

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT HYDERABAD
FOR THE STATE OF TELANGANA AND THE STATE OF ANDHRA
PRADESH

WRIT PETITION No.12918 of 2012

Between:

Patnaikuni Chandrasekhar & others.

Petitioners

VERSUS

The State of A.P.,
rep., by the Commissioner of Police,
Visakhapatnam, Visakhapatnam District
& others.

.. Respondents

Date of Judgment Pronounced: **24.10.2018**

SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL:

HON'BLE SRI JUSTICE P. KESHA RAO

1. Whether Reporters of Local newspapers may be allowed to see the Judgments? (Yes/No)
2. Whether the copies of judgment may be marked to Law Reports/Journals? (Yes/No)
3. Whether Their Ladyship/Lordship wish to see the fair copy of the Judgment? (Yes/No)

JUSTICE P. KESHA RAO

*** HON'BLE SRI JUSTICE P. KESHA RAO**

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% Dated 24-10-2018

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Respondents

! Counsel for Petitioners : M/s. T.V. Sridevi.

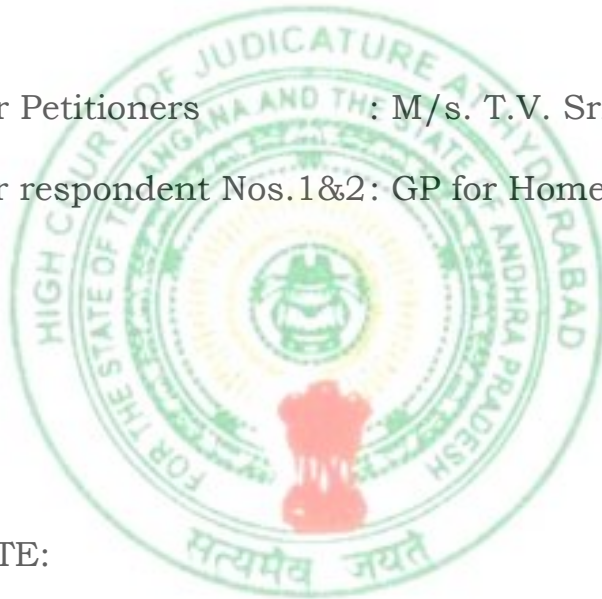
^Counsel for respondent Nos.1&2: GP for Home

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? Cases referred

1. (2007) 6 SCC 171
2. (2006) 5 SCC 733
3. (2008) 3 SCC 542



HON'BLE SRI JUSTICE P. KESHAVA RAO**WRIT PETITION No.12918 of 2012****ORDER:**

Heard the learned counsel for the petitioners and the learned Government Pleader appearing for respondent Nos.1 and 2.

The prayer in the writ petition is as follows:

“.... Hon'ble Court may be pleased to issue writ or order more particularly one in the nature of Mandamus declaring the action of the respondents 1 and 2 in not registering the F.I.R under Section 154 Cr.P.C against the 3rd and 4th respondents even though the report discloses cognizable and non-bailable offences against the 3rd and 4th respondents as illegal, arbitrary and violative of Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution of India and consequently direct the respondents 1 and 2 to register the crime and issue F.I.R against the 3rd and 4th respondents and be pleased to pass such other order or orders in the circumstances of the case.”

The case of the petitioners is that they have applied for the post of Marketing Executives in Good Friends Mutually Aided Co-operative Society, Visakhapatnam. Having satisfied with their qualifications and work experience, they were given employment with a monthly salary along with TA and DA. The nature of their job was to procure depositors and join them in the society and mobilize the deposits on daily, weekly and monthly basis. The Chairman, the 3rd respondent and the Board of Directors of the Society assured the petitioners that if the business is successful, they will enter into banking business apart from giving promotions and other benefits. The Chairman and the 3rd respondent forcibly taken the signatures of the petitioners on the blank papers and also on

