



CRM-M-56099-2023

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

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CRM-M-56099-2023

Date of decision: 13.10.2025

Sardool Masih

...Petitioner

V/s

State of Punjab

...Respondent

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUMEET GOEL**

Present: Mr. Vipin Mahajan, Advocate for the petitioner.

Mr. Gurpartap S. Bhullar, AAG Punjab.

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**SUMEET GOEL, J. (Oral)**

1. Present petition has been filed under Section 482 of Cr.P.C., seeking quashing of order dated 01.10.2022 (Annexure P-2) passed by the Judicial Magistrate Ist Class, Gurdaspur whereby the petitioner was declared proclaimed offender in case FIR No.0062 dated 27.08.2017 registered under Sections 323, 341, 506, 427, 148, 149 of IPC at Police Station Kahnuwan, District Gurdaspur.

2. Learned counsel for the petitioner has iterated that the Court below has already decided the case wherein all the co-accused have been released on probation vide order dated 10.08.2023 as the offence involved were all bailable in nature. Learned counsel for the petitioner has further iterated that the impugned order declaring the petitioner as a proclaimed offender is patently illegal and unsustainable as the mandatory procedure prescribed under Section 82(1) of Cr.P.C. has not been adhered to. Learned counsel has further submitted that the written proclamation issued did not allow a minimum period of 30 days from the date of publication for the



petitioner to appear before the Court. Furthermore, petitioner is a poor and hardworking individual and on account of unfortunate mishap in the house of petitioner, he was unable to arrange an advocate which led to the initiation of proceedings against him. According to learned counsel, the petitioner was never informed about the proclamation proceedings and has been regularly appearing before the trial Court prior to the issuance of the proceedings. The absence of the petitioner before the Court below was neither deliberate nor intentional but occurred due to unawareness of the legal consequences. Learned counsel asserts that the impugned order is *ex facie* illegal, arbitrary and unsustainable in the eyes of law and is, therefore, liable to be set-aside.

3. Referring to the short reply filed by way of an affidavit of Kulwant Singh, PPS, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Sub Division Rural, District Gurdaspur, on behalf of the State of Punjab, learned State counsel has reiterated the submissions made therein and opposed the present petition. While refuting the case set up by the petitioner, detailed arguments were advanced on merits, contending that the offence alleged against the petitioner is serious in nature and that the investigation was conducted in a fair and proper manner. It is submitted that after the investigation, the report under Section 173 of Cr.P.C. against the petitioner and co-accused was presented before the competent Court on 16.07.2018 and charge was framed on 20.10.2018. During the course of trial, the petitioner was declared proclaimed offender on 01.10.2022. It has further been pointed out that the learned Court below scrupulously adhered to the procedure prescribed under Section 82(1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and no infirmity or



irregularity is discernible from the record. Despite being granted the concession of bail, the petitioner willfully chose not to appear before the trial Court. Consequently, after adopting due process, the Court was constrained to declare him a proclaimed person. Learned State counsel has, therefore, contended that the conduct of the petitioner clearly establishes his deliberate defiance of the judicial process and misuse of the concession of bail. Accordingly, dismissal of the instant petition has been prayed for.

4. I have heard the learned counsel for the rival parties and carefully perused the record of the case.

5. The law is well settled that no person can be declared a proclaimed offender/person unless the procedure prescribed under Section 82(1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 is meticulously adhered to. It is trite law that the provisions of Section 82 are mandatory in nature, and any non-compliance thereof vitiates the entire proceedings. In the present case, the offence attributed to the petitioner being bailable in nature, he was duly released on bail by the Court below vide order dated 16.07.2018 upon furnishing the requisite bail bonds and was regularly appearing before the trial Court. The petitioner has asserted that on account of unfortunate mishap in the house, he was unable to arrange an advocate which led to the initiation of impugned proceedings against him. Furthermore, it has been stated that the petitioner was unaware of the consequences of the proceedings arising out of the impugned order. However, the trial Court vide impugned order dated 01.10.2022 declared the petitioner as proclaimed offender which is not shown to have been executed in conformity with Section 82(1) of the Cr.P.C.



