

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

CRM-M-46494-2025
Reserved on: 09.09.2025
Pronounced on: 22.09.2025

Gurpreet Singh @ Mannu

...Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab

...Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ANOOP CHITKARA

Present: Mr. Sandeep Gehlawat, Advocate for the petitioner.

Mr. Jasdev Singh Thind, DAG, Punjab.

ANOOP CHITKARA, J.

FIR No.	Dated	Police Station	Sections
24	08.03.2025	Sadar Amritsar, Distt. Amritsar	21-B, 27-A of NDPS Act (Sections 111 (2), 111(3), 111(4) of BNS added vide DDR No.11 dated 09.03.2025)

1. The petitioner apprehending arrest in the FIR captioned above has come up before this Court under Section 482 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, [BNSS], seeking anticipatory bail.

2. In paragraph 24 of the bail petition and 16 of the status report, the petitioner has the following criminal antecedents:

Sr. No.	FIR No.	Dated	Offenses	Police Station
1.	319	15.11.2023	352, 452, 148, 149 IPC	Sadar Amritsar
2.	108	23.05.2024	160, 161, 148, 149 IPC	Sadar Amritsar

3. The facts and allegations are taken from the status report filed by the State. On 08.03.2025, based on a chance recovery, the Police seized 20 grams of heroin and drug money of Rs.1430/- from the possession of co-accused Kunal @ Lotus. The Investigator claims to have complied with all the statutory requirements of the NDPS Act, 1985, and BNSS, 2023.

4. During custodial interrogation, the main accused, Kunal, confessed before the Police officer that he had purchased the drugs from a person, whose name, he did not know and he along with petitioner and other used to purchase heroin from that person. Based on such a confession before the police, the petitioner was arraigned as an accused. Apprehending arrest, he filed for anticipatory bail from the Sessions Court, which denied him bail. Feeling aggrieved, he has invoked the concurrent jurisdiction of this Court

under S. 482 BNSS, 2023.

5. The petitioner's counsel prays for bail by imposing any stringent conditions and contends that pre-trial incarceration would cause an irreversible injustice to the petitioner and his family.

6. The petitioner's counsel submits that the petitioner would have no objection whatsoever to any stringent conditions that this Court may impose, including that if the petitioner repeats the offense or commits any non-bailable offense which provides for a sentence of imprisonment for more than seven years, or commits any offence under the NDPS Act, where the quantity involved is more than half of the intermediate, or commercial quantity, or violates S. 19, or 24, or 27-A of the NDPS Act, the State may file an application to revoke this bail before the concerned Court having jurisdiction over this FIR, which shall have the authority to cancel this bail, and may do so at their discretion, to which the petitioner shall have no objection.

7. The State's counsel opposes bail and refers to the status report.

8. It would be appropriate to refer to paragraphs 12 to 15 of the status report, which reads as follows:

"12. The name and total weight of the drug: That the deponent humbly submits that 20 grams of heroin was recovered in this case from the co-accused Kunal @ Lotus. As per the report of RTFSL, 'Diacetylmorphine' (heroin) has been detected in the sample parcel of the contraband.

13. The evidence based on which the petitioner was arraigned as an accused: That the deponent humbly submits that the present petitioner Gurpreet Singh @ Mannu was arraigned as an co-accused along with other co-accused persons Gori Shanka @ Gori, Mulkha Singh and Shalu based on the disclosure statement of the main accused Kunal @ Lotus to the effect that they all together are involved in selling heroin.

14. The evidence against the petitioner: That the deponent humbly submits that the prosecution evidence against the present petitioner Gurpreet Singh @ Mannu is primarily based on the disclosure statements of the co-accused Kunal @ Lotus, Gori Shankar @ Gori and Mulkha Singh.

15. In case of dismissal of this petition, would the police arrest the petitioner in this FIR, and do they need the accused's police custody?:

That the deponent humbly submits that the present petitioner Gurpreet Singh @Mannu is along with co-accused persons was involved in drug peddling which they was doing while making a gang being defined as an organized crime. Hence, custodial interrogation of the petitioner is required to reach the origin of the contraband."

