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

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Date of decision : 04.02.2026

Ranjeet Singh

..... Petitioner

VERSUS

State of Haryana

..... Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SURYA PARTAP SINGH

Present : Mr. Krishan Singh, Advocate for the petitioner.

Ms. Deepali Verma, Asst. A.G. Haryana.

SURYA PARTAP SINGH, J. (oral)

1. For the commission of offence punishable under Sections 302, 120B, 201 and 34 of Indian Penal Code, the FIR No.4 dated 16.05.2023 has been lodged in Police Station GRP Kalka, District GRP Ambala Cantt, Haryana. The petitioner is being prosecuted for the commission of abovementioned offence and he has been arrested. The petitioner is in custody and, therefore, craving for bail.

2. In nut-shell, the facts emerging from record are that the FIR of this case came into being on the complaint of 'Achhar Singh', hereinafter being referred to as 'complainant' only. In the abovementioned complaint, it was stated by the complainant that on 14.05.2023, Dinesh Giri had called his friends, namely Sarabjit Singh, Mukul, Kalu, Dinesh @Nanu, Anil

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@Kancha, Chinu, Ravi, Pappu, and four other friends, to celebrate his birthday near Green Valley, Kalka. According to complainant, Gaurav Chaudhary, the friend of Sarabjit Singh (now deceased), had told him that in the birthday party, when they were consuming liquor and enjoying hookah, an altercation took place between Sarabjit Singh and Mukul @Baba. According to complainant, he was told that in the party, other friends intervened and separated them, but after the party when Sarabjit Singh along with Gaurav Chaudhary was going home, Mukul, armed with wooden handle, and his friends, intercepted them, and then attacked Sarabjit Singh. According to complainant, in the abovementioned attack Gaurav Chaudhary managed to sneak away from the spot but Sarabjit Singh could not, and that Sarabjit Singh had suffered injuries, which proved to be fatal.

3. It is the case of the prosecution that acting upon the abovementioned complaint, the formal FIR was lodged and investigation taken up. According to the prosecution, during the course of investigation when the accused Mukul @Baba was arrested, he suffered a disclosure statement, wherein he disclosed the names of other assailants, and one of them is the petitioner.

4. **Notice of motion.**

5. Ms. Deepali Verma, Asst. A.G. Haryana appears 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. However, no formal reply has been

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filed by the State and the learned State counsel has opted to orally oppose the present petition.

6. Heard.

7. It has been contented on behalf of the petitioner that the petitioner is innocent having no nexus, whatsoever, with the commission of crime, and that he has been falsely implicated in the present case, merely, on the basis of disclosure statement of co-accused. According to the learned counsel for the petitioner, the abovementioned disclosure statement has no legal sanctity as the same was recorded when the maker of it was in police custody. As per learned counsel for the petitioner, the description of the events, recorded by the investigating agency, nowhere attributes any role to the petitioner.

8. In addition to above, the learned counsel for the petitioner has also argued that the petitioner has clean antecedents, and that he has already suffered a prolonged incarceration for being in custody for a period of almost 02 years and 08 months. According to learned counsel for the petitioner, the trial is progressing at a slow pace, and the same is not likely to be concluded in near future. It has been further contended by learned counsel for the petitioner that similarly placed co-accused, namely Ravi, has already been accorded the benefit of bail by this Court.

9. *Per contra*, the learned State Counsel has argued that the allegations against the petitioner are for an offence which is serious in nature, and that the Investigating Agency has collected sufficient evidence to

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prove that the petitioner was involved in the incident of attack upon the deceased Sarabjit Singh, and that in execution of common conspiracy of the group, of which petitioner was a party, fatal injuries were inflicted on the person of Sarabjit Singh. According to learned State Counsel, if petitioner is released on bail, he may influence the witnesses, & thereby, tamper with the evidence.

10. The record has been perused carefully.

11. 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 02 years and 08 months;
- ii) that on parity also, the petitioner is entitled for bail as similarly placed co-accused, namely Ravi, has already been accorded the benefit of bail by this Court;
- iii) nothing is left to be recovered from the possession of petitioner;
- iv) that the trial is not likely to be concluded in near future;
- v) that the petitioner has clean antecedents;
- vi) that detention of the petitioner in judicial lockup is not likely to serve any purpose;
- vii) that with regard to identity of the petitioner, as one of the assailants, except the disclosure statement of co-accused, there is no other connecting evidence;



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.

12. 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”.

13. 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”.

14. 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



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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”.

15. 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.

16. 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.

17. 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



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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

04.02.2026

Gaurav Thakur

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