradicted and overcome or disproved by other evidence.....In any case, the question of discarding the document at this stage, on the ground of being inadmissible in evidence, is not permissible.”*

16. Even still further, in the matter of ***Keljroesatip Tep and Ors Vs. National Investigation Agency (2023) 6 SCC 58***, Hon’ble the Supreme Court held as follows:

“while dealing with the bail petition filed by the accused against whom offences under chapter IV and VI of UAPA have been made, the court has to consider as to wheterh there are reasonable grounds for believing that the accusation against the

accused is prima facie true. The bench also observed that distinction between the words “not guilty” as used in TADA, MCOCA and NDPS Act as against the words “prima facie” in the UAPA as held in Watali’s Caste (supra) to state that a degree of satisfaction required in the case of “not guilty” is much stronger than the satisfaction required in a case where the words used are “prima facie”.

17. Now, we would proceed to examine the facts of the present case in the light of the above stated principles laid down by the Hon’ble Supreme Court, which have to be kept in mind by the Courts while deciding the bail applications in such cases.

18. From the record, it is apparent that on 19.10.2018, Sukhraj Singh @ Raju, appellant, and his co-accused Malkiat Singh alias Meetu were arrested by Punjab Police while they were putting cloth banners of “Khalistan Zindabad” and “Khalistan Referendum 2020” at the pillars of Kot Meet Singh Flyover, Amritsar and the FIR was registered against them under Sections 124-A, 153-A, 153-B and 120-B IPC.

19. During the course of investigation by Punjab Police, it was found that the other accused, namely Bikramjit Singh @ Vicky, Manjit Singh @ Manga, Jatinder Singh @ Goldy, Harpreet Singh @ Happy, Gurwinder Singh @ Gurpreet Singh @ Gopi, Harmeet Singh @ Raju, Roofel @ Rufal @ Rahul Gill, Sukhmandar Singh @ Gopi and Kuldeep Singh @ Kuldeep Singh @ Keepa were also involved in the present case. Later on, in compliance of the Government of India order dated 04.04.2020, the NIA again registered the present FIR on 05.04.2020 and took over the investigation of the present case. During the process of investigation, sufficient incriminating evidence was collected to show that all the

appellants and their co-accused were members of a terrorist gang “Sikhs for Justice”, which was formed by a notified terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannu.

20. Even the appellants and their co-accused had created Facebook pages and YouTube channels containing Khalistan related materials to recruit the youth, particularly of Punjab State, so that they may be involved in various terrorist activities in different parts of Punjab, Delhi and other parts of the country.

21. Even from the arguments raised by learned counsel for the parties, it was apparent that sufficient evidence had been collected by Punjab Police as well as NIA, which revealed the involvement of the appellants in a terrorist gang and different roles were assigned to them.

22. Further, the analysis of call detail records clearly showed that they were constantly in touch with each other, and the funds were received from Pakistan and other countries from the entities, which had close relations with the banned terrorist organization “Sikhs for Justice”. Even, the investigating agency had collected material which showed transfer of funds in the accounts of the appellants and their relatives/friends. Thus, the material on record clearly indicated the complicity of all the appellants and they had knowingly facilitated the commission of a preparatory act towards the commission of terrorist act under Section 18 of the UAPA.

23. Apart from that, in the present case, certain protected witnesses are yet to be examined. In case the appellants are ordered to be released on bail, they may influence the witnesses and may also tamper with the prosecution evidence.

24. As a result of the above discussion, we find no merit in all the aforementioned cases filed by the appellants and accordingly, all the appeals are ordered to be dismissed.

25. Nothing stated herein shall be construed as an expression of opinion on the merits of the cases in hand and the observations have been made only for the limited purpose of disposal of the bail matters. The trial court shall decide the trial on the basis of the evidence led by both the sides before the court.

26. Since the appellants are in custody for a long period, the trial Court is directed to expedite the trial and conclude the same preferably within a period of 18 months from the date of receipt of certified copy of this order.

27. A copy of this order be sent to the concerned trial Court for compliance of the same.

(N.S.SHEKHAWAT)
JUDGE

(H.S. GREWAL)
JUDGE

12.02.2026
mks

Whether Speaking/Reasoned: YES / NO
Whether Reportable: YES / NO