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216 IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA  
AT CHANDIGARH

CRM-M-46367-2024  
Reserved on : 09.04.2025  
Pronounced on: 29.04.2025

RAMESH ALIAS HARMESH

...PETITIONER

VERSUS

STATE OF PUNJAB

...RESPONDENT

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ANOOP CHITKARA

Present: Mr.Raman Kumar, Advocate for the petitioner.

Mr. Adesh Pal Singh, AAG, Punjab.

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ANOOP CHITKARA, J.

FIR No.	Dated	Police Station	Sections
73	19.06.2021	Lohian, District Jalandhar	22 of NDPS Act, 1985

1. The petitioner incarcerated in the FIR captioned above had come up before this Court under Section 439 of Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, seeking regular bail.

2. Per paragraph 3 of the bail application and the reply/custody certificate, the accused-petitioner has no criminal antecedents.

3. The facts and allegations are taken from the reply filed by the State. On 19.06.2021, based on a chance recovery, the Police seized 100 intoxicant tablets containing salt Etizolam from the petitioner's possession. The Investigator claims to have complied with all the statutory requirements of the NDPS Act, 1985, and CrPC, 1973.

4. Counsel for the petitioner submits that the petitioner was earlier released on interim bail vide order dated 26.07.2021 by the trial Court. He further submits that due to non-appearance on 13.07.2023, his bail was cancelled and was declared PO vide order dated 05.03.2024. He further prays for bail by imposing any stringent conditions and contends that further pre-trial incarceration would cause an irreversible injustice to the petitioner and his family.

5. The State's counsel opposes bail and refers to the reply.

6. It would be appropriate to refer to paras 6 and 7 of the reply, which read as follows:

**"Role of the Petitioner**

7. *That a chance recovery of 100 loose intoxicant tablets, containing salt "Etizolam" has been effected from the bag thrown by petitioner and the total*



*weight of the said 100 tablets comes out to be 13.8 grams.*

**Evidence Against the Petitioner**

8. *That a chance recovery of 100 loose intoxicant tablets, containing salt "Etizolam" has been effected from the bag thrown by petitioner and the total weight of the said 100 tablets comes out to be 13.8 grams. Furthermore, the petitioner was granted interim bail by Ld. Trial Court on 26.07.2021 and thereafter, he did not appear before the Ld. Trial Court. Thus, he was declared as proclaimed offender on 05.03.2024. Thereafter, the petitioner was again arrested on 19.03.2025."*

7. As per FSL report, the total weight of 100 intoxicant tablets "Etizolam" is 13.8 grams which is commercial quantity.

REASONING:

8. The quantity of contraband is 100 intoxicant tablets containing salt Etizolam and the weight is 13.8 grams. The quantity allegedly involved in this case is commercial but the petitioner has already in custody for a period of 01 year, 01 month and 26 days. Given this, the rigors of S. 37 of the NDPS Act apply in the present case. The petitioner must satisfy the twin conditions put in place by the Legislature under Section 37 of the NDPS Act.

9. However, the petitioner is entitled to bail because Hon'ble Supreme Court had granted bail on prolonged custody in the following judicial precedents:

1) In Junaid Alam v. State of Uttarakhand, decided on 12 Aug 2024, SLP(Crl.) 7708-2024, Hon'ble Supreme Court holds,

[2]. It is pointed out that the petitioner has been in custody for last more than 18 months since he was arrested on 25.01.2023. It is then submitted that only 3 out of the 10 cited prosecution witnesses have been examined and they have not said anything to connect the petitioner with the crime.

[3]. The learned counsel for the State would submit that the concerned Contraband are medicinal drugs but they are sold for profit. Moreover, it is of commercial quantity.

[4]. We have perused the nature of the Contraband i.e., the prohibited medicines (SYP Codectus 100 Bottles (100 Ml each), Cap Pyeevon Spas Plus 720 Cap Parvion Spas 800 Capsules, Spasonof NF 960 capsules, Capsules Spasmoproxyvon Plus 144, Proxywell Spas 2568 Capsules, Alprasafe Table 600 Tablets, Pyeevon Spas Plus 32 Capsules).

[5]. Having considered the above and the fact that the trial is unlikely to conclude on a near date, we are of the view that the petitioner – Junaid Alam deserves to be granted bail. It is ordered accordingly. Appropriate bail conditions be imposed by the trial court.

