

Sanjiv Sharma @ Sanjeev Sharma Vs State Of Haryana

Court: High Court Of Punjab And Haryana At Chandigarh

Date of Decision: July 3, 2019

Acts Referred: Code Of Criminal Procedure, 1973 " Section 438
Narcotics Drugs & Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 " Section 15, 50, 61

Hon'ble Judges: Rajbir Sehrawat, J

Bench: Single Bench

Advocate: Rajiv Joshi, M.K. Sangwan

Final Decision: Dismissed

Judgement

Rajbir Sehrawat, J

The present petition has been filed by the petitioner under Section 438 Cr.P.C. for grant of anticipatory bail in case FIR No.0120 dated 08.04.2019

registered under Section 15/61 Narcotics Drugs & Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 at Police Station Naraingarh, District Ambala.

The FIR in the present case came to be registered on the statement of Inspector Keval Singh, CIA Staff, Naraingarh in which it was stated that he

had received secret information that one red coloured closed body Canter, bearing registration No.HR 68-B-8648 was standing on kacha road leading

to Kala Amb towards Ruchra factory, whose driver is stopping many truck drivers on the way and he is having some kind of secret conversation with

them. This led the police officers to have suspicion that the said driver was having some contraband substance in his possession. The information in

this regard was sent to Mr. Amit Kumar HPS, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Naraingarh for information. On the said secret information, the above

said inspector along with his companion police officials reached the spot and on reaching there, the police party found that red coloured closed body

Canter bearing registration number as stated above, was parked on the road and a person was found sitting on the driver seat. The driver was asked

to come down and he disclosed his name as Ravinder Singh alias Jonku. After having been given due notice under Section 50 of the NDPS Act, the

search of the vehicle was conducted in the presence of Mr. Amit Kumar, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Naraingarh. During the search, apart from

some small drums which were loaded in the Canter, four plastic bags were found; whose mouth had been sealed. Out of these, two were found to be

of white colour and two were of black colour. On being questioned, the said driver Ravinder Singh disclosed that these plastic bags were having poppy

husk. Accordingly, the bags were taken out from the Canter. On being weighed; total quantity of poppy husk found in these bags was 1 quintal and 60

kilograms. Samples were drawn out of that. On further questioning, the registration certificate of the Canter was found. Canter was found to be

owned by one Himanshu Bhalla, resident of Panchkula. He was also joined in the investigation, from whom it came out that 200 drums were loaded in

the Canter from Mumbai and were to be taken to Mukhmajra, Himachal Pradesh. Accordingly, the FIR was registered.

During the investigation above said Ravinder Singh disclosed that he had got the above said poppy husk from the present petitioner. Hence, the name

of the petitioner also came to be involved in this case.

While arguing the case, the learned counsel for the petitioner has submitted that, admittedly, the petitioner was not found to be present on the spot.

Nothing has been recovered from him. His name has been included in the case only on the basis of the disclosure statement of the co-accused, from

whom the recovery has been effected. Still further, it is submitted that police have tried to change the nature of the case, by substituting the name of

the petitioner in place of some other person, who was allegedly named originally by the co-accused as the supplier of the drugs. The counsel for the

petitioner has also relied upon an judgment passed by a coordinate Bench of this court in Jaz Singh versus State of Haryana, 2016(1) RCR (Criminal)

454, to contend that since the petitioner was not found at the spot, therefore, he is entitled to grant of anticipatory bail.

On the other hand, learned counsel for the State on being instructed by SI Krishan Lal, CIA Staff, Naraingarh, submits that sufficient material has

been found against the petitioner to justify his custodial interrogation. It is disputed by counsel for the State that anybody else was named by the co-

accused. There was no substitution of name of the petitioner in place of somebody else. It is further submitted by counsel for the State that, in fact,

the co-accused has named the supplier as Billa referring him as owner of the dhaba. The name Billa is referable only to the present petitioner and

nobody else. It is also pointed out that the present petitioner has been pretending to be the owner of the dhaba to ensure that his supplies are taken in

appropriate manner by the drivers of the trucks, who were having stop-over at this Dhaba. To justify the custodial interrogation, learned counsel for

the State has pointed out that during the investigation conducted so far, besides the disclosure statement of the co-accused, the call details taken by the

investigating officer, have also shown a connection of the petitioner with the co-accused arrested for drug trafficking in this case. Learned State

counsel has pointed out that before the date of occurrence itself, the petitioner has been found to have talked with co-accused on mobile phone.

Therefore, the petitioner cannot claim that he is not involved in the case. It is also submitted by learned counsel for the State that the petitioner is

having another case of similar nature as well, registered against him at different police station.

To counter the arguments of learned State counsel, learned counsel for the petitioner has submitted that another case was also of the same date, as is

of the present case.

No doubt, the accused as a citizen has a fundamental right to life and liberty. However, that right to life and liberty can very well be curtailed in

accordance with the procedure established by law. As per the procedure prescribed for Criminal Administration of Justice, the normal procedure for

curtailing the life and liberty of the accused, Cr.P.C. prescribes that the Investigating Officer can arrest an accused even without warrant and without

assistance/interference of the Court. However, to ensure that a person is not unduly harassed, at least in those cases, where the circumstances are

leading, predominately, towards ex- facie innocence of the accused, the Courts have been given special and extra-ordinary power under Section 438

Cr.P.C. This statutory power of granting pre-arrest bail is so extraordinary that it is not even available in all parts of the country; and even through-out

the country qua some offences under special statutes. Hence, right to get anticipatory bail is not any fundamental right. The provision of Section 438

Cr.P.C. provides only a remedy to an accused and leaves the extent of right to liberty to be decided by the Court.

In the present case this court finds that a person has been arrested with a very heavy quantity of the contraband. He has specifically named the

petitioner as the person who has supplied this contraband to him. There is nothing on record, as of now, to suggest that the petitioner has no

connection with the said co-accused, in any manner whatsoever. Rather as per the record of the police the petitioner is alleged to have repeated

contacts with the co-accused from whom the recovery is stated to have been made. Therefore, this court does not find any mitigating circumstance,

showing ex-facie innocence of the accused, qua the allegations levelled against him. Moreover, since the police claims to have collected some material

relatable to the petitioner qua the offence, therefore, this court finds substance in the argument of the learned counsel for the State that the police

deserve to be given an opportunity to investigate the case in the manner considered appropriate by it. Since the petitioner has been alleged to be in

repeated contact with the co-accused, from whom the recovery has been made, this court finds that protecting the petitioner against his arrest at this

stage would hamper the free and fair investigation of the case.

Although, the counsel for the petitioner has relied upon the judgment in the case of Jaz Singh (supra), however, this court finds that the facts of the

present case are totally distinguishable as compared to the facts of the judgment in aforesaid case. In that case the positive claim of the petitioner was

that he had engaged the co-accused as a driver on the truck owned by him and that driver had mis-conducted himself leading to the offence. He

further argued that he was not even present at the spot when the recovery was made by the police. Beyond the fact that the person was owner of the

vehicle in that case, there was nothing on record to suggest that he was involved in the offence. However, in the present case the police file contains

definite incriminating material which can lead to a positive connection of the petitioner with the consignment allegedly recovered from the co-accused.

In view of the above, but without commenting any further on merits of the case, this court does not find any ground to grant anticipatory bail to the

petitioner. Therefore, the present petition for anticipatory bail is dismissed.