REASONING:

9. As per paragraph 12 of the status report, the name of the contraband is heroin, and its weight is 20 grams.

10. Dealing in 20 grams of heroin in contravention of the NDPS Act, 1985, constitutes an offense under the following provisions and notifications:

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Substance Name	Heroin/ Chitta/ Smack/ Brown Sugar/ Diacetylmorphine
Quantity detained	20 Gram
Punishable U/s	S.21(b) of NDPS Act, 1985
Quantity type	Intermediate
Drug Quantity in % to upper limit of Intermediate	8.00%

Drug's Small & Commercial Qty. suggested by Committee report	
Notification No. & date	Expert Committee Report dated 24.03.1995 & 23.08.2001 (Small and Commercial)

<i>Specified as small & Commercial in S.2(viia) & 2(xxiii) NDPS Act, 1985</i>		
Notification No. & dated	S.O.1055(E)	10/19/2001
Sr. No.	56	
Common Name (Name of Narcotic Drug and Psychotropic Substance (International non-proprietary name (INN)	Heroin	
Other non-proprietary name	*****	
Chemical Name	Diacetylmorphine	
Small Quantity	< 5 Gram	
Commercial Quantity	> 250 Gram	

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Declared as punishable under NDPS Act and as per schedule defined in S.2(xi) & 2(xxiii) NDPS Act, 1985		
Notification No. & dated	S.(xvi)(d) NDPS Act, 1985 (61 of 1985), S.O. 821 (E)	11/14/1985

Sr. No.	2(xvi)(d)	
Common Name (Name of Narcotic Drug and Psychotropic Substance (International non-proprietary name (INN)	*****	
Other non-proprietary name	*****	
Chemical Name	2(xvi)(d) diacetylmorphine, that is, the alkaloid also known as dia-morphine or	

	<p>heroin and its salts;</p> <p>Explanation.-- For the purposes of clauses (v) (vi), (xv) and (xvi) the percentages in the case of liquid preparations shall be calculated on the basis that a preparation containing one per cent. of a substance means a preparation in which one gram of substance, if solid, or one millilitre of substance, if liquid, is contained in every one hundred millilitre of the preparation and so on in proportion for any greater or less percentage:</p> <p>Provided that the Central Government may, having regard to the developments in the field of methods of calculating percentages in liquid preparations prescribed, by rules, any other basis which it may deem appropriate for such calculation.</p>
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11. Given this, the rigors of S. 37 of the NDPS Act do not apply in the present case.

12. Section 2 (vii-a) of the NDPS Act defines commercial quantity as greater than the quantity specified in the schedule. Section 2 (xxiii-a) defines a small quantity as a quantity less than the quantity specified in the table of the NDPS Act. The remaining quantity falls in an undefined category, generally called an intermediate quantity. All sections in the NDPS Act specify an offence and mention the minimum and maximum sentence, depending upon the quantity of the substance. The commercial quantity mandates a minimum sentence of ten years of imprisonment and a minimum fine of Rupees One hundred thousand, and bail is subject to the riders mandated in S. 37 of the NDPS Act. When the quantity is less than commercial, the restrictions of Section 37 of the NDPS Act will not attract, and the factors for bail become similar to the offence regular statutes.

13. It would be appropriate to refer to the evidence collected against the petition, which is taken from the status report, which reads as follows:

“14. The evidence against the petitioner: That the deponent humbly submits that the prosecution evidence against the present petitioner Gurpreet Singh @ Mannu is primarily based on the disclosure statements of the co-accused Kunal @ Lotus, Gori Shankar @ Gori and Mulsha Singh.”

14. Thus, the evidence collected so far consists of disclosure statements. Such statements can be proven subject to the mandatory restrictions imposed in S. 25 & 26 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872/ S. 23 of BSA, 2023.

15. In *Tofan Singh v. State of Tamil Nadu*, (2021) 4 SCC 1, the majority view of a

three-member bench holds as follows:

We answer the reference by stating:

(i) That the officers who are invested with powers under section 53 of the NDPS Act are “police officers” within the meaning of section 25 of the Evidence Act, as a result of which any confessional statement made to them would be barred under the provisions of section 25 of the Evidence Act, and cannot be taken into account in order to convict an accused under the NDPS Act.

(ii) That a statement recorded under section 67 of the NDPS Act cannot be used as a confessional statement in the trial of an offence under the NDPS Act.

16. The status report filed by the police reveals that the investigator arraigned the petitioner as an accused based on the disclosure statement of the main accused, from whose possession the investigator had recovered the contraband. No other evidence is collected at this stage to connect the petitioner with the main accused. Thus, there is no justification to deny bail.

17. In *Baldev Singh v. State of Punjab*, SLP (Crl). 2364-2025, decided on 09-07-2025, the Hon’ble Supreme Court holds,

The petitioner before this Court is seeking an anticipatory bail, which was declined by the High Court by an order dated 16.01.2025. The petitioner is an accused for the offences punishable under Section 15B of the NDPS Act and is facing investigation. Vide order dated 09.04.2025, interim protection was granted to the petitioner, subject to cooperation in the investigation. Having considered the entire facts of the matter and the statement made by Ms. Nupur Kumar, learned counsel for the State, we do not think that this is a case where custodial interrogation of the petitioner is required. Hence, the order dated 09.04.2025 is made absolute.

