IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT CHANDIGARH

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CRM-M-58745-2025 (O&M)
Date of decision: 07.04.2026

MANPREET SINGH ......Petitioner

VERSUS

STATE OF PUNJAB ....Respondent

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

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Present: - Mr. Rajnish Gupta, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Dr. (Ms.) Savi Nagpal, Asst. A.G. Punjab.

Mr. Dhiraj Jindal, Advocate for the complainant.

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VINOD S. BHARDWAJ, J. (Oral)

CRM-15009-2026

Application is allowed as prayed for and Annexures P-7 to P-10 are taken on record.

CRM-M-58745-2025

The present first petition has been filed under Section 482 of BNSS, 2023 seeking grant of anticipatory bail to the petitioner in case bearing FIR No. 222 dated 17.09.2025 registered under Section 420 IPC and 13 of Punjab Travel Professionals (regulations) Act, 2014 at Police Station, Lehra, District Sangrur.

2. The FIR in the present case has been registered on the complaint of one Mohan Singh son of Hardam Singh, resident of Jaloor, Tehsil Lehra, District Sangrur which reads thus:-

> *"It is submitted that I, Mohan Singh, son of Hardam Singh, resident of Jaloor, Tehsil Lehra, District Sangrur, am a resident of the said village. My in-laws are residents of Bhutal Kalan. My brother Balwinder Singh wanted to go abroad. I met the above-named accused as he was from my in-laws' village. When he came to know that my brother wanted to go abroad, he contacted me and said that he would send my brother to America through "danki" (illegal route). I and my brother believed him and agreed.*
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> *Then around April 2024, the said person came to my house and said that the expenditure would be Rs. 40 lakhs, and that we should arrange the money. Then on 06/05/2024, this person came to our house, and we gave him Rs. 6 lakhs in cash. He said that first he would send Balwinder Singh to El Salvador and then from the Mexico border directly to America. He took this money from us for that purpose. Then on 20/05/2024, he again said that more money was required for expenses. Thereafter, on 24/05/2024, we deposited Rs.13 lakhs into the account of Manpreet Singh. They said that your visa would come soon and took my brother's passport. After that, we kept waiting for the response, expecting that the visa would come soon.*
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> *When we later spoke to them, they started making excuses and said that the visa had been applied for, but due to elections in America, the situation was strict and they could not send him right now. They assured us that they would soon get the work done. We believed them and remained silent. Months passed by, and then in November 2024, they told us that the work was done. They said that your visa had come and also gave us a color photocopy of the visa, saying that the original visa would*

be given when you are about to leave and after paying the remaining amount (copy attached).

At that time, they also returned our passport so that we could trust them. At that time, they took another Rs. 3 lakhs from us, saying we should arrange the remaining money. After that, we started arranging the balance amount. Later, we came to know that these persons had quarreled with someone earlier also. We held panchayats several times and told them that they had cheated us and asked for our money back, but they kept delaying and saying that due to Trump's government, the situation had become strict and to wait a little more.

When we got the visa checked, it was found to be fake. When we contacted them, they said that we were mistaken and the visa was genuine. Even then, we believed them and, fearing people's taunts, remained silent. But after some time, we became sure that the visa was fake. Now we have no hope from them and are certain that they have cheated us.

Therefore, it is requested that a case be registered against these two brothers, for cheating us, and action be taken under Sections 318(4), 316(2), and 61 BNS, and they be punished accordingly."

3. Learned Counsel appearing on behalf of the petitioner contends that the present FIR is a counter blast which has been lodged against the petitioner on account of malicious reasons. He contends that as a matter of fact, the petitioner had been allured by one Satgur Singh son of Mahinder Singh-brother-in-law of complainant Mohan Singh, Mohan Singh himself and one Ajay Kumar Rangra for getting a job as Driver in the Police Department and on the said pretext, they obtained a sum of Rs. 20,00,000/- from him. They also supplied a final list of Drivers (Constable) in District Cadre wherein the name of the petitioner was shown against registration No.90034628. However, when it transpired to the petitioner that the

complainant in connivance with other accused, had duped him, he submitted a complaint to Senior Superintendent of Police, Sangrur on 26.03.2025 pointing out that the aforesaid sum of Rs. 20,00,000/- had been paid to them out of which Rs. 13,00,000/- had been returned and Rs.07 lakhs had been illegally retained by them. He contends that after submission of the said complaint, a compromise was later arrived at between Manpreet Singh and Satgur Singh (brother-in-law of the complainant herein) wherein Satgur Singh and Ajay Kumar Rangra agreed to pay a sum of Rs. 11,50,000/- which included the principal outstanding amount of Rs. 7 lakhs and the interest thereupon in installments vide Cheque No. 749183 PNB Branch Hamirpur Himachal dated 7th May, 2025, cheque No. 749186 PNB Bank Branch Hamirpur Himachal dated 6th August, 2025 and cheque No. 749185 PNB Branch Hamirpur Himachal dated 10th November, 2025 and the said cheques were handed over by Satgur Singh to the petitioner herein on 10.04.2025 in the presence of eminent persons of society. The said cheques were, however, dishonoured on presentation viz. which the civil proceedings have already been initiated. He contends that in order to harass the petitioner, the aforesaid complaint was submitted by Mohan Singh (brother-in-law of Satgur Singh) to pressurize and to withdraw the proceedings that had been initiated against Satgur Singh. He further submits that no other criminal case has been registered against the petitioner.

4. Counsel for the respondent-State on the other hand reiterates the submissions made in the complaint. However, Counsel does not dispute the claim made by the petitioner.

5. Counsel for the complainant reiterates the allegations that have been leveled in the FIR and contends that the complainant has got no

concern with the settlement *inter se* between the petitioner and Satgur Singh. He further contends that even though the compromise was stated to have been executed between the parties, however, there is no reference of the instant FIR in the aforesaid compromise.

6. Counsel for the petitioner, however, contends that it is evident from a perusal of the document that the said compromise was executed on 10.04.2025 and the FIR in the present case had been registered after a period of about 05 months on 17.09.2025, hence, there was no occasion for mentioning of the present FIR in the said compromise and also there was no occasion for the petitioner to know that any complaint had already been submitted by the complainant to the Police party.

7. I have heard learned Counsel appearing on behalf of the respective parties and taking into consideration the arguable issues with respect to the allegations levelled by the complainant and also the version put-forth by the petitioner herein coupled with clean antecedents of the petitioner, the present petition is allowed and the petitioner is directed to join investigation as and when required by the Investigating Agency. In the event of petitioner joining investigation, he shall be admitted to interim bail by the arresting officer/investigating officer on furnishing of bail bonds by him to the satisfaction of the arresting officer/investigating officer. The petitioner shall also abide by the conditions as specified under Section 482 of the BNSS, 2023.

(VINOD S. BHARDWAJ)
JUDGE

07.04.2026
Vishal Sharma

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