6. This Court finds the course adopted by the Court below is antithesis to the provisions of Section 82 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. The Court below has committed illegality by issuing the said proclamation under Section 82 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973, without complying the mandatory requirements of law. The learned Court below, while declaring the petitioner as proclaimed offender, failed to satisfy itself regarding due execution of proclamation and proceeded in a mechanical manner. Such an order being violative of mandatory provisions of law, cannot be sustained. Section 82 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 reads as under:

*“82. Proclamation for person absconding. - (1) If any Court has reason to believe (whether after taking evidence or not) that any person against whom a warrant has been issued by it has absconded or is concealing himself so that such warrant cannot be executed, such Court may publish a written proclamation requiring him to appear at a specified place and at a specified time not less than thirty days from the date of publishing such proclamation.*

*(2) The proclamation shall be published as follows: -*

*(i)(a) it shall be publicly read in some conspicuous place of the town or village in which such person ordinarily resides;*

*(b) it shall be affixed to some conspicuous part of the house or homestead in which such person ordinarily resides or to some conspicuous place of such town or village;*

*(c) a copy thereof shall be affixed to some conspicuous part of the court-house;*

*(ii) the Court may also, if it thinks fit, direct a copy of the proclamation to be published in a daily newspaper circulating in the place in which such person ordinarily resides.*

*(3) A statement in writing by the Court issuing the proclamation to the effect that the proclamation was duly published on a specified day, in the manner specified in clause (i) of sub-section (2), shall be conclusive evidence that the requirements of this Section have been complied with, and that the proclamation was published on such day.*



*[(4) Where a proclamation published under sub-section (1) is in respect of a person accused of an offence punishable under Sections 302, 304, 364, 367, 382, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 402, 436, 449, 459, or 460 of the Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860), and such person fails to appear at the specified place and time required by the proclamation, the Court may, after making such inquiry as it thinks fit, pronounce him a proclaimed offender and make a declaration to that effect.*

*(5) The provisions of sub-sections (2) and (3) shall apply to a declaration made by the Court under sub-section (4) as they apply to the proclamation published under sub-section (1).]*”

7. A Coordinate Bench of this Court while dealing with invocation of the provision of Section 82 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, against an accused in the case of ‘**Sonu v. State of Haryana, 2021(1) RCR (Criminal) 319**’, held as under:

*“9. The essential requirements of section 82 of the Cr.P.C., 1973 for issuance and publication of proclamation against an absconder and declaring him as proclaimed person/offender may be summarized as under:-*

*(i) Prior issuance of warrant of arrest by the Court is sine qua non for issuance and publication of the proclamation and the Court has to first issue warrant of arrest against the person concerned. (See Rohit Kumar v. State of Delhi: 2008 CrI. J. 2561).*

*(ii) There must be a report before the Court that the person against whom warrant was issued had absconded or had been concealing himself so that the warrant of arrest could not be executed against him. However, the Court is not bound to take evidence in this regard before issuing a Proclamation under section 82(1) of the Cr.P.C., 1973. (See Rohit Kumar v. State of Delhi : 2008 CrI. J. 2561).*

*(iii) The Court cannot issue the Proclamation as a matter of course because the Police is asking for it. The Court must be prima facie satisfied that the person has absconded or is concealing himself so that the warrant of arrest, previously issued, cannot be executed, despite reasonable diligence. (See BishundayalMahton and others v. Emperor : AIR 1943 Patna 366 and Devender Singh Negi v. State of U.P. : 1994 CrI LJ (Allahabad HC) 1783).*



(iv) *The requisite date and place for appearance must be specified in the proclamation requiring such person to appear on such date at the specified place. Such date must not be less than 30 clear days from the date of issuance and publication of the proclamation. (See Gurappa Gugal and others v. State of Mysore : 1969 CriLJ 826 and Shokat Ali v. State of Haryana : 2020(2) RCR (CRIMINAL) 339).*

(v) *Where the period between issuance and publication of the proclamation and the specified date of hearing is less than thirty days, the accused cannot be declared a proclaimed person/offender and the proclamation has to be issued and published again. (See Dilbagh Singh v. State of Punjab (P&H) : 2015 (8) RCR (CRIMINAL) 166 and Ashok Kumar v. State of Haryana and another : 2013 (4) RCR (CRIMINAL) 550)*

