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

+ **W.P.(CRL) 3493/2017**

VISHAL VERMA & ORS. Petitioners

Through: Mr. Sanjiv Kumar, Advocate with
Petitioners in person.

Versus

THE STATE GOVT OF NCT OF DELHI & ANR. Respondents

Through: Ms. Richa Kapoor, Additional
Standing Counsel (Crl.) for State with
Mr. Ashish Negi, Advocate and
Mr. Sanjay Sharma, Advocate for
Respondent No.2 with Respondent
No. 2 in person.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE NAJMI WAZIRI

ORDER

% **19.12.2017**

Crl. M.A. No.20593/2017 (for exemption)

Allowed, subject to all just exceptions.

The application stands disposed off.

W.P.(CRL) 3493/2017

1. This petition seeks quashing of FIR No.12/2002 dated 08.01.2002 registered at Police Station Chandni Chowk, Delhi, for the offences punishable under sections 498A/406/506/377/34 IPC, pursuant to a complaint by respondent No.2, Ms. Sulekha Verma, daughter of Mr. Mohinder Kumar Verma, apropos a matrimonial discord with her erstwhile husband-petitioner No.1- Mr. Vishal Verma and his relatives, the other petitioners arrayed in this petition. The parties have since settled the lis by way of a settlement dated 08.11.2017 arrived at before the Delhi Mediation Centre, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi, whereunder the respondent No.2 is to be

paid a sum of Rs.26,50,000/- as a full and final settlement of all her claims against the petitioners. The complainant states that the said amount has been received by her towards full and final settlement of all her claims and no further amount, monies or articles are to be received from the petitioners. The marriage between the complainant and the petitioner No.1 has been dissolved by way of a decree of divorce on the ground of desertion. The complainant-Ms. Sulexna Verma has been identified by the Investigating Officer as well as by her counsel. She states that she does not wish to pursue her complaint and would rather look for happier times ahead in life. The petitioners have been identified by their counsel. The parties state that they shall abide by the terms of the aforesaid settlement. Their undertakings are accepted.

2. Ms. Richa Kapoor, the learned Additional Standing Counsel for the State, submits that the Chargesheet had been filed long back and the charges had been framed against the petitioners on 26.03.2008. She submits that since the respondent No.2 herself does not wish to pursue her complaint against the petitioners any further, no purpose would be served if the petitioners are directed to face trial. Therefore, the State has no objection if the present proceedings are brought to an end. However, she submits that since the State machinery was put in operation for the last more than 15 years, the petitioners should be burdened with some costs.

3. In the aforesaid circumstances, this Court keeps in mind the decision of the Supreme Court in ***Gian Singh Vs. State of Punjab and Another (2012) 10 SCC 303***, holding that even a non-compoundable offence can be quashed on the ground of a settlement agreement between the offender and

the victim, if the circumstances so warrant, and observed as under:

“58.However, certain offences which overwhelmingly and predominantly bear civil flavour having arisen out of civil, mercantile, commercial, financial, partnership or such like transactions or the offences arising out of matrimony, particularly relating to dowry, etc. or the family dispute, where the wrong is basically to the victim and the offender and the victim have settled all disputes between them amicably, irrespective of the fact that such offences have not been made compoundable, the High Court may within the framework of its inherent power, quash the criminal proceeding or criminal complaint or FIR if it is satisfied that on the face of such settlement, there is hardly any likelihood of the offender being convicted and by not quashing the criminal proceedings, justice shall be casualty and ends of justice shall be defeated.”

4. The amicable resolution of cases like the present one, is an abiding objective. The dictum of *Gian Singh* (supra) has been affirmed by the Apex Court in ***Narinder Singh & Ors. Vs. State of Punjab & Anr. 2014 6 SCC 466*** while observing:

“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.”

5. In a similar vein regarding matrimonial disputes the Supreme Court in ***Jitendra Raghuvanshi & Ors. Vs. Babita Raghuvanshi & Anr. (2013) 4 SCC 58*** held:

“15. In our view, it is the duty of the courts to encourage genuine settlements of matrimonial disputes, particularly, when the same are on considerable increase. Even if the offences are non-compoundable, if they relate to matrimonial disputes and the Court is satisfied that the parties have settled the same amicably and without any pressure, we hold that for the purpose of securing ends of justice, Section 320 of the Code would not be a bar to the exercise of power of quashing of FIR, complaint or the subsequent criminal proceedings.

16. There has been an outburst of matrimonial disputes in recent times. The institution of marriage occupies an important place and it has an important role to play in the society. Therefore, every effort should be made in the interest of the individuals in order to enable them to settle down in life and live peacefully. If the parties ponder over their defaults and terminate their disputes amicably by mutual agreement instead of fighting it out in a court of law, in order to do complete justice in the matrimonial matters, the courts should be less hesitant in exercising their extraordinary jurisdiction. It is trite

to state that the power under Section 482 should be exercised sparingly and with circumspection only 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....”

6. In view of the circumstance that the complainant/respondent No.2 herself does not desire to pursue the complaint any further, the FIR has been denuded of its substratum and any further proceeding emanating therefrom would be an exercise in futility.

7. In view of the aforesaid, FIR No.12/2002 dated 08.01.2002 registered at Police Station Chandni Chowk, Delhi, for the offences punishable under sections 498A/406/506/377/34 IPC and the consequential proceedings emanating therefrom are hereby quashed.

8. Before parting with the order, the Court finds substance in the contention raised by the learned counsel for the State that since the filing of the FIR in question i.e. on 08.01.2002, the State machinery for maintenance of law and order and the process for administration of justice has been kept in operation for almost 15 years. At this stage, the learned counsel for the petitioners, upon instructions, submits that the petitioners of their own volition shall deposit a sum of Rs.15,000/- with the Delhi High Court Mediation and Conciliation Centre. Let the same be deposited within four weeks from today and the proof of deposit be placed on record. In case of default, the Registry shall list the case for orders.

9. The petition stands disposed off in the above terms.

NAJMI WAZIRI, J.

DECEMBER 19, 2017/sb