

S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A
R E C O R D O F P R O C E E D I N G S

Petition(s) for Special Leave to Appeal (Crl.) No(s).1613/2026

[Arising out of impugned final judgment and order dated 22-12-2025 in CRM No.50573/2025 passed by the High Court of Punjab & Haryana at Chandigarh]

SUNNY CHAUHAN

Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

STATE OF HARYANA

Respondent(s)

(IA No. 28404/2026 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING C/C OF THE IMPUGNED JUDGMENT)

Date : 04-02-2026 This matter was called on for hearing today.

CORAM : HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE JOYMALYA BAGCHI
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE VIPUL M. PANCHOLI

For Petitioner(s) :Dr. Pankaj Nanhera, Sr. Adv.
Mr. Amarendra Kumar, Adv.
Mr. Rahul Gautam, Adv.
Mr. Gaurav Kumar, Adv.
Mr. Navneet S. Attri, Adv.
Mr. Kumar Murlidhar, AOR

For Respondent(s) :Mr. Deepak Thukral, Addl. AG
Mr. Himanshu Satija, AOR

UPON hearing the counsel the Court made the following
O R D E R

1. This Special Leave Petition contains a slightly unusual prayer. We say so because initially, the petitioner approached the High Court for the grant of regular bail in FIR No. 173 dated 08.08.2025 registered under Sections 109(1), 115(2), 117(2), 190, 191(3), 324(5), and 351(3) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and Section 25 of the Arms Act, read with Sections 16 and 177 of the

Motor Vehicles Act, at Police Station Sector-17, Faridabad. He was arrested in connection with this case on 11.08.2025. When his application came up before the High Court for hearing on 08.12.2025, it was adjourned to 20.02.2026, i.e., for a period of more than two months. The petitioner then applied for preponement of the hearing, but *vide* the impugned order dated 22.12.2025, his prayer was declined on the ground that the bail application of his co-accused had already been dismissed.

2. During the course of hearing and on a query posed by this Court, learned senior counsel for the petitioner submits that numerous bail applications are pending before the High Court of Punjab and Haryana at Chandigarh, where the next dates of hearing are being scheduled months later. Owing to this issue, bail applications remain pending for extended periods of time. On a further query and on an illustrative basis, he has submitted a chart of some of the bail applications which have been pending since May 2025 and have been adjourned to different dates in March 2026. The relevant Records of Proceedings have also been produced in order to display a court-wide pattern of repeated adjournments.

3. All that we wish to observe at this stage is that we are extremely disappointed to see the manner in which prayers pertaining to the liberty of individuals are being dealt with. We understand that Courts bear the burden of heavy dockets, featuring several matters that demand prioritization. However, among the miscellaneous matters, nothing can be more important than deciding the fate of an application for bail.

4. It is equally disturbing to know that in the Patna High Court, bail applications are not listed even for a preliminary hearing for months at a stretch. One of us (Hon'ble the Chief Justice) vividly recollects various matters coming to this Court, merely seeking directions for the pending bail applications to be duly listed before the Patna High Court.

5. We have no reason to doubt that the Hon'ble Chief Justices of the High Courts are cognizant that the High Courts, unfortunately, are unable to decide pending bail applications within a reasonable span of time. Such conditions continue to prevail despite this Court regularly indicating that timelines must be kept in mind while adjudicating matters where there is an inbuilt urgency owing to the very nature of the relief sought. It seems that the orders passed by this Court have not been able to bring about the desired sensitivity, due to which, the High Courts have seemingly not evolved any robust mechanism for time-bound adjudication of bail matters.

6. We are conscious of the fact that listing and prioratisation of matters for the purpose of listing is the exclusive prerogative of the Chief Justice of the respective High Courts, they being the masters of their roster. However, if people continue to languish in jails, their bail applications are not being heard, and there is an air of uncertainty surrounding when they will get to know the fate of their applications, we believe that this Court is under a bounden duty to lay down certain mandatory guidelines. However, before we do so, we consider it appropriate to direct the Registrar

Generals of all the High Courts to send complete details of the anticipatory bail/regular bail/suspension of sentence applications pending in the respective High Courts, along with the date of filing, date of decision, or the next date of hearing. Such details shall be furnished, for the time being, in respect of all the applications which came to be filed on or after 01.01.2025. However, if the applications filed prior to 01.01.2025 are still pending, details thereof shall also be furnished.

7. The above-stated information shall be furnished within a period of four weeks.

8. All the State Governments are directed to fully cooperate with the High Courts for early and time-bound adjudication of the bail applications/prayer for suspension of sentence. The States should be ready with the relevant information as and when the bail applications are listed for hearing, provided that a copy thereof has been submitted in the office of the learned Advocate General and/or the learned Public Prosecutor at least three days in advance. In such matters, the Investigating Officers or the authorized officer can also be permitted to appear online.

9. The Registrar Generals of the High Courts are further directed to circulate this order among the Hon'ble Judges of their High Courts with our fervent appeal to them to expeditiously dispose of the pending bail applications.

10. The Hon'ble Chief Justices are also requested to revisit their roster/listing arrangements. Wherever they find that there is a mismatch between the total pendency and the Bench allocated for

deciding such matters, they may expand the roster for listing of the bail matters.

11. Adverting to the case at hand, we find that the bail application filed by the petitioner is due to be heard on 20.02.2026. We request the Hon'ble Judge to decide the same on merits either on the date fixed or prior thereto, provided that the petitioner seeks preponement of the date.

12. Post the matter on 23.03.2026.

(ARJUN BISHT)
ASTT. REGISTRAR-cum-PS

(PREETHI T.C.)
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR