



IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

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CRM-M-13769-2025
Date of decision: 21.04.2025

Vijay Kumar Singla

.....Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab

.....Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE MANJARI NEHRU KAUL

Present : Mr. P.S. Ahluwalia, Advocate and
Mr. Keerat Dhillon, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Amit Rana, Sr. DAG, Punjab.

Mr. Pushp Jain, Advocate
for the complainant.

MANJARI NEHRU KAUL, J. (ORAL)

1. The petitioner is seeking the concession of bail under Section 483 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 in case FIR No.14 dated 04.06.2024 under Sections 7 and 7-A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and Section 120-B of the IPC, registered at Police Station Vigilance Bureau, District Bathinda.

2. Learned counsel for the petitioner submits that the petitioner has been in custody since 31.01.2025 in connection with the allegation that he, in collusion with the other accused persons including Junior Engineer (JE) Jatinder Singh, demanded illegal gratification for facilitating clearance of bills pertaining to certain contractual works awarded to the complainant. It is submitted that, even as per the case of



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the prosecution, no recovery of tainted money has been effected from the petitioner. Rather, the sum of Rs.1 lakh alleged to be bribe money was recovered from co-accused Jatinder Singh, JE. Further, a diary purportedly containing entries relating to the distribution of bribe amounts among various officials, including the petitioner, was also recovered from co-accused Jatinder Singh.

3. It is contended that the entire case of the prosecution against the petitioner is documentary in nature, and such material already forms part of the challan, which has been presented before the competent Court on 01.04.2025. It is argued that further incarceration of the petitioner would, therefore, serve no useful purpose, especially when the charges are yet to be framed.

4. *Per contra*, learned State counsel, assisted by learned counsel for the complainant, has opposed the prayer and submissions made by the counsel opposite and reiterated the allegations levelled in the FIR annexed as Annexure P-1. It has been submitted that the complainant, who is the president of a local cooperative society, was awarded multiple tenders for supplying electrical equipment and undertaking civil works for the Municipal Council, Mansa. Despite completion of work, his payments were allegedly withheld on account of demands for illegal gratification by the president and other officials of the Municipal Council, including the petitioner. While again referring to the FIR, it has been submitted that it contains a narration of several alleged instances where bribe amounts were paid to various officials, including Junior Engineer, Jatinder Singh, E.O. Amrit Lal,



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and others, purportedly at the instance of the petitioner and others. Audio and video recordings were also presented by the complainant in support of these allegations.

5. Learned State counsel, on instructions from SI Baldeep Kaur, Vigilance Mansa, however, has not disputed that no tainted money was ever recovered from the petitioner. However, it is submitted that in the audio recording presented by the complainant to the investigating agency, the petitioner is allegedly heard demanding the bribe and directing the complainant to deliver the money to co-accused Jatinder Singh. On further instructions, learned State counsel has not disputed that the challan has been presented; the custody period of the petitioner has also not been disputed by the learned State counsel. It has also not been disputed by the learned State counsel that co-accused Jatinder Singh, from whom the recovery of bribe was effected, has already been granted regular bail by a Coordinate Bench of this Court, vide order dated 30.08.2024 (Annexure P-3).

6. I have heard learned counsel for the parties and perused the material placed on record.

7. It is not in dispute that the petitioner has been in custody since 31.01.2025. The prosecution case against the petitioner appears to rest substantially on documentary evidence, which is part of the challan. The trial has not yet commenced and charges are yet to be framed. Given the number of witnesses cited (seven in total), the trial is unlikely to conclude in the near future.

8. In the totality of circumstances, this Court is of the



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considered view that further incarceration of the petitioner is not warranted at this stage and would not serve any useful purpose.

9. Accordingly, the instant petition is allowed. The petitioner be admitted to bail on his furnishing bail/surety bonds to the satisfaction of the Trial Court/Duty Magistrate concerned. However, it is made clear that anything observed hereinabove shall not be construed to be an expression of opinion on the merits of the case.

10. Needless to add, in case the petitioner misuses the concession of bail granted to him, the State would be at liberty to seek cancellation of the same.

21.04.2025

Vinay

**(MANJARI NEHRU KAUL)
JUDGE**

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