

\$~15

* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

Judgment delivered on: 23rd July, 2015

+ **CRL.M.C. No.2785/2015**

TARA CHAND & ANR. Petitioners
Represented by: Mr. Anshul Mittal, Proxy Counsel
with Petitioners in person.

Versus

STATE & ANR. Respondents
Represented by: Ms. Kanika Agnihotri, Proxy
Counsel with Mr. Ravi Nayak,
Additional Public Prosecutor for
the State with SI Ranjan Kumar,
PS Lajpat Nagar.
Respondent No. 2 in person.

CORAM:
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SURESH KAIT

SURESH KAIT, J. (Oral)

1. By way of this petition filed under Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, petitioners seek quashing of FIR No. 897/1999 registered at Police Station Lajpat Nagar for the offences punishable under Sections 420/471/34 IPC and the consequential proceedings emanating therefrom against the petitioners.

2. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the petitioners submits that the aforesaid case was registered on the complaint of respondent No.2, Sh. Sanjeev Jain. After investigation, the police has filed the chargesheet, charges have been framed and the case is pending for recording of

prosecution evidence. Meanwhile, the respondent No.2 has settled the matter with the petitioners vide settlement dated 29.05.2015 arrived at before the Mediation Centre, Saket Courts, New Delhi. Both the parties have undertaken to remain bound by the said settlement, therefore, he does not wish to pursue this case against the petitioners.

3. Respondent No.2 is personally present in the Court. For his identification, he has produced the original Aadhar Card, photocopy thereof is placed on record at page-9 (original seen and returned). The respondent No.2 submits that he has amicably settled all the disputes with the petitioners as per settlement dated 29.05.2015 and, therefore, has no objection if the present petition is allowed.

4. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the State submits that though the present matter stands settled amicably *inter se* the parties vide settlement noted above, however, FIR in question pertains to the year 1999. Due to which, Government machinery has been pressed into and precious public time has been consumed, thus, if this Court is inclined to allow the present petition, heavy costs may be imposed upon the petitioners.

5. Under the circumstances and looking to the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of ***Gian Singh Vs. State of Punjab and Another (2012) 10 SCC 303***, wherein the Apex Court has referred to a number of matters for the proposition that even a non-compoundable offence can also be quashed on the ground of a settlement agreement between the offender and the victim, if the circumstances so warrant; by observing as under:

*“ Resolution of a dispute by way of a compromise
between two warring groups, therefore, should attract*

the immediate and prompt attention of a court which should endeavour to give full effect to the same unless such compromise is abhorrent to lawful composition of the society or would promote savagery.

Where the High Court quashes a criminal proceeding having regard to the fact that the dispute between the offender and the victim has been settled although the offences are not compoundable, it does so as in its opinion, continuation of criminal proceedings will be an exercise in futility and justice in the case demands that the dispute between the parties is put to an end and peace is restored; securing the ends of justice being the ultimate guiding factor.”

6. While recognizing the need of amicable resolution of disputes in cases like the instant one, the aforesaid dictum has been affirmed by the Apex Court in a recent judgment in ***Narinder Singh & Ors. Vs. State of Punjab & Anr. 2014 6 SCC 466***. The pertinent observations of the Apex Court are as under:-

29. In view of the aforesaid discussion, we sum up and lay down the following principles by which the High Court would be guided in giving adequate treatment to the settlement between the parties and exercising its power under Section 482 of the Code while accepting the settlement and quashing the proceedings or refusing to accept the settlement with direction to continue with the criminal proceedings:

29.1 Power conferred under Section 482 of the Code is to be distinguished from the power which lies in the Court to compound the offences under Section 320 of the Code. No doubt, under Section 482 of the Code, the High Court has inherent power to quash the criminal proceedings even in those cases which are not compoundable, where the parties have settled the matter

between themselves. However, this power is to be exercised sparingly and with caution.

29.2. *When the parties have reached the settlement and on that basis petition for quashing the criminal proceedings is filed, the guiding factor in such cases would be to secure:*

(i) ends of justice, or

(ii) to prevent abuse of the process of any court.

While exercising the power the High Court is to form an opinion on either of the aforesaid two objectives.

