

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

CRM-M-18126-2026 (O&M)

NEERAJ KUMAR

PETITIONER

VERSUS

STATE OF HARYANA

RESPONDENT

1	The date when the judgment was reserved	09.09.2026
2	The date when the judgment is pronounced	11.09.2026
3	The date when the judgment is uploaded on the website	11.09.2026
4	Whether only operative part of the judgment is pronounced or whether the full judgment is pronounced	Full
5	The delay, if any, of the pronouncement of full judgment and reasons thereof.	Not applicable

CORAM: HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE SHALINI SINGH NAGPAL

Argued by: Mr. Hemant Bassi, Sr. Advocate with
Mr. Deepak Saini, Advocate and
Ms. Gursimran Kaur, Advocate for the petitioner.

Ms. Kanica Sachdeva, DAG Haryana.

Shalini Singh Nagpal, J.

1. Petitioner seeks regular bail in FIR No.467 dated 18.12.2025 under Sections 316(2), 318(4) and 61(2) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (B.N.S.), 2023, Police Station, Sadar Gohana, Sonapat. Sections 238(B) BNS, Sections 10 and 11 of Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 were added in the FIR during investigation. This is the first petition for regular bail.
2. On 17.12.2025, on secret information regarding leakage of question paper of CSIR-UGC NET Examination, scheduled for 18.12.2025, in exchange for ₹3-4 lakhs per student, police team reached near N.C. College to monitor suspicious activities between 12 noon to 05:00 P.M. During that

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time, a Tempo Traveller bearing registration No.HR-67E-6581 stopped on the service road near N.C. College. Several male and female students boarded the vehicle. After 10 to 15 minutes, the vehicle started and reached 'Narwal Kabaddi Academy', within the jurisdiction Police Station, Sadar Gohana, Sonipat. The SHO concerned was apprised of the situation and was asked to reach the spot. The police team entered the building and found students sitting in two rooms on the second floor. In one of the rooms, a person was explaining something to the students, who upon inquiry, disclosed his name as Neeraj Kumar Dhanak s/o Sudarshan r/o Kariha. The other person present disclosed his name as Sachin s/o Anil r/o Kariha. Upon interrogation, Neeraj Kumar Dhanak disclosed that they had provided question paper of CSIR-UGC NET examination scheduled the next day to the students for study purposes and there was a deal of ₹3-4 lakh per student. He further disclosed that he received the question paper on his mobile phone from his brother Dheeraj, which he printed using a laptop and printers and supplied it to the 16 Chemistry students and 21 Life Sciences students; that their associates Pawan and Ashish had contacted the students. He further disclosed that the question papers provided to the students would match the actual paper on the next day and on his assurance, the deal was finalized. It was further revealed that Neeraj and Sachin, along with his brother and other associates including Ashish and Pawan conspired to fraudulently leak the examination paper and induced the students. On the spot, two sets each of question papers of both subjects, one laptop, two printers and mobile phones of accused Neeraj and Sachin were recovered from the students and were handed over to Inspector Virender for further legal action.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner submits that co-accused Sachin, against whom identical allegations were levelled, had been allowed



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regular bail by learned Additional Sessions Judge, Sonipat vide order dated 20.03.2026. Petitioner was in custody w.e.f. 18.12.2025 i.e. for the last more than 10 months. The paper, which was allegedly recovered by the police did not tally with the question paper in the CSIR-UGC NET exam conducted on 18.12.2025. Investigation of the case was complete. Out of 23 witnesses, none had been examined. Petitioner, thus, deserved to be enlarged on regular bail.

4. Custody certificate dated 07.09.2026 and status report by way of affidavit of Mr. Devender Singh, HPS, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Mohana, District Sonipat, on behalf of respondent-State have been filed, which are made part of the record. Learned State counsel has opposed the prayer for regular bail on the ground that petitioner was prime member of the syndicate indulging in CSIR-UGC NET paper leak, scheduled for 18.12.2025. He was arrested from the spot, indulging in the crime, playing with the future of aspiring students and the crime was against the society at large. 03 mobile phones, laptops, printers, 02 sets each of question papers of Chemistry and Life Sciences and vehicles were recovered from the petitioner, whose direct involvement was *ex facie* established.

5. The object of bail is to secure the attendance of an accused person in his trial. The object is neither punitive nor preventive. Deprivation of liberty must be avoided unless the Court has reasons to believe that an accused will not be available to have trial. A man is deemed to be innocent until duly tried and found guilty and punishment begins after conviction. Though, seriousness of the charge is a relevant consideration, it is not the only test or factor. It would be improper for this Court to refuse bail only on the nature of allegations, when co-accused Sachin, against whom identical allegations were levelled has been allowed regular bail by learned Additional Sessions Judge, Sonipat vide order dated 20.03.2026.

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6. Petitioner is in custody w.e.f. 18.12.2025. Investigation of the case is complete and trial is in progress. Conclusion thereof is likely to take long. Petitioner is not involved in any other case. There is no reason to suspect that he would not be available for trial or would flee from the process of law. He has a fixed abode in Village Karotha, Village Sonipat. The witnesses involved in the case are police officials and petitioner is in no position to influence them. Considering the totality of facts and circumstances of the case, the period of custody and clean antecedents of the petitioner, the petition for regular bail is allowed. Petitioner is ordered to be released on regular bail, subject to his furnishing adequate bail and surety bonds to the satisfaction of Trial Court/Duty Magistrate.

7. Pending applications, if any, stand disposed of.

(SHALINI SINGH NAGPAL)
JUDGE

11.09.2026
HS.CHAUHAN

Whether Speaking/Reasoned :	Yes/No
Whether Reportable :	Yes/No