

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

CRM-M-43130-2016 (O&M)
Date of decision : 17.01.2017

AMARJEET SINGH & ANR

...Petitioner(s)

Versus

STATE OF PUNJAB AND ANR

...Respondent(s)

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE JITENDRA CHAUHAN

Present: Mr. Gaurav Sharma, Advocate for the petitioners.

Mr. R.S. Nain, AAG, Punjab

None for respondent No.2.

JITENDRA CHAUHAN, J. (Oral)

This petition has been filed under Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure for quashing of FIR No.97 dated 17.11.2016, registered under Sections 186 and 353 of the Indian Penal Code (for short 'the IPC'), at Police Station Tapa Mandi, Distt. Barnala, and all consequential proceedings arising therefrom, on the basis of compromise arrived at between the parties.

Vide order dated 02.12.2016, the parties were directed to appear before the Illaqa Magistrate, for getting their statements recorded. In compliance thereof, report of learned Judicial Magistrate First Class, Barnala, dated 14.12.2016, has been received, wherein, it has been noticed that the compromise between the parties is genuine, voluntary and reached without any pressure and undue influence.

Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court in '**Vinod @ Boda and others Vs. State of Haryana and another**' passed in CRM-M-31765-2012 has held as under:-

“Vinod @ Boda etc. have preferred petition under Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (in short – the Cr.P.C.) for quashing FIR No. 13 dated 13.10.2010 registered under Sections 148, 149, 332, 353, 186 and 506 of the Indian Penal Code (in short – the IPC) Police Station Titram District Kaithal (Annexure P-1) on the basis of compromise Annexure P-2.

2. Report of the trial Court has been received that parties have arrived at a compromise.

3. Learned counsel for the parties have arrived at a compromise and this Court (Jitendra Chaudhan, J.) vide order dated 8.11.2012 passed in Criminal Misc. No. M- 31858 of 2012 titled as Ranjit Singh and Anr. vs. State of Punjab and Anr. allowed the compromise in respect of offences under Sections 353, 186, 341, 332, 427 and 34 of the IPC. Counsel for the petitioners also relied upon authority in C.W.P. No. 4964 of 2013 titled as Court on its own motion vs. U.T., Chandigarh and others and allowed the compromised.

4. Learned State counsel has submitted that compromise cannot be allowed for offence under Sections 353 and 186 of the IPC, as these offences are against the State.

5. I have considered the submissions made by both the sides and have gone through the records of this case.

6. So far as the reliance of petitioners on C.W.P.No. 4964 of 2013 titled as Court on its own motion vs. U.T. Chandigarh and others' case (supra) is concerned in that writ petition there was a dispute between the version given by the Head Constable on one side and Shri Rupinder Singh Khosla, Advocate on the other side and the Division Bench of this court entrusted the matter to the Registrar, Vigilance to carry out a fact finding inquiry.

7. As per report both the sides in the larger interest of the society and for maintaining harmony and strengthening the machinery of administration of justice have mutually decided not to refer the matter to

the Court of law and the case was decided accordingly. It was observed in that judgment that there was no likelihood of any success and this exercise would prove to be in futility. The FIR was quashed at the threshold.”

Hon'ble the Supreme Court in ***Gian Singh Vs. State of Punjab***

and another, 2012(4) RCR (Criminal) 543, has observed as under:-

“57. 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-dominantly 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 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.”

In *Narinder Singh and Others Vs. State of Punjab and Another (2014) 6 SCC 466*, it has been observed thus:-

“31. 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:

(I) 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.

(II) 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.*

(III) Such a power is not 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 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.

(IV) On the other, those criminal cases having overwhelmingly and pre-dominantly 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.

(V) 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.

(VI) Offences under Section 307 IPC would fall in the category of heinous and serious offences and therefore is 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 later 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.

(VII) 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 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.”

Hence, in view of the report of learned Judicial Magistrate First

Class, Barnala, dated 14.12.2016 made in pursuance of the order dated 02.12.2016 passed by this Court; guidelines laid down by Hon'ble the Supreme Court; and ratio of law laid down by Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court in Vinod's case (supra), this Court feels that no useful purpose would be served in keeping the proceedings alive. It will be in the interest of justice, if the settlement reached between the parties is accepted.

Accordingly, the present petition is allowed. FIR No.97 dated 17.11.2016, registered under Sections 186 and 353 IPC, at Police Station Tapa Mandi, Distt. Barnala and all consequential proceedings arising therefrom are hereby quashed qua the present petitioners.

17.01.2017*ashok***(JITENDRA CHAUHAN)
JUDGE**

Whether speaking/reasoned: Yes / No

Whether reportable: Yes / No