

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH

CR No.1212 of 2017
Date of decision: 20.02.2017

Pritam Singh

... Petitioner

Vs.

Manjit Singh and others

... Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE RAMESHWAR SINGH MALIK

Present: Mr. Harsh Aggarwal, Advocate
for the petitioner.

RAMESHWAR SINGH MALIK, J. (ORAL)

Feeling aggrieved against the impugned order dated 31.01.2017 (Annexure P-7) passed by the learned trial Court, allowing the application of the plaintiffs to lead additional evidence, defendant has approached this Court by way of instant revision petition under Article 227 of the Constitution of India, for setting aside the impugned order.

Learned counsel for the petitioner, while placing reliance on two judgments of this Court in **Surjit Singh and others Vs. Varinder Singh and others, 2009 (5) RCR (Civil) 669** and **Nathu Ram Prem Chand Vs. Jagroop Singh, 2014 (60) RCR (Civil) 629**, submits that the learned trial Court has exceeded its jurisdiction, while passing the impugned order. He submits that once the order dated 09.02.2016 (Annexure P-4) closing the evidence of the plaintiffs by order of the Court has attained finality, which was never

challenged by the plaintiffs, present application for additional evidence was not even maintainable. Since the learned trial Court failed to appreciate this material aspect of the matter, while passing the impugned order, the same has resulted in miscarriage of justice and liable to be set aside. He prays for allowing the present revision petition, by setting aside the impugned order.

Having heard the learned counsel for the petitioner at considerable length, after careful perusal of the record of the case and giving thoughtful consideration to the contentions raised, this Court is of the considered opinion that keeping in view the peculiar facts and circumstances of the case, no fault can be found in the impugned order passed by the learned trial Court and the revision petition is liable to be dismissed, for the following more than one reasons.

A bare reading of the impugned order passed by the learned trial Court would make it crystal clear that it was not only the plaintiffs, who thought that these documents sought to be produced on record by way of additional evidence were necessary, but the learned trial Court itself found these documents to be necessary, for proper adjudication of the case. Once the learned trial Court has found that the documents sought to be produced by the plaintiffs by way of additional evidence would be necessary and facilitate the learned trial Court to arrive at a judicious conclusion, with a view to do complete and substantial justice between the parties, the learned trial Court was well within its jurisdiction to pass the impugned order and the same deserves to be upheld.

Further, the learned trial Court found the explanation given by the plaintiffs to be justified and sufficient to allow the application for additional

evidence. It has been recorded by the learned trial Court in the impugned order that the plaintiffs could not produce the evidence, now sought to be produced by way of additional evidence, at an early point of time, despite due diligence on the part of the plaintiffs. It is also pertinent to note here that the learned trial Court has compensated the petitioner by payment of reasonable costs, while granting only one opportunity to the plaintiffs to tender the documents in evidence. Having said that, this Court feels no hesitation to conclude that the learned trial Court committed no error of law, while passing the impugned order and the same deserves to be upheld, for this reason also.

Coming to the judgments relied upon by learned counsel for the petitioner, there is no dispute about the observations made therein. However, on close perusal of the cited judgments, none of them has been found of any help to the petitioner, being distinguishable on facts. It is settled proposition of law that peculiar facts and circumstances of each case are to be examined, considered and appreciated first before applying any codified or judgemade law thereto. Sometimes, difference of even one additional fact or circumstance can make the world of difference, as held by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in **Padmausundrao Rao and another Vs. State of Tamil Nadu and others, 2002 (3) SCC 533, Union of India Vs. Amrit Lal Manchanda and others, 2004 (3) SCC 75, State of Orissa Vs. Md. Illiyas, 2006 (1) SCC 275 and State of Rajasthan VS. Ganeshi Lal, 2008 (2) SCC 533.**

With a view to avoid repetition and also for the sake of brevity, the observations made by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in para 11 and 12 of its later judgment in **Ganeshi Lal's** case (supra), reiterating its earlier view taken in **Amrit Lal Manchanda's** case (supra) and **Mohd. Illiyas's** case (supra), which

can be gainfully followed in the present case, read as under:-

“11. “12....Reliance on the decision without looking into the factual background of the case before it is clearly impermissible. A decision is a precedent on its own facts. Each case presents its own features. It is not everything said by a Judge while giving a judgment that constitutes a precedent. The only thing in a Judge’s decision binding a party is the principle upon which the case is decided and for this reason it is important to analyse a decision and isolate from it the ratio decidendi. According to the well-settled theory of precedents, every decision contains three basic postulates; (i) findings of material facts, direct and inferential. An inferential finding of facts is the inference which the Judge draws from the direct, or perceptible facts; (ii) statements of the principles of law applicable to the legal problems disclosed by the facts; and (iii) judgment based on the combined effect of the above. A decision is an authority for what it actually decides. What is of the essence in a decision is its ratio and not every observation found therein nor what logically flows from the various observations made in the judgment. The enunciation of the reason or principle on which a question before a Court has been decided is alone binding as a precedent. (See: State of Orissa v. Sudhansu Sekhar Misra and Ors. (AIR 1968 SC 647) and Union of India and Ors. v. Dhanwanti Devi and Ors. (1996 (6) SCC 44). A case is a precedent and binding for what it explicitly decides and no more. The words used by Judges in their judgments are not to be read as