18. Quantity is non-commercial, petitioner’s name has been surfaced in disclosure statement of main accused as his co-seller, as such, no case for custodial interrogation is made out. Pre-trial incarceration should not be a replica of post-conviction sentencing. The evidence might be prima facie sufficient to launch prosecution or to frame charges, but this Court is not considering the evidence at that stage but is analyzing it for the stage of anticipatory bail. An analysis of the above does not justify custodial interrogation or pre-trial incarceration.

19. The law of bail, like any other branch of law, has its own philosophy, and occupies an important place in the administration of justice and the concept of bail emerges from the conflict between the police power to restrict liberty of a man who is alleged to have committed a crime, and presumption of innocence in favour of the alleged

criminal.¹ Personal liberty is a very precious fundamental right and it should be curtailed only when it becomes imperative according to the peculiar facts and circumstances of the case.² Personal liberty deprived when bail is refused, is too precious a value of our constitutional system recognised under Art. 21 that the curial power to negate it is a great trust exercisable, not casually, but judicially with lively concern for the cost to the individual and the community.³

20. The evidence collected might be prima facie sufficient to launch prosecution or even to frame the charges; however, it is insufficient for the purpose of denying bail.

21. Given the penal provisions invoked, the legal admissibility of evidence collected against the petition, coupled with the prima facie analysis of the nature of allegations, and the other factors peculiar to this case, there would be no justifiability for custodial interrogation or pre-trial incarceration.

22. Given the above, 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 anticipatory bail.

23. The investigation indicates that the petitioner is not the main accused, so the petitioner's bail shall not be treated as a precedent for granting bail to the other co-accused with a higher role.

24. 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 Arresting Officer, and if the matter is before a Court, then the concerned Court and due to unavailability before any nearest Ilaqa Magistrate/duty Magistrate. Before accepting the surety, the concerned Officer/Court must be satisfied that if the accused fails to appear, such surety can produce the accused.

25. 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)	

26. The bail order is subject to the petitioner's complying with the following terms.

¹Supreme Court of India in Vaman Narain Ghiya v. state of Rajasthan, [E-SCR] ; [2008] 17 SCR 369, Para 16, decided on 12.12.2008.

² Supreme Court of India in Siddharam Satlingappa Mhetre v. State of Maharashtra, SC 2J [E-SCR], Paragraph 127, decided on 02.12.2010.

³ Supreme Court of India in *Babu Singh & ors v. State of UP*, [E-SCR] P. 777, decided on 31.01.1978.

27. The petitioner is directed to join the investigation within seven days of uploading this order on the official webpage of the High Court of Punjab and Haryana and as and when called by the Investigator. The petitioner shall be in deemed custody for Section 27 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872/ Section 23 of BSA, 2023. The petitioner shall join the investigation as and when called by the Investigating Officer or any Superior Officer and shall cooperate with the investigation at all further stages as required. In the event of failure to do so, the prosecution will be open to seeking cancellation of the bail. During the investigation, the petitioner shall not be subjected to third-degree, indecent language, inhuman treatment, etc.

28. 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, 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.

29. 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 from the uploading of this order on the official webpage of this Court 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 it is otherwise permissible under the concerned rules. Restricting firearms would instill confidence in society; it would also restrain the accused from influencing the witnesses and repeating the offense.

30. In case the Investigator/Officer-In-Charge of the concerned Police Station arraigns another section of any penal offense in this FIR, and if the new section prescribes a maximum sentence that is not greater than the sections mentioned above, then this bail order shall be deemed to have also been passed for the newly added section(s). However, suppose the newly inserted sections prescribe a sentence exceeding the maximum sentence prescribed in the sections mentioned above; then, in that case, the Investigator/Officer-In-Charge shall give the petitioner notice of a minimum of seven days, providing an opportunity to avail the remedies available in law.

31. In Md. Tajiur Rahaman v. The State of West Bengal, decided on 08-Nov-2024, SLP (Crl) 12225-2024, Hon'ble Supreme Court holds in Para 7, "It goes without saying that if the petitioner is found involved in such like offence in future, the concession of bail granted to him today will liable to be withdrawn and the petitioner is bound to face the necessary consequences."

32. This bail is conditional, with the foundational condition being that if the petitioner repeats the offense or commits any non-bailable offense which provides for a sentence of imprisonment for more than seven years, or commits any offence under the NDPS Act, where the quantity involved is more than half of the intermediate, or commercial, or violates S. 19, or 24, or 27-A of the NDPS Act, the State shall file an application to revoke this bail before the concerned Court having jurisdiction over this FIR, which shall have the authority to cancel this bail, and as per their discretion, they may cancel this bail.

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

34. A certified copy of this order would not be needed for furnishing bonds, and any Advocate for the Appellant-Accused 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.

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

(ANOOP CHITKARA)
JUDGE

22.09.2025

Jyoti-II

Whether speaking/reasoned: Yes
Whether reportable: No.