



In the High Court of Punjab and Haryana, at Chandigarh

Criminal Misc. No. M-66719 of 2025

Date of Decision: 03.02.2026

Ranjit Singh alias Karela

... Petitioner(s)

Versus

State of Punjab

... Respondent(s)

CORAM: Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Partap Singh.

Present: Ms. Samanpreet Kaur and Mr. Harmanpreet Singh, Advocates
for the petitioner(s).

Mr. I.P.S.Sabharwal, Deputy Advocate General,
Punjab, for the respondent.

Surya Partap Singh, J.

1. For the commission of offence punishable under Sections 21, 27(a) and 29 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, hereinafter being referred to as “the NDPS Act” only, the FIR No. 221 dated 10.09.2025 has been lodged in Police Station Jandiala, District Amritsar Rural, Punjab. This is first petition for bail, filed by the petitioner, under Section 483 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, hereinafter being referred to as “BNSS” only.

2. Briefly stating the facts emerging from record are that the above mentioned FIR came into being in a case of chance recovery, when a police party headed by SI Naresh Kumar intercepted a young person on the basis of suspicion. As per prosecution, when search of the above mentioned person was carried out, he was found in possession of 09 grams of heroin.

recovery, the usual formalities with regard to enquiry of the name of aforesaid person, seizure of recovered contraband, lodging of FIR and arrest of accused were undertaken and the investigation started. As per prosecution, during the course of investigation, the above-named person, namely Paramjit Singh, was interrogated, who during the course of interrogation suffered a disclosure statement, wherein he nominated the present petitioner.

4. Notice of motion.

5. Since advance notice has already been served upon the State, Mr.I.P.S.Sabharwal, Deputy Advocate General, Punjab accepts notice on behalf of respondent-State. Hence, service of notice upon the State is hereby dispensed with. The learned State Counsel has filed custody certificate of the petitioner. The same be taken on record.

6. However, no formal reply has been filed by the State. The learned State counsel has opted to oppose the present petition orally.

7. Heard.

8. The record has been perused carefully.

9. A perusal of the record shows that there are several factors which are required to be taken into consideration at this stage. Those factors are:-

- i) that the petitioner is already in custody for a period of almost more than four months;
- ii) that nothing has been recovered from the possession of petitioner, and the above mentioned co-accused has been simply implicated on the basis of disclosure statement

suffered by the co-accused, which was recorded when the above said co-accused was already in police custody. Thus, there is a big question mark with regard to credibility and admissibility of above mentioned disclosure statement;

- iii) that the quantity of contraband recovered from the possession of co-accused comes within the ambit of non-commercial quantity. In fact the same is just above the highest threshold meant for small quantity, and only a friction of lower limit fixed for commercial quantity of heroin;
- iv) that trial of the case is not likely to be concluded in near future;
- v) that detention of petitioner in judicial lockup is not likely to serve any purpose;
- vi) that there is nothing on record to show that if released on bail, the petitioner may tamper with the evidence or influence the witnesses; and
- vii) that there is nothing on record to show that if released on bail, the petitioner will not participate/cooperate in the trial.

10. With regard to the legal aspect involved in the instant case, it is relevant to mention that the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of Dataram v. State of Uttar Pradesh and Another(2018) 3 Supreme Court Cases 22, has observed that "a fundamental postulate of criminal jurisprudence is the

presumption of innocence, meaning thereby that a person is believed to be innocent until found guilty. However, there are instances in our criminal law where a reverse onus has been placed on an accused with regard to some specific offences but that is another matter and does not detract from the fundamental postulate in respect of other offences. Yet another important facet of our criminal jurisprudence is that the grant of bail is the general rule and putting a person in jail or in a prison or in a correction home (whichever expression one may wish to use) is an exception. Unfortunately, some of these basic principles appear to have been lost sight of with the result that more and more persons are being incarcerated and for longer periods. This does not do any good to our criminal jurisprudence or to our society. There is no doubt that the grant or denial of bail is entirely the discretion of the judge considering a case but even so, the exercise of judicial discretion has been circumscribed by a large number of decisions rendered by this Court and by every High Court in the country. Yet, occasionally there is a necessity to introspect whether denying bail to an accused person is the right thing to do on the facts and in the circumstances of a case.”

11. The principles laid down by the Hon’ble the Supreme Court of India in the case of *Satender Kumar Antil v. Central Bureau of Investigation* (2022) 10 Supreme Court Cases 51, are also relevant in this case. In the above mentioned case, it has been observed that “the rate of conviction in criminal cases in India is abysmally low. It appears to us that this factor weighs on the mind of the Court while deciding the bail applications in a negative sense. Courts tend to think that the possibility of a conviction being nearer to rarity, bail applications will have to be decided strictly, contrary to

legal principles. We cannot mix up consideration of a bail application, which is not punitive in nature with that of a possible adjudication by way of trial. On the contrary, an ultimate acquittal with continued custody would be a case of grave injustice.”

12. Recently, in the case of Tapas Kumar Palit v. State of Chhattisgarh, 2025 SCC Online SC 322 the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India has observed that “if an accused is to get a final verdict after incarceration of six to seven years in jail as an undertrial prisoner, then, definitely, it could be said that his right to have a speedy trial under Article 21 of the Constitution has been infringed.” It has also been observed by the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India in the above mentioned case that “delays are bad for the accused and extremely bad for the victims, for Indian society and for the credibility of our justice system, which is valued. Judges are the masters of their Courtrooms and the Criminal Procedure Code provides many tools for the Judges to use in order to ensure that cases proceed efficiently.”

13. To elucidate further, this Court is conscious of the basic and fundamental principle of law that right to speedy trial is a part of reasonable, fair and just procedure enshrined under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. This constitutional right cannot be denied to the accused as mandated by Hon’ble Apex court in Balwinder Singh versus State of Punjab and Another 2024 SCC Online SC 4354.

14. If the cumulative effect of all the above mentioned factors, involved in the instant case, is taken into consideration, it leads to a conclusion that the petitioner is entitled for the benefit of bail, and that the present petition deserves to be allowed.

15. Accordingly, without commenting anything on the merits of the case, the present petition is hereby **allowed**. The petitioner is hereby ordered to be released on bail on his furnishing personal bond and surety bond(s) to the satisfaction of learned trial Court, subject to the following conditions:-

- a) that the petitioner shall not directly or indirectly make any inducement, threat or promise to any person acquainted with the facts of the case, so as to dissuade him to disclose such facts to the Court or to any other authority;
- b) that the petitioner shall at the time of execution of bond, furnish the address to the Court concerned and shall notify the change in address to the trial Court, till the conclusion of trial; and
- c) that the petitioner shall not leave India without prior permission of the trial Court.

16. In case, the petitioner violates any of the conditions mentioned above, it shall be viewed seriously and the concession of bail granted to him shall be liable to be cancelled and the prosecution shall be at liberty to move an application in this regard.

17. It is, however, made clear that any observation made here-in-above is only for the purpose of deciding the present petition and the same shall have no bearing on the merits of the case.

(Surya Partap Singh)
Judge

February 03, 2026
“DK”

Whether speaking/reasoned : Yes/No
Whether reportable : Yes/No