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118 IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

CRM-M-59441-2025
Date of Decision: 06.04.2026

Money Kalra

..... Petitioner

Versus

Union of India

.....Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE RAJESH BHARDWAJ

Present: Mr. Premjit Singh Hundal, Senior Advocate with
Mr. Gursahib Singh Hundal, Advocate and
Mr. Ajay Kumar, Advocate and
Mr. Rajat Kumar Bharti, Advocate,
for the petitioners.

Mr. Sourabh Goel, Special Public Prosecutor
for NCB with
Ms. Samridhi Jain, Advocate,
Ms. Reviet Malhotra, Advocate,
Ms. Geetika Sharma, Advocate,
Ms. Anju Bansal, Advocate,
Ms. Himanshi, Advocate and
Ms. Deify, Advocate.

Rajesh Bhardwaj, J.

1. Prayer in the present petition is for grant of regular bail to the petitioner in a case NCB Crime No.79 dated 15.11.2022, registered under Sections 8, 8-A, 18, 21, 23, 25, 27-A, 27-B, 28, 29, 60 & 62 of NDPS Act, 1985, at Police Station NCB Chandigarh.

2. Succinctly facts of the case are that the complaint in the present case was registered on the basis of secret information. The NCB, Chandigarh, recovered 20.326 kgs of heroin from the conscious possession of Sandeep Singh @ Deepu. During investigation, he disclosed that he was working for Akshay Chhabra, who is the mastermind of a heroin trafficking gang operating in Ludhiana and across Punjab on a large scale. He further



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disclosed that the seized contraband had been ordered by Akshay Chhabra, who had directed him to collect the same. During the investigation, complicity of the petitioner was surfaced and supplementary complaint dated 22.12.2023 was filed. It was found that it was a highly organized transnational drug syndicate. It was also found during the investigation that the petitioner is the key operative in a trade-based money laundering module facilitating *hawala* transaction, drug proceeds and financial remittances for narcotic consignments destined for Pakistan via Dubai-based channels. The petitioner was arrested on 22.07.2023. The petitioners approached the Court of learned Judge, Special Court, Ludhiana praying for grant of regular bail. However, after hearing both the sides, the learned Court finding no merit in the same, dismissed the bail application filed by the petitioner vide order dated 30.05.2024. Earlier also the petitioner approached this Court by way of filing CRM-M-54823-2024 and CRM-M-39766-2024, however, the same were dismissed vide orders dated 19.11.2024 and 01.05.2025, respectively. Hence, the petitioner is before this Court again praying for grant of regular bail by way of filing the present third petition.

3. Learned Senior Counsel for the petitioner has vehemently contended that the petitioner has been falsely implicated in the present case. It is submitted that in the original complaint, the petitioner was neither named nor any role or involvement was attributed to him. He contends that the petitioner has been arrayed as an accused on the basis of the disclosure statement of the co-accused, namely, Akshay Kumar Chhabra, wherein, no direct evidence has been disclosed against the petitioner. He submits that



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even otherwise, disclosure statement of the co-accused is not even an admissible evidence. He contends that no recovery has been effected from the petitioner. He submits that the petitioner is behind the bars since 22.07.2023, however, till date the prosecution has not been able to conclude the prosecution evidence and thus, the fundamental right of the petitioner of speedy trial is miserably defeated. He further submits that the petitioner is critically ill and is not getting adequate and proper diet as prescribed by the doctors. He, thus, submits that in the overall facts and circumstances of the present case, the petitioners deserve to be granted regular bail.

4. *Per contra*, learned counsel for NCB has vehemently opposed the submissions made by learned counsel for the petitioner. He has submitted that only 04 witnesses, out of total 99 prosecution witnesses remain to be examined, out of them, cross-examination of Investigating Officer Paramjeet Singh is going on. He has drawn the attention of this Court to the status report dated 01.02.2026 and has submitted that in all there are 22 accused in the present case and all are behind the bars. He submits that the co-accused, Akshay Kumar Chhabra, was the kingpin of the drug trafficking network, while the petitioner was an expert in trade-based money laundering, allegedly responsible for sending proceeds of the drug trade out of India and handling the drug money along with his father, Surinder Kalra. It is contended that the accused persons established various businesses and engaged with multiple entities merely on paper, without any actual sale or purchase of goods, with the sole intent of laundering and rotating the proceeds of crime generated from the drug trafficking business.

He has further submitted that till dated 39.936 Kgs of heroin, 0.557 kgs of



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opium, 23.645 kgs of caffeine, 04 bottles of HCL, 01 bottle of Chemical, 31 live bullets and one magazine have been recovered, and two clandestine laboratories/heroin processing hideouts of the group have also been busted and 54 properties, 51 bank accounts, and 24 vehicles have been frozen. It is further contended that the petitioner was actively involved in carrying out *hawala* transactions of drug money for the kingpin, namely, Akshay Chhabra. He contends that the petitioner's parents, who were also part of the syndicate, have already fled to Dubai, and that there is a high risk of the petitioner absconding if he is granted bail. It is contended that the petitioner is involved in one more case of the similar nature. He has placed on record the custody certificates of the petitioners. He, thus, submits that in the facts and circumstances of the present case, no case for grant of regular bail is made out.

5. After hearing learned counsel for the parties and perusing the record, it is deciphered that the allegations against the petitioner pertain to his involvement in a highly organized transnational drug trafficking syndicate, with specific attribution of his role in facilitating trade-based money laundering and *hawala* transactions. The allegations against the petitioner are not only serious but also *prima facie* strike at the very core of national security and public order. Recovery of approximately 40 kgs of heroin, indicating commercial-scale trafficking, along with evidence of a systematic pattern of narcotics smuggling, has been made in the present case. The apprehension expressed by the prosecution regarding the petitioner being a flight risk cannot be said to be unfounded, particularly in view of the conduct of his family members. Moreover, the trial is at an

advanced stage, with only a few prosecution witnesses remain to be examined. In such circumstances, no ground is made out to extend the concession of bail to the petitioner.

6. In view of the quantity of narcotics recovered, the seriousness of the allegations, the petitioner’s role in the financial operations of the syndicate, the transnational nature of the crime, and its serious implications for national security, this Court does not consider it appropriate to grant bail to the petitioner.

7. Nothing said herein shall be treated as an expression of opinion on the merits of the case.

06.04.2026		(RAJESH BHARDWAJ)
sharmila		JUDGE
	Whether Speaking/Reasoned	: Yes/No
	Whether Reportable	: Yes/No