10. The prolonged incarceration, generally militates against the most precious fundamental right guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution and in such a situation, the conditional liberty must override the statutory embargo created under Section 37(1)(b)(ii) of the NDPS Act<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Supreme Court of India, in Rabi Prakash v. The State of Odisha, SLP (Crl) 4169-2023, Para 4, decided on 13



11. In Tajmul SK v. The State of West Bengal, decided on 23 Jul 2024, CrA 3047-2024, Hon'ble Supreme Court holds,

[5]. We are inclined to set aside the impugned order only on the premise that right to speedy trial is a fundamental right. Despite the fact that the appellant has been under incarceration for more than one and a half years, the trial is yet to start, though, it is submitted by learned counsel appearing for the State that charges have been framed. Suffice it is to state that trial would take considerable length of time. There is no antecedent involving the appellant.

[6]. Accordingly, the impugned order is set aside and the appellant is granted bail, subject to the conditions that may be imposed by the Trial Court.

12. Given the above, the petitioner's pretrial custody is more than some of the judicial precedents mentioned above; the petitioner is entitled to bail under Article 14 of the Constitution of India.

13. Per the custody certificate dated 08.04.2025, the petitioner's custody in this FIR is of 01 year, 01 month and 26 days. Given the drugs were medicines that attracted violation of S. 22 of NDPS Act, viz-a-viz pre-trial custody, coupled with the prima facie analysis of the nature of allegations and the other factors peculiar to this case, there would be no justifiability further pre-trial incarceration at this stage, subject to the compliance of terms and conditions mentioned in this order.

14. Without commenting on the case's merits, in the facts and circumstances peculiar to this case, and for the reasons mentioned above, the petitioner makes a case for bail. This order shall come into force from the time it is uploaded on this Court's official webpage.

#### CONDITIONS:

15. Given above, provided the petitioner is not required in any other case, the petitioner shall be released on bail in the FIR captioned above subject to furnishing bonds to the satisfaction of the concerned Court and due to unavailability before any nearest Ilaqa Magistrate/duty Magistrate. Before accepting the surety, the concerned Court must be satisfied that if the accused fails to appear, such surety can produce the accused.

16. While furnishing a personal bond, the petitioner shall mention the following personal identification details:

1.	AADHAR number	
2.	Passport number (If available) and when the attesting officer/court considers it appropriate or considers the accused a flight risk.	
3.	Mobile number (If available)	
4.	E-Mail id (If available)	

17. This order is subject to the petitioner's complying with the following terms.

18. The petitioner shall abide by all statutory bond conditions and appear before the concerned Court(s) on all dates. The petitioner shall not tamper with the evidence, influence,



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browbeat, pressurize, induce, threaten, or promise, directly or indirectly, any witnesses, Police officials, or any other person acquainted with the facts and circumstances of the case or dissuade them from disclosing such facts to the Police or the Court.

19. Given the background of allegations against the petitioner, it becomes paramount to protect the members of society, detection squad and incapacitating the accused would be one of the primary options until the filing of the closure report or discharge, or acquittal. Consequently, it would be appropriate to restrict the possession of firearms. [This restriction is being imposed based on the preponderance of the evidence of probability and not of evidence of certainty, i.e., beyond a reasonable doubt; and as such, it is not to be construed as an intermediate sanction]. Given the nature of the allegations and the other circumstances peculiar to this case, the petitioner shall surrender all weapons, firearms, and ammunition, if any, along with the arms license to the concerned authority within fifteen days of release from prison and inform the Investigator of the compliance. However, subject to the Indian Arms Act, 1959, the petitioner shall be entitled to renew and reclaim them in case of acquittal in this case, provided otherwise permissible under the concerned rules. Restricting firearms would instill confidence in the victim(s), their families, and society; it would also restrain the accused from influencing the witnesses and repeating the offense.

20. Petitioner shall not default in appearance before trial Court.

21. **This bail is conditional, and the foundational condition is that if the petitioner indulges in any non-bailable offense, the State shall file an application for cancellation of this bail before the Trial Court, which shall be at liberty to cancel this bail.**

22. Any observation made hereinabove is neither an expression of opinion on the case's merits nor shall the trial Court advert to these comments.

23. A certified copy of this order would not be needed for furnishing bonds, and any Advocate for the Petitioner can download this order along with case status from the official web page of this Court and attest it to be a true copy. If the attesting officer wants to verify its authenticity, such an officer can also verify its authenticity and may download and use the downloaded copy for attesting bonds.

24. Petition allowed in terms mentioned above. All pending applications, if any, stand disposed of.

29.04.2025  
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(ANOOP CHITKARA)  
JUDGE

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