if they are words in Act of Parliament. In Quinn v. Leathem (1901) AC 495 (H.L.), Earl of Halsbury LC observed that every judgment must be read as applicable to the particular facts proved or assumed to be proved, since the generality of the expressions which are found there are not intended to be exposition of the whole law but governed and qualified by the particular facts of the case in which such expressions are found and a case is only an authority for what it actually decides. Coming to the peculiar fact situation obtaining on record of the present case, it is unhesitatingly held that learned Permanent Lok Adalat discussed, considered and appreciated each and every relevant aspect of the matter, before passing the impugned award. The only endeavour made by the learned Permanent Lok Adalat was to do complete and substantial justice between the parties and this approach adopted by learned Permanent Lok Adalat has been found well justified on facts as well as in law. Ed. See State of Orissa Vs. Mohd. Illiyas, (2006) 1 SCC 275 at p.282, para 12.

12. 15....Courts should not place reliance on decisions without discussing as to how the factual situation fits in with the fact situation of the decision on which reliance is placed. Observations of Courts are neither to be read as Euclid's theorems nor as provisions of the statute and that too taken out of their context. These observations must be read in the context in which they appear to have been stated. Judgments of Courts are not to be construed as statutes. To interpret words, phrases and provisions

of a statute, it may become necessary for judges to embark into lengthy discussions but the discussion is meant to explain and not to define. Judges interpret statutes, they do not interpret judgments. They interpret words of statutes; their words are not to be interpreted as statutes. In London Graving Dock Co. Ltd. V. Horton (1951 AC 737 at p.761), Lord Mac Dermot observed: (All ER p. 14 C-D)

"The matter cannot, of course, be settled merely by treating the ipsissima verba of Willes, J as though they were part of an Act of Parliament and applying the rules of interpretation appropriate thereto. This is not to detract from the great weight to be given to the language actually used by that most distinguished judge."

16. In Home Office v. Dorset Yacht Co. (1970 (2) All ER 294) Lord Reid said (at All ER p.297g-h), "Lord Atkin's speech.....is not to be treated as if it was a statute definition. It will require qualification in new circumstances." Megarry, J in Shepherd Homes Ltd. V. Sandham (No.2) (1971) 1 WLR 1062 observed: (All ER p. 1274d-e) "One must not, of course, construe even a reserved judgment of Russell L.J. as if it were an Act of Parliament." And, in Herrington v. British Railways Board (1972 (2) WLR 537) Lord Morris said: (All ER p. 761c)

"There is always peril in treating the words of a speech or judgment as though they are words in a legislative enactment, and it is to be remembered that judicial

utterances made in the setting of the facts of a particular case."

17. Circumstantial flexibility, one additional or different fact may make a world of difference between conclusions in two cases. Disposal of cases by blindly placing reliance on a decision is not proper.

15. The following words of Lord Denning in the matter of applying precedents have become locus classicus: (Abdul Kayoom v. CIT, AIR 1962 SC 680

"Each case depends on its own facts and a close similarity between one case and another is not enough because even a single significant detail may alter the entire aspect, in deciding such cases, one should avoid the temptation to decide cases (as said by Cordozo) by matching the colour of one case against the colour of another. To decide therefore, on which side of the line a case falls, the broad resemblance to another case is not at all decisive."

"Precedent should be followed only so far as it marks the path of justice, but you must cut the dead wood and trim off the side branches else you will find yourself lost in thickets and branches. My plea is to keep the path to justice clear of obstructions which could impede it Ed. See Union of India Vs. Amrit Lal Manchanda, (2004) 3 SCC 75, pp. 83-84, paras 15-18."

No other argument was raised.

Considering the peculiar facts and circumstances of the case noted

above, coupled with the reasons aforementioned, this Court is of the considered view that present revision petition is wholly misconceived, bereft of merit and without any substance, thus, it must fail. No ground for interference has been made out.

However before parting with the order and on the repeated requests made by learned counsel for the petitioner, it is observed that it shall be open to the petitioner to raise his all possible pleas before the learned trial Court at the time of arguments.

Resultantly, with the abovesaid observations made, instant revision petition stands dismissed, however, with no order as to costs.

[RAMESHWAR SINGH MALIK]
JUDGE

20.02.2017
vishnu

Whether speaking/reasoned

Yes/No

Whether reportable

Yes/No