

HONOURABLE JUSTICE G. SRI DEVI

CRIMINAL APPEAL No.1432 of 2009

JUDGMENT:

Appellant-State filed the present Criminal Appeal by invoking the provision under Section 378(1) and (3) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, challenging the judgment dated 12.12.2007 rendered in S.C.No.50 of 2007 on the file of the Special Sessions Judge for Trial of Offences under SCs & STs (POA) Act, Karimnagar, wherein and whereby the learned Sessions Judge acquitted the respondents/A1, A2, A4 and A6 for the offence punishable under Section 3(1)(x) of SCs & STs (POA) Act, 1989.

2. The case of the prosecution, in brief, is that on 24.11.2006 at 1700 hours, the de-facto complainant lodged a report stating that due to land disputes, the accused had intentionally insulted the de-facto complainant by abusing him in filthy language in the name of his caste. Based on the said complaint, a case in Cr.No.75 of 2006 was registered against the accused for the offence under Section 3(1)(x) of SCs & STs (POA) Act, 1989.

3. Heard learned Public Prosecutor for the appellant-State and perused the record.

4. A perusal of the impugned judgment goes to show that the learned Sessions Judge, after considering the entire evidence and the documents, observed that there was clear discrepancy in the evidence of P.Ws.1 to 7 with regard to the abusive words made by the accused towards the de-facto complainant in the name of his

caste, and acquitted the accused. The learned Sessions Judge after appreciating the entire evidence in proper perspective has rightly acquitted the accused. Further, in an appeal against acquittal, the scope of this Court is very limited and if any perversity or illegality appears on the face of the record, then only this Court can interfere with the finding of the lower Court. It is well settled that in an appeal against acquittal, the Appellate Court can interfere only when there is possibility of one view, which is pointing towards the guilt of the accused. When there is possibility of two views and one view, which is in favour of the accused, is taken into account and the accused is acquitted by the competent Court, there is no need to interfere with the order passed by the trial Court.

5. In ***Mrinal Das v. State of Tripura***¹ the Apex Court held as under:

“It is clear that in an appeal against acquittal in the absence of perversity in the judgment and order, interference by this Court exercising its extraordinary jurisdiction, is not warranted. However, if the appeal is heard by an appellate court, being the final court of fact, is fully competent to re-appreciate, reconsider and review the evidence and take its own decision. In other words, law does not prescribe any limitation, restriction or condition on exercise of such power and the appellate court is free to arrive at its own conclusion keeping in mind that acquittal provides for presumption in favour of the accused. The presumption of innocence is available to the person and in criminal jurisprudence every person is presumed to be innocent unless he is proved guilty by the competent court. If two reasonable views are possible on the basis of the evidence on record, the appellate court should not disturb the findings of acquittal. There is no limitation on the part of the appellate court to review the evidence upon which

¹ (2011) 9 SCC 479

the order of acquittal is found and to come to its own conclusion. The appellate court can also review the conclusion arrived at by the trial Court with respect to both facts and law. While dealing with the appeal against acquittal preferred by the State, it is the duty of the appellate court to marshal the entire evidence on record and only by giving cogent and adequate reasons set aside the judgment of acquittal. An order of acquittal is to be interfered with only when there are "compelling and substantial reasons" for doing so. If the order is "clearly unreasonable", it is a compelling reason for interference. When the trial Court has ignored the evidence or misread the material evidence or has ignored material documents like dying declaration/report of ballistic experts etc., the appellate court is competent to reverse the decision of the trial Court depending on the materials placed."

6. In ***Maloth Somaraju v. State of Andhra Pradesh***² the Apex Court held that there can be no two opinions that merely because the acquittal is found to be wrong and another view can be taken, the judgment of acquittal cannot be upset. The appellate Court has more and serious responsibility while dealing with the judgment of acquittal and unless the acquittal is found to be perverse or not at all supportable and where the appellate Court comes to the conclusion that conviction is a must, the judgment of acquittal cannot be upset. The appellate Court has to examine as to whether the trial Court, while upsetting the acquittal, has taken such care.

7. In view of the judgments referred to above and having regard to the facts and circumstances of the case, I am of the view that there are no merits in the appeal and the same is liable to be dismissed.

² (2011) 8 SCC 635

8. Hence, the Criminal Appeal is dismissed confirming the judgment dated 12.12.2007 in S.C.No.50 of 2007 on the file of the Special Sessions Judge for Trial of Offences under SCs & STS (POA) Act, Karimnagar.

9. Miscellaneous applications, if any pending in this appeal, shall stand dismissed.

G. SRI DEVI, J

16th February, 2021

sj

