

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

245

**CRM-M-7475-2020
Date of decision: 05.04.2022**

GURDEEP KAUR AND OTHERS

... Petitioners

Versus

STATE OF PUNJAB AND OTHERS

... Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE VINOD S. BHARDWAJ

Present: Mr. N.S. Chahal, Advocate for the petitioners.

Mr. Karanbir Singh, AAG, Punjab.

Mr. H.R. Bhardwaj, Advocate
for the respondents No.2 to 4.

VINOD S. BHARDWAJ. J.(Oral)

1. The petitioner has filed the present petition under Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 for quashing of FIR No.0319 dated 17.12.2019 under Sections 452, 323, 148, 149 and 506 of the IPC registered at Police Station City Muktsar Distt. Sri Muktsar Sahib (Annexure P-1) and all consequential proceedings arising therefrom on the basis of compromise dated 12.02.2020 (Annexure P-2) effected between the parties.

2. Learned counsel for the petitioners submits that there was a minor altercation amongst the petitioners and respondent No.2 (complainant) resulting in registration of the aforesaid FIR and that with the intervention of the respectables from both the sides, the matter has been settled and amicably resolved. It is further submitted that the compromise amongst the parties was effected on account of free will and without any pressure and

coercion.

3. The parties were directed to appear before the Illaqa Magistrate vide order dated 19.02.2020 to get their statements recorded and the Illaqa Magistrate was further directed to send the report regarding the genuineness of the compromise and to also intimate whether any criminal proceedings against the petitioners are pending.

4. In compliance to the said order, a report from the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Sri Muktsar Sahib has been received vide reference No. 209 dated 28.07.2020. The Chief Judicial Magistrate, Sri Muktsar Sahib has reported as under:-

“All the petitioners/accused Satinder Singh @ Dilbag Singh, Daljit Kaur, Gurdeep Kaur and Mangal Singh, all resident of Patti Malloki, Near Arya School, Ward no. 40, Street No.6 Tehsil and District Moga have suffered the joint statement that FIR No. 319 dated 17.12.2019 under Sections 452, 323, 148, 149, 506 of IPC, P.S. City, Sri Muktsar Sahib was registered against them on the statement of Manpreet Singh. They have further stated that now the matter has been compromised with the intervention of the respectable amicably. They have further stated that the compromise has been effected voluntarily, without any coercion, fraud or misrepresentation and with the free will of the parties. They have further stated that FIR No. 319 dated 17.12.2019 under Sections 452, 323, 148, 149, 506 of IPC, P.S. City Sri Muktsar Sahib and consequent proceedings be quashed. They have further stated that they have not been declared proclaimed offender in this case.

The undersigned has carefully gone through the statements got recorded by the complainant, injured and accused. Ex-facie, it transpires from the statements of the parties (recorded before the undersigned) that they have

arrived at compromise with their free volition, without any inducement, threat, promise, coercion or undue influence from any quarter. Apparently, the compromise has been genuinely arrived at to eliminate bitterness and acrimony between the parties and in order to restore cordial relations.

It is further humbly submitted that this Court was further directed to give the report whether any of the parties has been declared as proclaimed offenders. It is humbly submitted that in this regard the statement of ASI Lakhwinder Singh, no.435/SMS posted at P.S. City Sri Muktsar Sahib was recorded. ASI Lakhwinder Singh has suffered the statement that he is the Investigation Officer of the case FIR No.319 dated 17.12.2019 under Sections 452, 323, 148, 149, 506 of IPC, P.S. City Sri Muktsar Sahib. He has further stated that this case was registered on the statement of Manpreet Singh against Satinder Singh @ Dilbag Singh, Daljeet Kaur, Gurdeep Kaur and Mangal Singh. He has further stated that as per the record available in the Police Station, none of the accused or the complainant party has been declared as proclaimed offender.

From the statement suffered by ASI Lakhwinder Singh who is the Investigating Officer of the present case, it is found that none of the party has been declared proclaimed offender in the present case.”

5. The full Bench of this Court in the matter of “**Kulwinder Singh and others versus State of Punjab and another**” reported as **(Punjab and Haryana High Court) : 2007 (3) RCR (Criminal) 1052** has been observed as under:

“ (28) To conclude, it can safely be said that there can never be any hard and fast category which can be prescribed to enable the Court to exercise its power under Section 482 of the Cr.P.C. The only principle that can be laid down is the one which has been incorporated in the Section itself, i.e., "to prevent abuse of the process of any Court" or "to secure the ends of justice".

(29) *In Mrs. Shakuntala Sawhney v. Mrs. Kaushalya Sawhney and Ors.*, Hon'ble Krishna Iyer, J. aptly summoned up the essence of compromise in the following words:

"The finest hour of justice arrives propitiously when parties, despite falling apart, bury the hatchet and weave a sense of fellowship of reunion."

