

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

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**CRM-M-1769-2021 (O&M)
Date of Decision: 14.12.2022**

Gobind Singh

...Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab and Another

...Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE JAGMOHAN BANSAL

Present:- Mr. Mayur Karkra, Advocate,
for the petitioner

Mr. Digvijay Nagpal, AAG, Punjab

Mr. Ajay Kripal Singh, Advocate for
Mr. Mohit Rathee, Advocate
for respondent No.2.

JAGMOHAN BANSAL, J. (Oral)

The instant petition has been filed under Section 482 Cr.P.C. seeking quashing of FIR No.0006 dated 15.01.2020 (Annexure P-1) under Sections 307, 109 & 34 of IPC and Section 25 of Arms Act, 1959, registered at Police Station Ghanaur, District Patiala and all consequent proceedings arising thereon, on the basis of compromise dated 30.01.2020 (Annexure P-3).

In terms of order dated 08.03.2021 of this Court, JMIC, Rajpura, has submitted her report dated 2.04.2021. The relevant extracts of the report are as below:-

“4. Today, Investigating Officer ASI Balbir Singh, Belt No.2701/PTA appeared in the Court and suffered a separate statement that as per record, the present FIR was registered on the statement of complainant Harpreet Singh son of Kesar Singh of Village Chamaru, U/s 307 IPC, 25/54/59 Arms Act dated 15.01.2020 against accused Gobind Singh and

others. During investigation, it was found that no incident ever took place and the accused were never arrested. Thereafter, the cancellation report was prepared dated 16.06.2020. The copy of the same is Annexure C1. The cancellation has not been presented till date before the Court/Illaq Magistrate. In the present FIR, accused persons were never arrested. Moreover, no other proceedings are pending against the accused.

5. Since, the matter has been compromised by complainant Harpreet Singh with the accused namely Gobind Singh, voluntarily, without any pressure, coercion or threat from any side, who has no objection in quashing of FIR against accused Gobind Singh on the basis of Compromise Deed dated 30.01.2020, therefore, compromise is complete and appears to be good in the eyes of law. Therefore, the report as sought by your honour is being sent for your kind and esteemed perusal."

Learned State counsel and counsel for the private respondent would submit that they have no objection if the present FIR and all subsequent proceedings are quashed.

Relying upon its earlier judgments in '**Gian Singh Vs. State of Punjab and others, (2012) 10 SCC 303**' and '**The State of Madhya Pradesh Vs. Laxmi Narayan and others (2019) 5 SCC 688**', a two Judge Bench of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in '**Ramgopal and another Vs. State of Madhya Pradesh 2021 SCC online SC 834**' while dealing with power of High Court under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. to quash non-compoundable offences on the basis of compromise between the disputing parties has held:

“11. True it is that offences which are ‘non-compoundable’ cannot be compounded by a criminal court in purported exercise of its powers under Section 320 Cr.P.C. Any such attempt by the court would amount to alteration, addition and modification of Section 320 Cr.P.C, which is the exclusive domain of Legislature. There is no patent or latent ambiguity in the language of Section 320 Cr.P.C., which may justify its wider interpretation and include such offences in the docket of ‘compoundable’ offences which have been consciously kept out as non-compoundable. Nevertheless, the limited jurisdiction to compound an offence within the framework of Section 320 Cr.P.C. is not an embargo against invoking inherent powers by the High Court vested in it under Section 482 Cr.P.C. The High Court, keeping in view the peculiar facts and circumstances of a case and for justifiable reasons can press Section 482 Cr.P.C. in aid to prevent abuse of the process of any Court and/or to secure the ends of justice.

12. The High Court, therefore, having regard to the nature of the offence and the fact that parties have amicably settled their dispute and the victim has willingly consented to the nullification of criminal proceedings, can quash such proceedings in exercise of its inherent powers under Section 482 Cr.P.C., even if the offences are non-compoundable. The High Court can indubitably evaluate the consequential effects of the offence beyond the body of an individual and thereafter adopt a pragmatic approach, to ensure that the felony, even if goes unpunished, does not tinker with or paralyze the very object of the administration of criminal justice system.

13. It appears to us that criminal proceedings involving non-heinous offences or where the offences are predominantly of a private nature, can be annulled irrespective of the fact that trial has already been concluded or appeal stands dismissed against conviction. Handing out punishment is not the sole form of delivering justice.

Societal method of applying laws evenly is always subject to lawful exceptions. It goes without saying, that the cases where compromise is struck post-conviction, the High Court ought to exercise such discretion with rectitude, keeping in view the circumstances surrounding the incident, the fashion in which the compromise has been arrived at, and with due regard to the nature and seriousness of the offence, besides the conduct of the accused, before and after the incidence. The touchstone for exercising the extra-ordinary power under Section 482 Cr.P.C. would be to secure the ends of justice. There can be no hard and fast line constricting the power of the High Court to do substantial justice. A restrictive construction of inherent powers under Section 482 Cr.P.C. may lead to rigid or specious justice, which in the given facts and circumstances of a case, may rather lead to grave injustice. On the other hand, in cases where heinous offences have been proved against perpetrators, no such benefit ought to be extended, as cautiously observed by this Court in Narinder Singh & Ors. vs. State of Punjab & Ors. and Laxmi Narayan (Supra).

In other words, grave or serious offences or offences which involve moral turpitude or have a harmful effect on the social and moral fabric of the society or involve matters concerning public policy, cannot be construed betwixt two individuals or groups only, for such offences have the potential to impact the society at large. Effacing abominable offences through quashing process would not only send a wrong signal to the community but may also accord an undue benefit to unscrupulous habitual or professional offenders, who can secure a 'settlement' through duress, threats, social boycotts, bribes or other dubious means. It is well said that "let no guilty man escape, if it can be avoided."

The petitioner and private respondent are from the same village. No injury was actually caused to the complainant and it is a case of only fire in the air. The police has prepared a cancellation report dated 16.06.2020. The petitioners were not arrested during investigation and no other proceeding is pending against the petitioner.

From the perusal of the enclosed FIR, report of the Trial Court and compromise arrived between the parties, it transpires that contesting parties have amicably resolved their issue, thus, no useful purpose would be served by continuing the proceedings. The alleged offences are of pre-dominantly private in nature and no moral turpitude or interest of public at large is involved. The continuance of the proceedings would just waste valuable judicial time and it is well-known fact that courts are already over burdened.

In view of above facts and circumstances, the present petition deserves to be allowed and accordingly is allowed. FIR No.0006 dated 15.01.2020 (Annexure P-1) under Sections 307, 109 & 34 of IPC and Section 25 of Arms Act, 1959, registered at Police Station Ghanaur, District Patiala and all consequent proceedings arising thereon are quashed qua the petitioner.

(JAGMOHAN BANSAL)
JUDGE

14.12.2022

Mohit Kumar

Whether speaking/reasoned *Yes/No*

Whether reportable *Yes/No*