the letter pads of Mutually Aided Co-operative Society and kept in their custody. Initially, salaries were paid for three months and thereafter, the petitioners were made to work without paying any salary by threatening to foist false cases against them based on the signatures taken on the blank papers. Since the payments are not being made to the depositors, the Sakshi daily newspaper published news items from 12th to 17th January, 2012. Thereafter, the depositors started pressurizing the petitioners to return the deposits made by them. In fact, the Station House Officer, IV Town Police Station, Visakhapatnam, summoned the Chairman of the Society and the 3rd respondent and they were taken into custody. At the instance of the 2nd respondent, 4th respondent stood as guarantee to the business of the Society and opened a bank account in Sri Kanaka Mahalakshmi Co-operative Bank for repaying the deposits to the aggrieved depositors through cheques. Thereafter, the 4th respondent proclaimed that they are the new management of the Society and they have taken over its activities into their fold. However, respondent Nos.3 and 4, suspecting that the petitioners are responsible for the entire issue, bore grudge against them and started threatening them with dire consequences if they did not take back the reports. In that connection, the petitioners lodged a complaint before the Commissioner of Police, Visakhapatnam. Though the complaint was lodged, there was no action from respondent

Nos.1 and 2 and they have not registered any crime. Aggrieved by the said inaction, the present writ petition is filed.

Learned counsel for the petitioners contended that respondent Nos.1 and 2 are duty bound to register a crime when once the complaint discloses commission of a cognizable offence. In fact, the complaint discloses commission of a *Prima facie* offence against respondent Nos.3 and 4. However, no action has been taken.

Per contra, the learned Government Pleader appearing for respondent Nos.1 and 2 contended that the writ petition is not maintainable, since the petitioners have got a remedy under Section 190 read with Section 200 Cr.P.C., against the inaction on the part of respondent No.2 in registering a crime.

Having heard both the counsel and from a perusal of the material on record, the admitted facts are that pursuant to the complaint lodged by the petitioners, the 2nd respondent failed to register any crime, though commission of *prima facie* case is made out, according to the petitioners. In this regard, Chapter XII of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, contemplates information to the police and their powers to investigate. Sections 154 and 156 Cr.P.C., relate to the information in cognizable cases and the powers of the police officers to investigate cognizable cases. When information is brought before the police about commission of any alleged offence, which is cognizable, the concerned police officer is

duty bound to register the crime. However, when the police officer fails to register a crime, the aggrieved party can resort to the provisions of Chapter XV of the Code and lodge a complaint before the concerned Magistrate.

In **Aleque Padamsee and others vs. Union of India and others**¹, the Apex Court had considered the similar issue and held as under:

“6. “4. When the information is laid with the police, but no action in that behalf is taken, the complainant can under Section 190 read with Section 200 of the Code lay the complaint before the Magistrate having jurisdiction to take cognizance of the offence and the Magistrate is required to enquire into the complaint as provided in Chapter XV of the Code. In case the Magistrate, after recording evidence, finds a prima facie case, instead of issuing process to the accused, he is empowered to direct the police concerned to investigate into the offence under Chapter XII of the Code and to submit a report. If he finds that the complaint does not disclose any offence to take further action, he is empowered to dismiss the complaint under Section 203 of the Code. In case he finds that the complaint/evidence recorded prima facie discloses an offence, he is empowered to take cognizance of the offence and could issue process to the accused.

These aspects have been highlighted by this Court in *All India Institute of Medical Sciences Employees' Union (Regd) v. Union of India* ((1996) 11 SCC 582). It was specifically observed that a writ petition in such cases is not to be entertained. The above position was again highlighted in *Gangadhar Janardan Mhatre v. State of Maharashtra* [(2004) 7 SCC 768], *Minu Kumari and another v. State of Bihar and others* ((2006) 4 SCC 359) and *Hari Singh v. State of U.P.* (2006 (5) SCC 733).

7. Whenever any information is received by the police about the alleged commission of offence which is a cognizable one there is a duty to register the FIR. There can be no dispute on that score. The only question is whether a writ can be issued to the police authorities to register the same. The basic question is as to what course is to be adopted if the police does not do it. As was held in *All India Institute of Medical Sciences* case (supra) and reiterated in *Gangadhar* case (supra) the remedy available is as set out above by filing a complaint before the Magistrate. Though it was faintly suggested that there was conflict in the views in *All India Institute of Medical Sciences* case (supra), *Gangadhar* case (supra), *Hari Singh* case (supra),