(30) *The power to do complete justice is the very essence of every judicial justice dispensation system. It cannot be diluted by distorted perceptions and is not a slave to anything, except to the caution and circumspection, the standards of which the Court sets before it, in exercise of such plenary and unfettered power inherently vested in it while donning the cloak of compassion to achieve the ends of justice.*

(31) *No embargo, be in the shape of Section 320(9) of the Cr.P.C., or any other such curtailment, can whittle down the power under Section 482 of the Cr.P.C.*

(32) *The compromise, in a modern society, is the sine qua non of harmony and orderly behaviour. It is the soul of justice and if the power under Section 482 of the Cr.P.C. is used to enhance such a compromise which, in turn, enhances the social amity and reduces friction, then it truly is "finest hour of justice". Disputes which have their genesis in a matrimonial discord, landlord-tenant matters, commercial transactions and other such matters can safely be dealt with by the Court by exercising its powers under Section 482 of the Cr.P.C. in the event of a compromise, but this is not to say that the power is limited to such cases. There can never be any such rigid rule to prescribe the exercise of such power, especially in the absence of any premonitions to forecast and predict eventualities which the cause of justice may throw up during the course of a litigation.*

(33) *The only inevitable conclusion from the above discussion is that there is no statutory bar under the Cr.P.C. which can affect the inherent power of this Court under Section 482. Further, the same cannot be limited to matrimonial cases alone and the Court has the wide power to quash the proceedings even in non-*

compoundable offences notwithstanding the bar under Section 320 of the Cr.P.C., in order to prevent the abuse of law and to secure the ends of justice.

(34) The power under Section 482 of the Cr.P.C. is to be exercised Ex-Debitia Justitia to prevent an abuse of process of Court. There can neither be an exhaustive list nor the defined para-meters to enable a High Court to invoke or exercise its inherent powers. It will always depend upon the facts and circumstances of each case. The power under Section 482 of the Cr.P.C. has no limits. However, the High Court will exercise it sparingly and with utmost care and caution. The exercise of power has to be with circumspection and restraint. The Court is a vital and an extra-ordinary effective instrument to maintain and control social order. The Courts play role of paramount importance in achieving peace, harmony and ever-lasting congeniality in society. Resolution of a dispute by way of a compromise between two warring groups, therefore, should attract the immediate and prompt attention of a Court which should endeavour to give full effect to the same unless such compromise is abhorrent to lawful composition of the society or would promote savagery.

6. The legal principles as laid down for quashing of the judgment were also approved by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter of **Gian Singh Versus State of Punjab and another**, (2012) 10 SCC 303. Still further, the broad principles for exercising the powers under Section 482 were summarized by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter of “**Parbatbhai Aahir @ Parbatbhai Bhimsinhbhai Karmur and others versus State of Gujarat and another**” (2017) 9 SCC 641, the same are extracted as under:

16. The broad principles which emerge from the precedents on the subject, may be summarised in the following propositions :

16.1 Section 482 preserves the inherent powers of the High Court to prevent an abuse of the process of any court or to secure the ends of justice. The provision does not confer new powers. It only

recognises and preserves powers which inhere in the High Court;

16.2 *The invocation of the jurisdiction of the High Court to quash a First Information Report or a criminal proceeding on the ground that a settlement has been arrived at between the offender and the victim is not the same as the invocation of jurisdiction for the purpose of compounding an offence. While compounding an offence, the power of the court is governed by the provisions of Section 320 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. The power to quash under Section 482 is attracted even if the offence is non-compoundable.*

16.3 *In forming an opinion whether a criminal proceeding or complaint should be quashed in exercise of its jurisdiction under Section 482, the High Court must evaluate whether the ends of justice would justify the exercise of the inherent power;*

16.4 *While the inherent power of the High Court has a wide ambit and plenitude it has to be exercised; (i) to secure the ends of justice or (ii) to prevent an abuse of the process of any court;*

16.5 *The decision as to whether a complaint or First Information Report should be quashed on the ground that the offender and victim have settled the dispute, revolves ultimately on the facts and circumstances of each case and no exhaustive elaboration of principles can be formulated;*

16.6 *In the exercise of the power under Section 482 and while dealing with a plea that the dispute has been settled, the High Court must have due regard to the nature and gravity of the offence. Heinous and serious offences involving mental depravity or offences such as murder, rape and dacoity cannot appropriately be quashed though the victim or the family of the victim have settled the dispute. Such offences are, truly speaking, not private in nature but have a serious impact upon society. The decision to continue with the trial in such cases is founded on the overriding element of public interest in punishing persons for serious offences;*

