

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

CRM-M-23589-2020 (O&M)

Date of decision: 21.8.2020

Surinder Kaur

.....Petitioner.

vs.

State of Punjab and others

.....Respondents.

CORAM: - HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANJAY KUMAR

Present: - Mr. Kehar Singh Hissowal, Advocate, for the petitioner.

Mr. Hittan Nehra, Additional Advocate General, Punjab.

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Sanjay Kumar, J. (ORAL)

The petitioner's grievance is that the police authorities of the State of Punjab are not taking appropriate action upon her representation dated 22.6.2020, whereby she alleged commission of a cognizable offence by the fourth respondent.

As this Court does not propose to go into the merits of the allegations levelled by the petitioner against the fourth respondent or venture any opinion on the merits of the matter, it is not necessary to put the fourth respondent on notice or afford him an opportunity of hearing.

In the light of the law laid down by a Constitution Bench in Lalita Kumari vs. Government of Uttar Pradesh and others {(2014) 2 Supreme Court Cases 1}, it is not open to the police authorities to remain somnolent after receiving a complaint as to the commission of a cognizable offence. The directions of the Supreme Court in this regard read as under:

'120.1. The registration of FIR is mandatory under Section 154 of the Code, if the information discloses commission of a cognizable offence and no preliminary inquiry is permissible in such a situation.

120.2. If the information received does not disclose a cognizable offence but indicates the necessity for an inquiry, a preliminary inquiry may be conducted only to ascertain whether cognizable offence is disclosed or not.

120.3. If the inquiry discloses the commission of a cognizable offence, the FIR must be registered. In cases where preliminary inquiry ends in closing the complaint, a copy of the entry of such closure must be supplied to the first informant forthwith and not later than one week. It must disclose reasons in brief for closing the complaint and not proceeding further.

120.4. The police officer cannot avoid his duty of registering offence if cognizable offence is disclosed. Action must be taken against erring officers who do not register the FIR if information received by him discloses a cognizable offence.

120.5. The scope of preliminary inquiry is not to verify the veracity or otherwise of the information received but only to ascertain whether the information reveals any cognizable offence.

120.6. As to what type and in which cases preliminary inquiry is to be conducted will depend on the facts and circumstances of each case. The category of cases in which preliminary inquiry may be made are as under:

- a) Matrimonial disputes/ family disputes
- b) Commercial offences
- c) Medical negligence cases
- d) Corruption cases
- e) Cases where there is abnormal delay/laches in initiating criminal prosecution, for example, over 3 months delay in reporting the matter without satisfactorily explaining the reasons for delay.

The aforesaid are only illustrations and not exhaustive of all conditions which may warrant preliminary inquiry.

120.7. While ensuring and protecting the rights of the accused and the complainant, a preliminary inquiry should be made time bound and in any case it should not exceed 7 days. The fact of such delay and the causes of it must be reflected in the General Diary entry.

120.8. Since the General Diary/Station Diary/Daily Diary is the record of all information received in a police station, we direct that all information relating to cognizable offences, whether resulting in registration of FIR or leading to an inquiry, must be mandatorily and meticulously reflected in the said Diary and the decision to conduct a preliminary inquiry must also be reflected, as mentioned above.'

The record reflects that the petitioner approached the Senior Superintendent of Police, Fatehgarh Sahib, by way of her representation, alleging commission of the offence. Though the petitioner should approach the jurisdictional Station House Officer in the first instance, Section 154(3) Cr. P.C. permits an aggrieved party to approach the Superintendent of Police also.

In the light of the authoritative edict of the Supreme Court, set out *supra*, this petition is disposed of directing the Senior Superintendent of Police, Fatehgarh Sahib, and the Station House Officer, Police Station City Fatehgarh Sahib, District Fatehgarh Sahib, to take appropriate action upon the complaint of the petitioners in terms of the aforesaid directions of the Supreme Court.

(SANJAY KUMAR)
JUDGE

21.8.2020

preeti

whether speaking/non speaking

yes/no

whether reportable/non reportable

yes/no