¹ (2007) 6 SCC 171

Minu Kumari case (supra) and *Ramesh Kumari* case (supra), we find that the view expressed in *Ramesh Kumari* case (supra) related to the action required to be taken by the police when any cognizable offence is brought to its notice. In *Ramesh Kumari* case (supra) the basic issue did not relate to the methodology to be adopted which was expressly dealt with in *All India Institute of Medical Sciences* case (supra), *Gangadhar* case (supra), *Minu Kumari* case (supra) and *Hari Singh* case (supra). The view expressed in *Ramesh Kumari* case (supra) was re- iterated in *Lallan Chaudhary and others v. State of Bihar* (AIR 2006 SC 3376). The course available, when the police does not carry out the statutory requirements under Section 154 was directly in issue in *All India Institute of Medical Sciences* case (supra), *Gangadhar* case (supra), *Hari Singh* case (supra) and *Minu Kumari* case (supra). The correct position in law, therefore, is that the police officials ought to register the FIR whenever facts brought to its notice show that cognizable offence has been made out. In case the police officials fail to do so, the modalities to be adopted are as set out in Section 190 read with Section 200 of the Code. It appears that in the present case initially the case was tagged by order dated 24.02.2003 with WP(C) 530/2002 and WP(C) 221/2002. Subsequently, these writ petitions were de-linked from the aforesaid writ petitions.

8. The writ petitions are finally disposed of with the following directions:

(1) If any person is aggrieved by the inaction of the police officials in registering the FIR, the modalities contained in Section 190 read with Section 200 of the Code are to be adopted and observed.

(2) It is open to any person aggrieved by the inaction of the police officials to adopt the remedy in terms of the aforesaid provisions.

(3) So far as non-grant of sanction aspect is concerned, it is for the government concerned to deal with the prayer. The government concerned would do well to deal with the matter within three months from the date of receipt of this order.

(4) We make it clear that we have not expressed any opinion on the merits of the case.”

In **Hari Singh vs. State of U.P.**², the Apex Court held

as under:

“When the information is laid with the police, but no action in that behalf is taken, the complainant can under Section 190 read with Section 200 of the Code lay the complaint before the Magistrate having jurisdiction to take

² (2006) 5 SCC 733

cognizance of the offence and the Magistrate is required to enquire into the complaint as provided in Chapter XV of the Code. In case the Magistrate after recording evidence finds a prima facie case, instead of issuing process to the accused, he is empowered to direct the police concerned to investigate into the offence under Chapter XII of the Code and to submit a report. If he finds that the complaint does not disclose any offence to take further action, he is empowered to dismiss the complaint under Section 203 of the Code. In case he finds that the complaint/evidence recorded prima facie discloses an offence, he is empowered to take cognizance of the offence and would issue process to the accused. These aspects have been highlighted by this Court in *All India Institute of Medical Sciences Employees' Union (Regd.) v. Union of India* ((1996) 11 SCC 582). It was specifically observed that a writ petition in such cases is not to be entertained.”

The above said proposition was also considered and held in **Divine Retreat Centre vs. State of Kerala and others**³ and held that wherever there is inaction on the part of the police to act on the complaint and follow the procedure under Chapter XII of the Code, it is for the aggrieved party to file a complaint under Section 190 read with Section 200 Cr.P.C. before the Magistrate.

The grievance of the petitioners is that respondent Nos.1 and 2 are not taking any action pursuant to the complaint lodged by them particularly in registering a crime. In such a situation, the petitioners have got every right to invoke the powers under Section 190 read with Section 200 Cr.P.C., and file a complaint before the Magistrate having jurisdiction to take cognizance of the offence and the Magistrate is required to look into the complaint in compliance with the procedure contemplated in Chapter XV of the Code. Therefore, the course left open to the petitioners is to approach the

³ (2008) 3 SCC 542

concerned Magistrate by invoking the provisions of Chapter XV of the Code. The petitioners cannot straight away file the writ petition without invoking the provisions of Sections 190 and 200 Cr.P.C. In that view of the matter, this Court is of the opinion that the writ petition, as filed is not maintainable.

Accordingly, the writ petition is dismissed.

Miscellaneous petitions, if any, shall also stand dismissed.

Date: 24.10.2018.
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L.R. Copies to be marked.

P. KESHAVA RAO, J