16.7 *As distinguished from serious offences, there may be criminal cases which have an overwhelming or predominant*

element of a civil dispute. They stand on a distinct footing in so far as the exercise of the inherent power to quash is concerned;

16.8 Criminal cases involving offences which arise from commercial, financial, mercantile, partnership or similar transactions with an essentially civil flavour may in appropriate situations fall for quashing where parties have settled the dispute;

16.9 In such a case, the High Court may quash the criminal proceeding if in view of the compromise between the disputants, the possibility of a conviction is remote and the continuation of a criminal proceeding would cause oppression and prejudice; and

16.10 There is yet an exception to the principle set out in propositions 16.8 and 16.9 above. Economic offences involving the financial and economic well-being of the state have implications which lie beyond the domain of a mere dispute between private disputants. The High Court would be justified in declining to quash where the offender is involved in an activity akin to a financial or economic fraud or mis-demeanour. The consequences of the act complained of upon the financial or economic system will weigh in the balance.

7. It is evident that in view of the amicable resolution of the issues amongst the parties, no useful purpose would be served by continuation of the proceedings. The furtherance of the proceedings is likely to be a waste of judicial time and there appears to be no chances of conviction.

8. The Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter of **"Ramgopal and another versus State of Madhya Pradesh"** reported as **2021 SCC ONLINE SC 83**, that the matters which can be categorized as personal in nature or in the matters in which the nature of injuries do not exhibit mental depravity or commission of an offence of such a serious nature that quashing of which would override public interest, the Court can quash the FIR in view of the settlement arrived at amongst the parties. The observation of the Hon'ble Supreme Court is extracted as under:

“19. We thus sum up and hold that as opposed to Section 320 Cr.P.C. where the Court is squarely guided by the compromise between the parties in respect of offences ‘compoundable’ within the statutory framework, the extraordinary power enjoined upon a High Court under Section 482 Cr.P.C. or vested in this Court under Article 142 of the Constitution, can be invoked beyond the metes and bounds of Section 320 Cr.P.C. Nonetheless, we reiterate that such powers of wide amplitude ought to be exercised carefully in the context of quashing criminal proceedings, bearing in mind: (i) Nature and effect of the offence on the conscious of the society; (ii) Seriousness of the injury, if any; (iii) Voluntary nature of compromise between the accused and the victim; & (iv) Conduct of the accused persons, prior to and after the occurrence of the purported offence and/or other relevant considerations.

9. The instant FIR between the parties has been registered as a result of matrimonial discord. The husband had got the FIR registered against his wife and in-laws. However, the same has been amicably resolved with the intervention of the parties and it is pointed out that a petition under Section 13 (B) for decree of divorce has already been granted by the Family Court, Sri Muktsar Sahib. The parties have mutually resolved to give a quietus to their dispute and to live peacefully. The offence in question cannot be said to be heinous or shocking to the conscience of the society or that of the Court. No interest of justice would be served by continuation of the proceedings and forcing the parties to undergo the rigours of criminal prosecution. To the contrary, continuation of the proceedings is only likely to subject the parties to unnecessary harassment and agony of a failed relationship. The continuation of the proceedings is only likely to end in futility.

10. Considering the facts of the instant case and noticing the principles laid down by the Apex Court in “Gian Singh Versus State of Punjab and another”, (2012) 10 SCC 303, “Ramgopal and another versus State of Madhya Pradesh” reported as 2021 SCC ONLINE SC 834 and also by the Full Bench of this Court in “Kulwinder Singh and others versus State of Punjab and another”, 2007 (3) RCR (Criminal) 1052, that the dispute involved in the instant case pertains to offence under Sections 452, 323, 148, 149 and 506 of the IPC which cannot be perceived as falling within the prohibited category or as an offence that is heinous and grossly shocking to the conscience of the Court or having a wide pervasive impact on the social or public order, the instant petition is allowed and the case FIR No.0319 dated 17.12.2019 under Sections 452, 323, 148, 149 and 506 of the IPC registered at Police Station City Muktsar Distt. Sri Muktsar Sahib (Annexure P-1) and all subsequent proceedings arising therefrom **are hereby quashed**, qua the petitioners in light of the compromise dated 12.02.2020 (Annexure P-2). However, the same would be subject to payment of costs of Rs. 10,000/- by each petitioner to be deposited with the “**Punjab and Haryana High Court Lawyers Welfare Fund**” within one month from the date of receipt of certified copy of this order.

Petition is allowed.

(VINOD S. BHARDWAJ)
JUDGE

APRIL 05, 2022

Vishal Sharma

Whether speaking/reasoned	:	Yes/No
Whether Reportable	:	Yes/No