

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ORISSA AT CUTTACK

CRLMC No.3014 of 2019

Nakula Jena & others.

....

Petitioners

-versus-

State of Odisha & another.

....

Opposite Parties

CORAM: JUSTICE S.PUJAHARI

ORDER

25.04.2022

Order No.

06.

1. This matter is taken up through Hybrid mode.
2. This application under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. has been filed by the petitioners to quash the order of cognizance dated 28.12.2018 as well as the criminal proceeding in G.R. Case No.972 of 2018, arising out of Chandaka P.S. Case No.139 of 2018, for alleged commission of offences punishable under Sections 341, 294, 323, 325, 324, 307, 506 and 354/34 of I.P.C., pending in the Court of the learned J.M.F.C.(O), Bhubaneswar.
3. A joint affidavit has been filed by the petitioners as well as the opposite party no.2-Informant, so also the injured persons indicating therein that at the intervention of the well-wishers, the dispute between them has already been amicably settled outside the Court and they do not want to proceed with the case against the petitioners further.

4. Learned counsel for the State does not oppose such submissions. A memo dated 21.01.2020 has been filed by the learned Addl. Standing counsel appearing for the State enclosing the report of the I.I.C., Chandaka Police Station indicating therein that the dispute has already been settled / compromised between the parties in presence of village gentries.

5. Relying on a decision of the Apex Court in the case of ***Narinder Singh and others vrs. State of Punjab and another***, reported in (2014) 6 SCC 466, the learned counsel for the parties submit that since the dispute between the parties having already been amicably settled outside the Court, the present CRLMC should be allowed and the entire criminal prosecution in G.R. Case No.972 of 2018, arising out of Chandaka P.S. Case No.139 of 2018 pending in the Court of the J.M.F.C.(O), Bhubaneswar be quashed.

6. Admittedly, the opposite party no.2-Informant and other injured persons were present in Court on 21.01.2020 and stated that they have voluntarily entered into the compromise.

7. I have gone through the joint affidavit filed and other papers available on record.

8. No doubt, some of the offences are non-compoundable in nature. Non-compoundability of an offence does not stand on the way of the Court for quashment of the proceeding in appropriate cases in exercise of power under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. In this regard, the Apex Court in the case of ***Narinder Singh and others vrs. State of Punjab and another***, reported in (2014) 6 SCC 466 taking note of almost all the earlier decision, such as, *Gian Singh vrs. State of Punjab*, (2012) 10 SCC 303, *B.S. Joshi vrs. State of*

Haryana, (2003) 4 SCC 675, Rajendra Harakchand Bhandari vrs. State of Maharashtra, (2011) 13 SCC 311, Dimpey Gujral vrs. UT, Chandigarh, (2013) 11 SCC 497, Shiji vrs. Radhika, (2011) 10 SCC 705, State of Rajasthan vrs. Shambhu Kewat, (2014) 4 SCC 149, in paragraph-29 have held as follows :-

“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 its 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 aground 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.”

9. No doubt, some of the offences are non-compoundable in nature. Non-compoundability of an offence does not stand on the way of the Court for quashment of the proceeding in appropriate cases in exercise of power under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. So, placing reliance on the decision of the Apex Court in the case of **Narinder Singh (supra)** wherein it has been held that the Court should be liberal in such cases for quashment of criminal proceeding / investigation, this Court is of the view that the criminal prosecution / investigation launched against the petitioners needs to be quashed in exercise of power under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. in the present case, particularly for the ends of justice.

10. In the circumstances, the compromise is accepted and the impugned order of cognizance as well as the proceeding in G.R. Case No.972 of 2018, arising out of Chandaka P.S. Case No.139 of 2018 on the file of the learned J.M.F.C.(O), Bhubaneswar against the present petitioners is hereby quashed. The trial Court shall do well to comply with this order on production of the certified copy of this order.

11. This CRLMC is accordingly allowed.

12. Urgent certified copy of this order be granted on proper application.

(S. Pujahari)
Judge

MRS