

HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH, BILASPUR

CRMP No. 1832 of 2017

Mohit Kumar Sahu, S/o - Shri Chain Singh, Aged about - 33 Years, R/o - Village - Nawagaon Kandel, Police Station Arjuni, Dhamtari, Distirct - Dhamtari (C.G.)

---- Petitioner

Versus

Ghanshyam Sahu, S/o - Shri Bisahu Ram Sahu, Aged about - 32 Years, R/o - Village - Kandel, Post - Kandel, Police Station- Arjuni, Tashil and Distirct - Dhamtari (C.G.)

---- Respondent

For Petitioner : Shri Anil Gulati, Advocate.
For Respondent : None.

Hon'ble Shri Justice Ram Prasanna Sharma
Order On Board

19/06/2019

1. Heard on I.A. No. 01/2017, an application for condonation of delay in filing the petition.
2. For the reasons mentioned in the application, same is allowed and delay of 17 days in filing the petition is hereby condoned.
3. Also heard on application filed under Section 378(4) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 for grant of leave to appeal.
4. On due consideration, leave is granted.
5. This appeal is preferred against the order dated 29th August, 2017 passed by Judicial Magistrate First Class, Dhamtari, District – Dhamtari (C.G.) in Criminal Case No. 311/2016 filed under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 (for short “the Act, 1881”) wherein the said Court dismissed the complaint for want of prosecution.

6. It appears that the case was fixed for appearance and to record evidence of appellant/complainant. The complaint was dismissed on the said date on single default.
7. In the matter of **Associated Cement Co. Ltd. Vs. Keshvanand** reported in **(1998) 1 SCC 687**, Hon'ble the Apex Court held as under:-

“18. Reading the Section in its entirety would reveal that two constraints are imposed on the court for exercising the power under the Section. First is, if the court thinks that in a situation it is proper to adjourn the hearing then the Magistrate shall not acquit the accused. Second is, when the Magistrate considers that personal attendance of the complainant is not necessary on that day the Magistrate has the power to dispense with his attendance and proceed with the case. When the Court notices that the complainant is absent on a particular day the court must consider whether personal attendance of the complainant is essential on that day for progress of the case and also whether the situation does not justify the case being adjourned to another date due to any other reason. If the situation does not justify the case being adjourned the Court is free to dismiss the complaint and acquit the accused. But if the presence of the complainant on that day was quite unnecessary then resorting to the step of axing down the complaint may not be a proper exercise of the power envisaged in the section. The discretion must, therefore be exercised judicially and fairly without impairing the cause of administration of criminal justice.”

8. Again, in the matter of **Mohd. Azeem Vs. A. Venkatesh & another** reported in **(2002) 7 SCC 726**, Hon'ble the Apex Court held that in a proceeding under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, the single default in appearance on the part of the

complainant, the dismissal of the complaint case is not proper, legal and justified.

9. Dismissal of complaint was not the only option before the trial Court.

The trial Court should have adjourned the case for some other day as provided under Section 256 (1) of Cr.P.C. but that is not done in the present case. Court should try to decide the case on merits and it should not be sent to the record room without deciding the issues between the parties. As dismissal for single default is not just and proper, the order passed by the trial Court is not sustainable.

10. Accordingly, order passed by the trial Court is set aside allowing the petition. The trial Court is directed to proceed with the case in accordance with law after providing opportunity to both the parties and decide the issues between the parties on merit.

11. The appellant shall appear before the trial Court for further proceedings on 2nd August, 2019.

12. Consequently, the petition stands dismissed at motion stage itself.

Sd/-
(Ram Prasanna Sharma)
Judge