29.3. *Such a power is not to be exercised in those prosecutions which involve heinous and serious offences of mental depravity or offences like murder, rape, dacoity, etc. Such offences are not private in nature and have a serious impact on society. Similarly, for the offences alleged to have been committed under special statute like the Prevention of Corruption Act or the offences committed by public servants while working in that capacity are not to be quashed merely on the basis of compromise between the victim and the offender.*

29.4. *On the other hand, those criminal cases having overwhelmingly and predominantly civil character, particularly those arising out of commercial transactions or arising out of matrimonial relationship or family disputes should be quashed when the parties have resolved their entire disputes among themselves.*

29.5. *While exercising its powers, the High Court is to examine as to whether the possibility of conviction is remote and bleak and continuation of criminal cases would put the accused to great oppression and prejudice and extreme injustice would be caused to him by not quashing the criminal cases.*

29.6. *Offences under Section 307 IPC would fall in the category of heinous and serious offences and therefore are to be generally treated as crime against the society and not against the individual alone. However, the High Court would not rest its decision merely because there is a mention of Section 307 IPC in the FIR or the charge is framed under this provision. It would be open to the High Court to examine as to whether incorporation of Section 307 IPC is there for the sake of it or the prosecution has collected sufficient evidence, which if proved, would lead to proving the charge under Section 307 IPC. For this purpose, it would be open to the High Court to go by the nature of injury sustained, whether such injury is inflicted on the vital/delegate parts of the body, nature of weapons used, etc. Medical report in respect of injuries suffered by the victim can generally be the guiding factor. On the basis of this prima facie analysis, the High Court can examine as to whether there is a strong possibility of conviction or the chances of conviction are remote and bleak. In the former case it can refuse to accept the settlement and quash the criminal proceedings whereas in the latter case it would be permissible for the High Court to accept the plea compounding the offence based on complete settlement between the parties. At this stage, the Court can also be swayed by the fact that the settlement between the parties is going to result in harmony between them which may improve their future relationship.*

29.7. *While deciding whether to exercise its power under Section 482 of the Code or not, timings of settlement play a crucial role. Those cases where the settlement is arrived at immediately after the alleged commission of offence and the matter is still under investigation, the High Court may be liberal in accepting the settlement to quash the criminal proceedings/investigation. It is because of the reason that at this stage the investigation is still on and even the charge-sheet has not been filed. Likewise, those cases where the charge is framed but the evidence is yet to start or the evidence is still at infancy*

stage, the High Court can show benevolence in exercising its powers favourably, but after prima facie assessment of the circumstances/material mentioned above. On the other hand, where the prosecution evidence is almost complete or after the conclusion of the evidence the matter is at the stage of argument, normally the High Court should refrain from exercising its power under Section 482 of the Code, as in such cases the trial court would be in a position to decide the case finally on merits and to come to a conclusion as to whether the offence under Section 307 IPC is committed or not. Similarly, in those cases where the conviction is already recorded by the trial court and the matter is at the appellate stage before the High Court, mere compromise between the parties would not be a ground to accept the same resulting in acquittal of the offender who has already been convicted by the trial court. Here charge is proved under Section 307 IPC and conviction is already recorded of a heinous crime and, therefore, there is no question of sparing a convict found guilty of such a crime.”

7. Both the parties who are present in the Court today, approbate the aforesaid settlement dated 29.05.2015, recorded before the Mediation Centre, Saket Courts, and undertake to remain bound by the same.

8. As regards the submission qua imposition of costs is concerned, I find force in the submissions of learned counsel for the State, however, considering the financial position of the petitioners, I am not inclined to impose cost upon them.

9. Keeping in view the legal position as discussed above, the settlement arrived at between the parties and the fact that respondent No.2/complainant is no longer interested in supporting the prosecution because of which, its chances of success in the matter are now greatly diminished, therefore, I am of the considered opinion that this matter

deserves to be given a quietus as continuance of proceedings arising out of the FIR in question would be an exercise in futility.

10. Consequently, FIR No. 897/1999 registered at Police Station Lajpat Nagar for the offences punishable under Sections 420/471/34 IPC and all proceedings emanating therefrom, are hereby quashed qua the petitioners.

11. In view of the above, the present petition is allowed.

12. A copy of this order be given *dasti* to the learned counsel for the parties.

**SURESH KAIT
(JUDGE)**

JULY 23, 2015

sb