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**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH**

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Date of decision : 23.04.2026

BALJIT SINGH

... PETITIONER

VERSUS

STATE OF PUNJAB

.. RESPONDENT

CORAM : HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE H.S.GREWAL

Present:- Mr. Vivek Dahiya, Amicus Curiae for the petitioner.
Mr. S.S. Nahar, AAG, Punjab.

H.S. Grewal, J.(Oral)

1. This revision petition has been filed against the judgment dated 04.07.2007 passed by Id. Additional Sessions Judge/ Fast Track Court/Adhoc, Ludhiana vide which the judgment of conviction and order of sentence dated 02.02.2005 passed by Id. Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Jagraon, District Ludhiana has been upheld whereby the petitioner was convicted and sentenced to undergo as under:-

Under Section 304-A IPC	To undergo RI for one year and to pay Rs. 2000/- as fine and in default of payment of fine, he shall further undergo SI for one month
Under Section 279 IPC	To undergo RI for two months
Under Section 427 IPC	To pay Rs. 500/- as fine and in default of payment of fine, he shall undergo SI for 07 days

All the sentences were ordered to run concurrently.

2. The case of the prosecution is that at about 5:30 PM on 02.07.1997, complainant Gurdial Singh along with his nephew Parkash was travelling on a



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scooter towards Passi Nagar, Ludhiana, while Rajinder Singh (brother of the complainant) was riding a separate scooter ahead of them. Near Jodhan, a Jeep bearing No. DL-3C-9464, driven in a rash and negligent manner and on the wrong side, struck Rajinder Singh's scooter. As a result, Rajinder Singh fell and sustained grievous head injuries. He was taken to DMC Hospital, Ludhiana, where he was declared brought dead. During investigation, the driver of the Jeep was identified as Baljit Singh son of Gurnam Singh. The police conducted usual investigation, including preparation of site plan, recording of witness statements, mechanical inspection of vehicles, and postmortem examination of the deceased, and thereafter registered the FIR against the accused.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner contends that PW1 and PW2, who claimed that they were following the deceased and had witnessed the accident, cannot be relied upon. It is argued that neither of them took the deceased to the hospital, which casts doubt on their presence at the spot. Moreover, the defence witness, namely Sohan Singh, who had taken the deceased to the hospital, has deposed that PW1 and PW2 were not present at the place of occurrence. Therefore, the testimony of the alleged eyewitnesses becomes doubtful and unreliable, giving rise to serious doubt regarding the genesis of the prosecution case. He further submits that he is not assailing the impugned judgment of conviction on merits and restricts his prayer qua modification of the order on quantum of sentence. He also contends that the petitioner has undergone custody for a period of 09 months and 14 days out of the awarded sentence. The petitioner is not involved in any other case. He prays



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that since FIR in question pertains to the year 1997, a lenient view may be taken while passing an order on quantum by this Court.

4. Learned State counsel opposes the prayer of the petitioner and filed the custody certificate in the Court, which are taken on record. He further submits that the Courts below has passed a well reasoned judgment based on correct appreciation of evidence available on record. He has not refuted the fact that the petitioner is not involved in any other case.

5. I have heard learned counsel for the parties and have gone through the material placed on record.

6. The FIR in the present case pertains to the year 1997 and he has already faced the rigors of the trial for more than 28 years.

7. Hon'ble the Supreme Court in "***Deo Narain Mandal Vs. State of UP***", (2004) 7 SCC 257, has held that awarding of sentence is not a mere formality in criminal cases. When a minimum and maximum term is prescribed by the statute with regard to the period of sentence, a discretionary element is vested in the Court. Background of each case, which includes factors like gravity of the offence, the manner in which the offence is committed, age of the petitioner, should be considered while determining the quantum of sentence and this discretion is not to be used arbitrarily or whimsically. After assessing all relevant factors, proper sentence should be awarded bearing in mind the principle of proportionality to ensure the sentence is neither excessively harsh nor does it come across as lenient.

8. Further, a Division Bench of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Ravada Sasikala Vs. State of AP***, AIR 2017 SC 1166, has held that the



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imposition of sentence also serves a social purpose, as it acts as a deterrent by making the accused realise the damage caused not only to the victim, but also to the society at large. The law in this regard is well settled that opportunities of reformation must be granted and such discretion is to be exercised by evaluating all attending circumstances of each case by noticing the nature of the crime, the manner, in which the crime was committed and conduct of the accused to strike a balance between the efficacy of law and the chances of reformation of the accused.

9. A perusal of the judgment of conviction passed by the Courts below indicates no perversity in their findings and the same are based on correct appreciation of evidence available on record. However, learned counsel for the petitioner has not assailed the judgments, rather restricted the prayer only qua modification of quantum of sentence to that of the sentence already undergone by the petitioner.

10. As far as the question of quantum of sentence is concerned, it is worthwhile to note that the occurrence in this case pertains to the year 1997. The right to speedy and expeditious trial is one of the most valuable and cherished rights guaranteed under the Constitution. The petitioner has already suffered the agony of protracted trial, spanning over a period of more than 28 years and has been in the corridors of the court for this prolonged period. In view of the facts noted above, the case of the petitioner deserves to be dealt with leniency. The petitioner also deserves the benefit of the consistent view taken by this court in this regard. Thus, guided by the judicial pronouncements made by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the cases of [Haripada Das Vs. State of](#)



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West Bangal reported in (1998) 9 SCC 678 and *Alister Anthony Pareira vs. [2023:RJ-JD:28174] (5 of 5) [CRLR-755/2003] State of Maharashtra reported in 2012 2 SCC 648* and considering the facts and circumstances of the case, age of petitioner, his status in the society and the fact that he faced financial hardship and had to go through mental agony, this court is of the view that ends of justice would be met, if sentence imposed upon the petitioner is reduced to the period as already undergone by him.

11. Accordingly, judgments passed by the Id. Appellate Court Ludhiana as well as Id. Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Jagraon, District Ludhiana are hereby affirmed but the quantum of sentence awarded by the Courts concerned under Sections 304-A, 279 IPC and 427 IPC has been modified and reduced to the period of sentence as already undergone by him. The petitioner is on bail. He need not surrender. His bail bonds are discharged.

12. With these modifications, the present revision petition is disposed of.

13. Pending application(s), if any, shall also stand disposed of.

23.04.2026*renu***(H.S.GREWAL)
JUDGE**

Whether speaking/reasoned	:	Yes/No
Whether reportable	:	Yes/No