

2025:PHHC:123534



117 IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

CRWP-8343-2025
DECIDED ON:22.08.2025

ANKUSH DHANERWAL

.....PETITIONER

VERSUS

STATE OF PUNJAB AND OTHERS

.....RESPONDENTS

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANDEEP MOUDGIL.

Present: Mr. Jatinder Pal Singh, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. J.S. Rattu, DAG, Punjab.

Mr. Ankur Bali, Addl. PP,
for respondents No.3 and 4.

SANDEEP MOUDGIL, J

The jurisdiction of this Court has been invoked under Article 226 of the Constitution of India seeking a writ in the nature of *Mandamus* for directing the respondents to provide security for the protection of life and liberty of the petitioner and his family members, who apprehends danger at the hands of respondents No.5 and 6.

2. In addition to above, legal action has also been sought on the complaints dated 02.06.2025 and 23.07.2025, pursuant to which the petitioner has sought registration of an FIR.

3. Respondent No.2-Senior Superintendent of Police, Mohali, and Respondent No.4-Senior Superintendent of Police, UT Chandigarh are hereby

directed to examine the representations dated 02.06.2025 and 23.07.2025 (Annexures P-2 and P-3 respectively), along with the online complaint dated 23.07.2025 (Annexure P-4), and take appropriate action if the authorities deem it necessary, to provide security for the life and liberty of the petitioner.

4. During the course of hearing, certain glaring facts came to light, which this Court finds pertinent to recall in addition to the factual background that led to the filing of the instant petition.

5. The petitioner has stated that he provided professional legal services to Respondents No.5 (ex-Sarpanch) and his son, residents of Village Maidewas, District Sangrur. These respondents had approached the petitioner in 2022 to file a writ petition challenging the election to the post of 'Sarpanch'. It is asserted by the petitioner that the outcome of the writ petition was unsatisfactory to Respondents No.5 and 6, who then became furious and pressured the petitioner to refund the professional fees. Upon his refusal to do so, Respondents No.5 and 6 allegedly resorted to threats and intimidation.

6. According to the petitioner, these overt acts did not stop there. On 24.05.2025, 28.05.2025, 02.06.2025, and 23.07.2025, Respondents No.5 and 6 reportedly visited the petitioner's residence armed with weapons such as a 'Gandasa', 'Barcha', 'Kirpan', and 'dandas', openly threatening him to refund the money or face elimination of his family. The petitioner further submitted that on 23.07.2025, Respondents No.5 and 6 even entered the premises of this High Court and Bar Library, threatening him in front of his colleagues to "teach him a lesson," and warned that failure to return the fees would lead to his elimination. The petitioner claims to have immediately informed the

police, who arrived after the accused had fled the scene. These details are reflected in the petition as well as in the representations made to various authorities, including the Respondents No.2 & 4, along with an online complaint dated 23.07.2025 (Annexure P-4) lodged with Chandigarh Police.

7. Following these events, the petitioner approached this Court through the instant petition, alleging inaction on the part of the official respondents and seeking protection for his life and liberty, as well as action on his complaints (Annexures P-2 to P-4).

8. Having addressed the first prayer by directing Respondents No.2 and 4 to examine the threat perception to the life and liberty of the petitioner, the Court adjourned the matter on the second prayer, calling for a status report regarding the action taken. This report was eventually filed on 20.05.2025. Shri Ankur Bali, Respondent No.3, submitted a short reply by way of an affidavit dated 19.08.2025, executed by Uday Pal Singh, CPS, Deputy Superintendent of Police-cum-SDPO, Central Chandigarh, which has been taken on record and copy thereof, has been furnished to the petitioner in Court itself.

9. The affidavit acknowledges receipt of the online complaint dated 23.07.2025, which was registered at Police Station Sector 3, Chandigarh, under diary entry No.1131-5C dated 28.07.2025. It was further assigned to SI Kulwant Singh for necessary action and to report to the SHO concerned.

