



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

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CRM-M-66984-2025 (O&M)
Decided on : 11.02.2026

Nishant Gauri

..... Petitioner

VERSUS

State of Punjab

..... Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SURYA PARTAP SINGH

Present: Mr. Bhriugu Dutt Sharma, Advocate for the petitioner.

Mr. Lakhan, AAG Punjab.

SURYA PARTAP SINGH, J.

This is first petition for bail filed by the petitioner with regard to FIR No.50 dated 27.05.2024 under Sections 302 and 34 of Indian Penal Code, Police Station Maqsudan, District Jalandhar (Rural). The abovementioned FIR came into being at the instance of 'Pardeep Singh', hereinafter being referred to as 'complainant' only. It was stated by the above-named complainant that on 27.05.2024 at about 10.00 am, when he reached his agency, he noticed a crowd in the plot across the road. According to complainant when he went there, he found two persons in injured condition lying there, and that one of them had already passed away.

2. It is the case of the prosecution that in view of abovementioned complaint, formal FIR of this case was lodged and the investigation taken up. According to prosecution, during the course of investigation on the basis of secret information, the accused were arrested. They were duly



interrogated and their disclosure statements were recorded. Thereafter they were sent to stand trial in the Court.

3. The learned State Counsel has filed custody certificate of the petitioner. The same be taken on record. No formal reply has been filed by the State and the learned State Counsel has opted to orally oppose the present petition.

4. Heard.

5. It has been contended on behalf of petitioner that present case is a blind murder case, wherein no eye-witness account is available. According to learned counsel for the petitioner, the petitioner is innocent having no nexus, whatsoever, with the commission of crime, and that without evidence he has been prosecuted in the present case. According to learned counsel for the petitioner, the present case, which is based on circumstantial evidence, there is nothing on record to show that the petitioner was having any kind of motive for the commission of offence, or that he was seen in the company of deceased.

6. In addition to above, it has also been argued by learned counsel for the petitioner that otherwise also the petitioner has already suffered a lot incarceration for being in custody for a period of more than one year and seven months, and that the trial is not likely to be concluded in near future. It has been further argued by learned counsel for the petitioner that petitioner has no criminal antecedents and, therefore, in the given fact-situation, he is entitled for the benefit of bail.



7. *Per contra*, the learned State Counsel has argued that serious offence of committing murder of one person and causing dangerous to life injuries on the body of another person have been levelled against the petitioner and that the petitioner has suffered a confessional statement, wherein he has admitted his involvement in the commission of crime. According to learned State Counsel, the prosecution is yet to avail opportunity to prove guilt of the petitioner and, therefore, at this stage, when evidence is, yet, to be concluded by the prosecution, any finding with regard to weakness of the evidence cannot be returned.

8. The record has been perused carefully.

9. A perusal of record shows that in the present case, following are the relevant factors which are required to be taken into consideration, for a decision:-

- i. that the petitioner is already in custody for a period of more than one year and seven months;
- ii. that the petitioner has no criminal antecedents;
- iii. that the instant case is a blind murder case, wherein no eye-witness account is available;
- iv. that *prima facie* except the confessional statement of the petitioner there is no other evidence against the petitioner;
- v. that the trial is not likely to be concluded in near future;
- vi. that the investigation in the present case is already complete and nothing is left to be recovered from the possession of petitioner;



- vii. that detention of the petitioner in judicial lockup is not likely to serve any purpose;
- viii. 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
- ix. that there is nothing on record to show that if released on bail, the petitioner will not participate/cooperate in the trial.

10. In the present case, the principles of law laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of "Dataram versus State of Uttar Pradesh and another", 2018(2) R.C.R. (Criminal) 131, are relevant, wherein it has been 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 Vs. Central Bureau of Investigation and Another’, (2022) 10 SCC 51, are also relevant in this case. In the abovementioned 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 Vs. 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



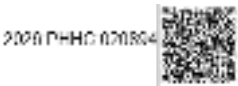
Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in the abovementioned case that “delays are bad for the accused and extremely bad for the victims, for Indian society and for the credibility of our justice system, which is valued. Judges are the masters of their Courtrooms and the Criminal Procedure Code provides many 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 abovementioned 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 furnishing personal bond and surety bond(s) to the satisfaction of learned trial Court. However the abovementioned concession shall be subject to following conditions:-

- (i) 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.

- (ii) 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 final decision of the trial; and
- (iii) that the petitioner shall not leave India without prior permission of the trial Court.

(SURYA PARTAP SINGH)
JUDGE

11.02.2026

Gaurav Thakur

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