(vi) *The Proclamation has to be published in the manner laid down in section 82(2) of the Cr.P.C., 1973. For publication the proclamation has to be first publicly read in some conspicuous place of the town or village in which the accused ordinarily resides; then the same has to be affixed to some conspicuous part of the house or homestead in which the accused ordinarily resides or to some conspicuous place of such town or village and thereafter a copy of the proclamation has to be affixed to some conspicuous part of the Court-house. The three sub-clauses (a)- (c) in section 82 (2)(i) of the Cr.P.C., 1973 are conjunctive and not disjunctive, which means that there would be no valid publication of the proclamation unless all the three modes of publication are proved. (See Pawan Kumar Gupta v. The State of W.B. : 1973 CriLJ 1368). Where the Court so orders a copy of the proclamation has to be additionally published in a daily newspaper circulating in the place in which the accused ordinarily resides. Advisably, proclamation has to be issued with four copies so that one each of the three copies of the proclamation may be affixed to some conspicuous part of the house or homestead in which the accused ordinarily resides, to some conspicuous place of such town or village and to some conspicuous part of the Courthouse and report regarding publication may be made on the fourth copy of the proclamation. Additional copy will be required where the proclamation is also required to be published in the newspaper.*

(vii) *Statement of the serving officer has to be recorded by the Court as to the date and mode of publication of the proclamation. (See Birad Dan v. State: 1958 CriLJ 965).*

(viii) *The Court issuing the proclamation has to make a statement in writing in its order that the proclamation was duly published on a*



*specified day in a manner specified in section 82(2)(i) of the Cr.P.C., 1973. Such statement in writing by the Court is declared to be conclusive evidence that the requirements of Section 82 have been complied with and that the proclamation was published on such day. (See Birad Dan v. State: 1958 CriLJ 965).*

*(xi) The conditions specified in section 82(2) of the Cr.P.C., 1973 for the publication of a Proclamation against an absconder are mandatory. Any non-compliance therewith cannot be cured as an 'irregularity' and renders the Proclamation and proceedings subsequent thereto a nullity. (See Devendra Singh Negi alias Debu v. State of U.P. and another: 1994 CriLJ 1783 and Pal Singh v. The State: 1955 CriLJ 318)."*

8. It is pertinent to mention that it is by now a settled principle of law that before issuing a proclamation under Section 82 Cr.P.C., the Court must record its satisfaction that the accused, against whom the proclamation is sought to be issued, is absconding or concealing himself with intent to evade arrest. This foundational requirement is conspicuously absent in the present case. A perusal of the impugned order dated 01.10.2022 reveals that no such satisfaction was recorded by the Court below, nor was there any material to justify the inference that the petitioner had absconded or was deliberately avoiding arrest. On the contrary, the stand of the petitioner that on account of unfortunate mishap in his house, he was unable to arrange an advocate which led to the initiation of the impugned proceedings.

9. The provisions of Section 82 of the Code of Criminal Procedure having serious ramifications qua the right of the accused concerning his presence in the criminal trial proceedings ought not be and cannot be invoked in casual and cavalier manner. The requirement of recording of satisfaction, that the accused has absconded or is concealing himself so that warrant of his arrest cannot be executed, as embodied in Section 82 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, is to be scrupulously



complied with based on relevant material available on record of the case in that regard. Non-adherence to said requirement while declaring the accused as proclaimed person vitiates the proclamation proceedings initiated against the accused.

10. Hence, no useful purpose would be served by keeping the criminal proceedings pending against the petitioner, particularly when the petitioner has already joined the investigation and duly cooperated. It is, therefore, an appropriate case for the exercise of powers under Section 528 of BNSS/Section 482 of Cr.P.C. and to bring to an end the criminal proceedings initiated in the light of the FIR ibid against the petitioner.

11. In view of the above findings, in the entirety of facts and circumstances of the present case, the present petition is allowed and the order dated 01.10.2022 (Annexure P-2) passed by the Judicial Magistrate Ist Class, Gurdaspur whereby the petitioner was declared proclaimed offender in case FIR No.0062 dated 27.08.2017 registered under Sections 323, 341, 506, 427, 148, 149 of IPC at Police Station Kahnuwan, District Gurdaspur as well as the other consequential proceedings arising therefrom are quashed.

12. Pending application(s), if any, shall also stand disposed of accordingly.

**(SUMEET GOEL)**  
**JUDGE**

October 13 2025  
*Ajay*

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