10. Additionally, paragraph 5 of the affidavit notes that the petitioner's statement was recorded following his call to the police. Based on the statement and the complaint, a public notice was issued to Respondent No.6 for appearance and to join inquiry on 10.08.2025. The petitioner was

also called to join the inquiry. Both the parties appeared before the Investigating Officer on 15.08.2025, where a typed written statement in Punjabi was submitted on behalf of Respondents No.5 and 6. This statement was duly signed by Respondent No.6 and endorsed by Respondent No.5 as correct, and has been placed on record as Annexure R-1 to the affidavit, along with the petitioner's statement dated 26.08.2025 at Annexures R-2 and R-3. The matter has been scheduled for further inquiry on 19.08.2025, to ascertain the source of the cash allegedly paid by Respondents No.5 and 6 to the petitioner.

11. At this stage the statement of respondent No.5 needs to be glanced at, which is reproduced hereinbelow:-

"Stated that I am resident of afore-mentioned address and is engaged in the work of agriculture. In the month of October, 2024, elections were held for the Sarpanch post wherein my father Balwinder Singh intended to fill his nomination form to contest for Sarpanch elections, however, the representatives of the opposite parties were not letting my father Balwinder Singh to fill the nomination form by levelling false allegation upon regarding usurping 21 kanal land at Village: Maidewas. And as such, we had approached the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court and had engaged Ankush Dhanerwal as our Advocate in & Rs.4,50,000/-. The said advocate had filed CWP No. 30383 of 2024 before the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court whereafter, the Hon'ble Punjab and High Court had passed an order in our favour to the extent that my father Balwinder Singh can file his nomination form for contesting Sarpanch elections. Thereafter on 03/10/2024, we had paid a sum of & 1 lakh in cash to Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate. Thereafter on 04/10/2024, my father Balwinder Singh had duly filled his nomination form for the Sarpanch election and on the said date we had paid a sum of & Rs.1,50,000/-through Google pay app by transferring the same to Ankush Dhanerwal and as such a total sum of & Rs.2,50,000/- were transferred to Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate. On 15/10/2025, elections were held for Sarpanch and without showing us the votes polled, one Satnam Singh son of Lal Singh who is from our village only was declared winner. Thereafter, on 17/10/2024, we had come to the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court and met our Advocate Ankush Dhanerwal and asked him to file an application for recounting of the panchayat elections held in our village before the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court upon which he had told us

that he shall obtain an order from the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court regarding recounting within 2 weeks. We had paid a sum of & Rs.50,000 /- in cash to Ankush Dhanerwal in the presence of Kulwinder Singh son of Gurdev Singh and Resham Singh son of Amarjit Singh Village: Maidewas on the same day. Thereafter, on dated 19/10/2024 Rs.40,000/-, Rs.7,35,000/- on 21/10/2024, Rs.10,000/- on 23/10/2024 and Rs.65,000/- on 24/10/2024 were transferred through Google play app to Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate and as such, a sum of Rs.4,50,000/-had been paid our fees. Thereafter on 27/11/2024, the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court, Chandigarh directed us to file a complaint regarding recounting of panchayat election before SIM, Sunam, District: Sangrur after which Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate told us that he will again re-file appeal before the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court and would get an order from the Hon'ble Court for which he had demanded a fee of Rs.5,45,000/- shall be incurred for giving it to the government pleader as well as Judge. We had agreed to pay the same to Ankush Dhanerwal who had again filed COCP No. 989 of 2025 before the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court and again we had paid a sum of Rs.85,000/- on 04/11/2024, Rs.50,000/-on 12/11/2024, & 1 lakh on dated 16/01/2025,50,000/- on 17/01/2025 Rs.50,000/-on 18/01/2025, & 10,000/- on 26/01/2025 and as such, paid a total sum of & Rs.2,60,000/- transferred through Google pay app to Ankush Dhanerwal Thereafter, on 28/02/2025, Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate did not appear before the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court. And as such, Hon'ble Punjab and High Court had dismissed our appeal bearing COCP No. 989 of 2025. Thereafter, we had tried to contact Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate telephonically to fix a meeting however he had started ignoring us and thereafter, we went to Village: Nagli, Tehsil and District: Tohana (Haryana) i.e. village of Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate where we found his house locked and we had met uncle of Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate in the village who is doing Karyana shop and had disclosed everything to him, had telephonically called Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate and return our money or get our work done and also, the uncle Ankush Dhanerwal and Sarpanch of said village had informed us that Ankush Dhanerwal had also committed fraud with other persons previously. Thereafter, Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate had submitted a complaint against us at the local police station of his village concerned i.e. Police Station: Sadar Tohana regarding giving him threats and we had gone to said police station to join the said enquiry where Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate did not come present, thereafter, we had asked for return of brief from Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate who without any provocation started threatening us of being an advocate after which, Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate had given a complaint against us at Police Station: Sector 3, Chandigarh wherein also we had appeared to join enquiry and there as well, Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate did not appear. Thereafter, we had gone to Hon'ble Punjab and High Court to meet another Advocate where Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate came and had called police

