

IN THE HIGH COURT OF SINDH, CIRCUIT COURT HYDERABAD

CP No. D-784 of 2025

[*Asghar Ali vs. The State*]

Before:
Mr. Justice Abdul Mobeen Lakho
Justice Ms. Sana Akram Minhas

Petitioner / Accused : Through, Mr. Mir Murtaza Abro, Advocate

Respondent: : Through, Ms. Sana Memon, Asst. Prosecutor General

Date of Hearing : 03.6.2025

Date of Decision : 03.6.2025

O R D E R

1. **ABDUL MOBEEN LAKHO, J:** The Petitioner/Accused was booked under FIR No.50/2025, registered at Police Station Saeedabad, District Matiari, under Sections 9(1) and 3(b) of the *Sindh Control of Narcotics Substances Act, 2024* (“**Act 2024**”). Having been taken into custody, he has approached this Court seeking post-arrest bail.
2. The Petition for post-arrest bail has been submitted before this Constitutional Bench pursuant to the Order dated 22.04.2025, passed in CP No.D-937/2025 (*Syed Sahir Hasan v. Province of Sindh & Others*) by a Full Bench of this Court, which affirmed that, despite the prohibition on the grant of bail under the Act 2024, this Bench retains jurisdiction to hear bail applications filed through Constitutional Petitions.
3. The brief facts of the case are that on 05.05.2025, a police party was patrolling, when upon reaching Balandia Mori near Village Kareem Chandio, they noticed a person standing there. Upon seeing the police, he attempted to flee but was apprehended at about 1200 hours by PC Ubaidullah. A body search was conducted, leading to the recovery of a black plastic bag from the side pocket of his shirt. Upon inspecting the bag, four pieces of charas were found, weighing a total of 515 grams. Consequently, the Petitioner was booked in the aforementioned FIR and taken into custody.
4. We have heard the arguments advanced by the learned Counsel for the Petitioner/Accused as well as the learned Assistant Prosecutor General and have carefully perused the record.

- 5. At the outset, we observe that the Petitioner’s arrest was made under the provisions of the Act, 2024, which, by virtue of Section 35, expressly bars the grant of bail and excludes the applicability of Sections 496 and 497 of the *Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898*. In these circumstances, the Petitioner has approached this Court under its constitutional jurisdiction for the grant of bail.

- 6. In **Khan Asfandyar Wali v. Federation of Pakistan (PLD 2001 SC 607)**, the Supreme Court held that where a statute bars the grant of bail during trial, the Petitioner nonetheless retains the right to seek relief before the High Court under its constitutional jurisdiction.

- 7. As per the contents of the FIR, the Petitioner was apprehended at the scene with 515 grams of charas in his possession. He was taken into custody along with the recovered narcotics, which, prima facie, were secured in safe custody. According to both the Counsel for the Petitioner and the Assistant Prosecutor General, based on the alleged recovered quantity, the prescribed sentence under the relevant statute is imprisonment for a term extendable to nine years, but not less than five years, along with a fine that may be up to Rs.100,000/-.

- 8. It is a well-established principle that bail in narcotics-related offences is to be granted sparingly, given the grave threat such offences pose to society, particularly to the youth. This rationale underpins the statutory bar on the grant of bail under the Act 2024. Nonetheless, in the present case, the relatively minor quantity of the recovered substance warrants consideration in favour of bail rather than its outright refusal. What weighs heavily in our deliberation, however, is the fact that the Petitioner has remained in custody since 05.05.2025, without any charge having been framed or trial proceedings having commenced.

- 9. In response to our query, the learned Assistant Prosecutor General submitted that the Government of Sindh has, to date, neither established the special courts nor appointed judges as required under Section 30 of the Act 2024. However, in our view, the non-establishment of special courts cannot serve as a justification for delaying the trial of cases, particularly in light of the proviso to Section 30(3), which specifically addresses this contingency in the following terms:

30. *Establishment of special court:*
(1)
(2)
(3)

Provided that until the Special Courts are established under this section, the existing competent court shall continue to perform its functions for the speedy disposal of narcotics cases.

10. Given the lack of progress in the trial, the Petitioner is faced with the very real prospect of prolonged incarceration. Such a situation amounts to a violation of the Petitioner's fundamental rights, including the right to a speedy trial, which, under Section 35(2) of the Act 2024, mandates conclusion of the trial within six months. Considering also the relatively minor quantity of narcotics allegedly recovered, we are of the view that the grant of post-arrest bail to the Petitioner is justified.
11. Accordingly, the Petitioner is granted post-arrest bail upon furnishing surety in the sum of Rs.100,000/- (Rupees One Lac) along with a personal bond in the like amount to the satisfaction of the Additional Registrar of this Court. The Petitioner is directed to ensure his presence on each and every date of hearing without fail before the Trial Court.
12. The Petition stands disposed of in the above terms.
13. By our short order dated 3.6.2025 we had granted bail to the Petitioner. These are our reasons for doing so.

JUDGE

JUDGE

AHSAN K. ABRO