

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CRIMINAL APPELLATE JURISDICTION

WRIT PETITION NO. 631 OF 2016

Floyd Pinto and Another.

..Petitioners.

Versus

State of Maharashtra & Others.

..Respondents.

Ms. Sneha Prabhu i/b Som Sinha for the Petitioners.

Mr. Siddarth Chandrashekhar i/b Li Shu Fen for Respondent No. 3.

Mr. F. R. Shaikh, learned APP for the State.

Coram : RANJIT MORE &
V. L. ACHLIYA, JJ.

Date : **February 16, 2016.**

P. C. :

1. By this writ petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India and also invoking the powers of this Court under section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, the Petitioners are seeking to quash FIR registered against them with Azad Maidan Police Station at the instance of Respondent No.3, being FIR No. 143 of 2015. The allegations in the said FIR against the Petitioners pertain to the commission of the offence punishable under sections 498A and 406 read with 34 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

2. Petitioner No.1 and Respondent No.3 were the husband and wife. Petitioner No.2 is the mother of Petitioner No.1. The matrimonial disputes between the parties gave rise to the filing of civil

as well as criminal proceedings by the parties against one another and the subject matter of present petition is one of them.

3. The learned Counsel appearing for the respective parties submitted that during the pendency of investigation into above FIR, with the help and intervention of family members, friends and well-wishers, the parties have amicably settled their differences by way of mutual settlement and pursuant to the understanding arrived at between them, the instant petition is filed for quashing the above FIR, by the consent of Respondent No. 3.

4. Respondent No.3 has filed an affidavit dated 15th February 2016 wherein she has stated that in view of the settlement of disputes between herself and Petitioner No.1 and there marriage having been dissolved by decree of divorce by mutual consent, she has no objection for quashing the FIR in question.

5. Respondent No.3 is personally present before the Court. On specific query made by us, she submitted that she has made the said affidavit on her own free will, without there being any pressure or undue influence. She has further confirmed that she has no objection

for quashing the FIR in question lodged by her against the Petitioners for the offence punishable under sections 498A and 406 read with 34 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

6. The Apex Court in *B. S. Joshi vs. State of Haryana reported [AIR 2003 SC 1386]* has held that in the event of settlement of matrimonial dispute, the FIR under Section 498A can be quashed, even though the said offence is not compoundable in terms of Section 320 of the Cr.P.C. The relevant observations of the Apex Court are contained in Paras 14 and 15 which are reproduced herein below:

"14. There is no doubt that the object of introducing Chapter XX-A containing Section 498A in the Indian Penal Code was to prevent the torture to a woman by her husband or by relatives of her husband. Section 498A was added with a view to punishing a husband and his relatives who harass or torture the wife to coerce her or her relatives to satisfy unlawful demands of dowry. The hyper-technical view would be counter productive and would act against interests of women and against the object for which this provision was added. There is every likelihood that non-exercise of inherent power to quash the proceedings to meet the ends of justice would prevent women from settling earlier. That is not the object of Chapter XXA of Indian Penal Code.

15. In view of the above discussion, we hold that the High Court in exercise of its inherent powers can quash criminal proceedings or FIR or complaint and Section 320 of the Code does not limit or affect the powers under Section 482 of the Code."

Similar view has been taken by the Full Bench of this Court in *Abasaheb Yadav Honmane vs. State of Maharashtra [2008(5) LJ.Soft 46]*.

7. It can, thus, be seen that the matter has been amicably settled between the parties. From the perusal of complaint, it transpires that the allegations are totally personal in nature. There is no element of public law involved in the crime. The offence alleged cannot be said to have any impact on the society. In these circumstances, and especially, in view of the law laid down by the Apex Court in the case of Madan Mohan Abbot vs. State of Punjab, [(2008) 4 SCC 582], we find that no purpose would be served by keeping the criminal proceedings pending except burdening the Criminal Courts which are already overburdened.

8. In the light of the principles laid down by the Apex Court in the aforesaid decision as well as in the case of Narinder Singh vs. State of Punjab [2014 AIR SCW 2065] we are of the considered view that there is no impediment in quashing subject FIR. Accordingly, petition is made absolute in terms of prayer clause (c).

[V. L. ACHLIYA, J.]

[RANJIT MORE, J.]