telephonically and had given false complaint against us. Thereafter on 12/08/2025, we had submitted a complaint against Ankush Dhanerwal before DGP, Chandigarh. Thereafter, Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate had approached the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court by filing a writ petition against us alleging threat to life and liberty. There is no truth in the petition as we have never threatened Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate and on the contrary, Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate was the one who gave threat of being an advocate to us and whenever we ask for return of our fees, he flatly refused to return the same. The statement has been recorded, read the same, same is correct."

12. Apart from the other allegations, a more serious concern regarding the conduct of the petitioner as an Advocate arises from the following portion of the statement:

"Thereafter on 27/11/2024, the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court, Chandigarh directed us to file a complaint regarding recounting of panchayat election before SIM, Sunam, District: Sangrur after which Ankush Dhanerwal, Advocate told us that he will again re-file appeal before the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court and would get an order from the Hon'ble Court for which he had demanded a fee of Rs.5,45,000/- shall be incurred for giving it to the government pleader as well as Judge. We had agreed to pay the same to Ankush Dhanerwal who had again filed COCP No. 989 of 2025 before the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court and again we had paid a sum of Rs.85,000/- on 04/11/2024, Rs.50,000/- on 12/11/2024, & 1 lakh on dated 16/01/2025, 50,000/- on 17/01/2025 Rs.50,000/- on 18/01/2025, & 10,000/- on 26/01/2025 and as such, paid a total sum of & Rs.2,60,000/- transferred through Google pay app to Ankush Dhanerwal."

13. The allegations made by Respondent No.6 against the petitioner are of a serious nature, claiming that the petitioner demanded a sum to be paid to both the Government Pleader and the Judicial Officer. However, the names of the Government Pleader and the Judicial Officer are not mentioned in the statement. It further indicates that the amount was actually paid in installments to the petitioner via Google Pay.

14. This Court is mindful and concerned of the fact that, just a few days prior, an FIR bearing No. RC0052025A0015 dated 14.08.2025 was

registered against a practicing advocate, namely Jatin Salwan, at the CBI ACB Chandigarh, for allegedly accepting a bribe in the name of a Judicial Officer, and the matter is currently under investigation by the CBI.

15. Having considered the factual aspects and the serious nature of the allegations involved, this Court finds it appropriate to refer the entire matter to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for an effective and thorough investigation. Given the complexity and sensitivity of the issues ranging not only from threats to the petitioner's life to the serious charges of alleged misconduct against him as an advocate but raises questions of integrity of an important pillar of democracy i.e. judicial institution of which the Bench & Bar are two sides of a coin and indispensable companion, an independent agency's involvement is necessary to ensure a fair and transparent inquiry.

16. At this stage, notice to Central Bureau of Investigation.

17. On the asking of this Court, Mr. Prateek Gupta, Advocate, who is present in Court, accepts notice on behalf of Central Bureau of Investigation and is, hereby, directed to take immediate cognizance of the complaints and allegations, investigate all aspects diligently, and submit a detailed report within a stipulated timeframe. The authorities shall extend all necessary cooperation to the CBI for the effective conduct of the investigation.

18. Accordingly, the present petition stands disposed off.

(SANDEEP MOUDGIL)
JUDGE

22.08.2025

Sham

Whether speaking/reasoned : *Yes/No*

Whether reportable : *Yes/No*