

HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH, BILASPUR**Cr.M.P.No.259 of 2017**

1. Ramesh Agrawal S/o. Shri Jaynarayan Das Agrawal, aged about 61 years,
 2. Smt.Alka Devi Agrawal, W/o. Shri Ramesh Agrawal, aged about 55 years,
 3. Raman Kumar Agrawal, S/o Shri Ramesh Agrawal, Aged about 32 years,
 4. Smt. Reena Agrawal, W/o. Shri Raman Agrawal, aged about 33 years,
 5. Dhananjay Agrawal, S/o Shri Ramesh Agrawal, aged about 30 years,
- All R/o. Naya Ganj, Itwari Bazar, P.S. Kotwali, Tahsil and District Raigarh (CG)

---- Petitioners

Versus

1. Smt.Sunita Agrawal W/o Shri Dhananjay Agrawal, aged about 26 years, R/o Gulmohar Colony, Chakradharnagar, P.S. Chakradharnagar, Tahsil and District Raigarh (CG) at present R/o Ward No.7, Ram Mandir Chowk Sakti, P.S. and Tahsil-Sakti, Disrict Janjgir-Champa (CG)
2. State of Chhattisgarh, through S.H.O. of the P.S. Chadradharnagar, Tahsil Raigarh, District Raigarh (CG)

---Respondents

For Petitioner	:	Mr.Abhishek Saraf, Advocate
For Respondent No.1	:	Mr.Akhtar Hussain, Advocate
For Respondent No.2	:	Mr.Gary Mukhopadhyay, G.A.

Hon'ble Shri Justice Sanjay K. Agrawal**Order on Board**25/04/2017

Heard.

1. This petition is against the order dated 10.2.2017 passed by the Judicial Magistrate First Class, Raigarh, District Raigarh in Criminal Case No.1233 of 2015 (State of Chhattisgarh Vs. Ramesh Agrawal and others) by which the application filed

by the parties for compounding the offence under Section 320 of the CrPC has been rejected holding that offence under Section 498A of the IPC is not compoundable.

- 2.** Facts of the case are that marriage of petitioner No.5 was solemnized with respondent No.1 in the year 2015. Petitioner No.1 is father-in-law, petitioner No.2 is mother-in-law, petitioner No.3 is brother-in-law and petitioner No.4 is sister-in-law of respondent No.1. F.I.R. was lodged by respondent No.1 on 25.8.2015 against the petitioners alleging that they are treating her with cruelty and demanding dowry, pursuant to which, F.I.R. No.276/2015 was registered at Police Station Chakradharnagar, District Raigarh for commission of offence under Sections 498A, 323/34 and 506 of the IPC and they were charge-sheeted before the jurisdictional Criminal Court.
- 3.** During pendency of the criminal case, both the parties have filed an application under Section 320 (8) of the CrPC for compounding the offence stating inter-alia that they have settled their disputes amicably, therefore, criminal case be dropped. The said application was dismissed by the trial Court holding that offence under Section 498A of the IPC is not compoundable and therefore, the Court has no jurisdiction to direct for compounding of the offence.
- 4.** Before this Court, the petitioners and respondent No.1 were present on 6.4.2017, their statements were recorded by this Court, in which they stated that they have settled their disputes amicably. Respondent No.1 has also stated that she is not desirous of prosecuting the FIR any further. It is submitted by the parties that they have settled their disputes amicably and respondent No.1 does not want to continue with the criminal case and has compromised the case without any fear, undue influence or any pressure. Therefore, the criminal case pending before the Judicial Magistrate First Class, Raigarh be quashed.

5. The Supreme Court in **Gian Singh v. State of Punjab &**

Another¹ has laid down the following principles :

“61. The position that emerges from the above discussion can be summarised thus: the power of the High Court in quashing a criminal proceeding or FIR or complaint in exercise of its inherent jurisdiction is distinct and different from the power given to a criminal court for compounding the offences under Section 320 of the Code. Inherent power is of wide plenitude with no statutory limitation but it has to be exercised in accord with the guideline engrafted in such power viz; (i) to secure the ends of justice or (ii) to prevent abuse of the process of any Court. In what cases power to quash the criminal proceeding or complaint or F.I.R may be exercised where the offender and victim have settled their dispute would depend on the facts and circumstances of each case and no category can be prescribed. However, before exercise of such power, the High Court must have due regard to the nature and gravity of the crime. Heinous and serious offences of mental depravity or offences like murder, rape, dacoity, etc. cannot be fittingly quashed even though the victim or victim’s family and the offender have settled the dispute. Such offences are not private in nature and have serious impact on society. Similarly, any compromise between the victim and offender in relation to the offences under special statutes like Prevention of Corruption Act or the offences committed by public servants while working in that capacity etc; cannot provide for any basis for quashing criminal proceedings involving such offences. But the criminal cases having overwhelmingly and pre-dominatingly civil flavour stand on different footing for the purposes of quashing, particularly the offences arising from commercial, financial, mercantile, civil, partnership or such like transactions or the offences arising out of matrimony relating to dowry, etc. or the family disputes where the wrong is basically private or personal in nature and the parties have resolved their entire dispute. In this category of cases, High Court may quash criminal proceedings if in its view, because of the compromise between the offender and victim, the possibility of conviction is remote and bleak and continuation of criminal case would put accused to great oppression and prejudice and

1. (2012) 10 SCC 303

extreme injustice would be caused to him by not quashing the criminal case despite full and complete settlement and compromise with the victim. In other words, the High Court must consider whether it would be unfair or contrary to the interest of justice to continue with the criminal proceeding or continuation of the criminal proceeding would tantamount to abuse of process of law despite settlement and compromise between the victim and wrongdoer and whether to secure the ends of justice, it is appropriate that criminal case is put to an end and if the answer to the above question(s) is in affirmative, the High Court shall be well within its jurisdiction to quash the criminal proceeding.

62. In view of the above, it cannot be said that *B.S. Joshi, Nikhil Merchant and Manoj Sharma* were not correctly decided. We answer the reference accordingly. Let these matters be now listed before the Bench(es) concerned."

6. The Supreme Court in **B.S.Joshi & Ors. v. State of Haryana & Anr.**² has held as under :

"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."

7. Furthermore, the Supreme Court in the case of **Jitendra**

2. (2003) 4 SCC 675

Raghuvanshi and others v. Babita Raghuvanshi and another³ has examined scope of compromise under Section 320 of Cr.P.C. in offence of non-compoundable nature.

8. The Supreme Court referred to various cases and has laid down that in cases of matrimonial matters, court should exercise power under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. sparingly and only it may exercise when the court is convinced, on the basis of material on record, that allowing the proceedings to continue would be an abuse of process of court or that the ends of justice require that the proceedings ought to be quashed.
9. In the present case, wife/respondent No.1 was present before this Court on 6.4.2017 and she has clearly stated that she has settled the dispute amicably and she does not want to continue with the criminal case.
10. Taking into consideration the fact that the petitioners and respondent No.1 have settled their disputes amicably and she does not want to continue with criminal case, it would be in the interest of justice to quash the criminal proceedings pending before the Judicial Magistrate First Class, Raigarh in Criminal Case No.1233 of 2015.
11. For the foregoing reasons, the petition is allowed and criminal proceedings pending before the Judicial Magistrate First Class, Raigarh in Criminal Case No.1233 of 2015 are hereby quashed. The petitioners are acquitted of the

3 (2013) 4 SCC 58

charges.

Sd/-

(Sanjay K. Agrawal)
JUDGE

B/-