

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

117+241

CRM-M-23551-2018 (O&M)

Date of decision:20.04.2022

MANJIT KAUR @ RANDEEP SIDHU @ SONIKA SHARDA

...Petitioner

Versus

STATE OF PUNJAB AND ANR

...Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SURESHWAR THAKUR

Present: Mr. Vaibhav Sehgal, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Amitoj Singh Dhaliwal, DAG, Punjab.

Mr. Indresh Goel, Advocate
for respondent No.2.

SURESHWAR THAKUR, J. (ORAL)

1. Through the instant petition, filed under Section 482 of the Cr.P.C., the petitioners seek quashing of FIR No.79, dated 06.08.2016, under Sections 177 and 420 of IPC and Section 2 of Passport Act, 1920 (Entry to India) lodged at Police Station P.A.U. Ludhiana, and, also of all consequential proceedings arising therefrom, hence on the basis of affidavit of compromise (Annexure P-2) arrived at between the parties.

2. When the instant petition came up before this Court on 30.05.2018, an order was made upon the learned Magistrate concerned, to make a report to this Court, with respect to the genuineness of the compromise, as also whether any person(s) has/have been nominated as accused, and, as also whether any person has been declared a proclaimed offender, and, that whether challan has been filed. The afore order, makes it apparent that the petitioners had depended, upon, a compromise/settlement, arrived at, in respect of the FIR (supra) with the complainant-respondent No.2.

3. The afore made order by this Court on 30.05.2018, has been complied with by the learned Magistrate concerned, and, the elicited report has been placed on record. A perusal of the report, transmitted to this Court, by the learned Magistrate concerned, reveals that the settlement/compromise, arrived at *inter se* the petitioners, and, the respondent No.2, is a sequel of both, being *ad idem* qua it, besides the compromise/ settlement being a sequel of no pressure or coercion, being exercised upon each other. Moreover, the compromise is compositely drawn, and, thereons exist the signatures of all concerned, in the penal transactions concerned. Therefore, the learned Magistrate has reported that the settlement/compromise, depended upon by the petitioners, for seeking quashing of the FIR (supra), is both voluntary, and, also is free from vices of duress, and, or of compulsion, being exercised upon each other, besides is genuine.

4. Learned counsel for the petitioner as well as learned counsel for co-respondent No.2 both stated at bar that the compromise as is depended upon by them, is compositely drawn.

5. Today, the learned counsel appearing for the State of Punjab, on instructions meted to her, has contended before this Court, that the relief, as claimed by the petitioners, in the petition, cannot be granted, as some of the offences constituted against the accused-petitioners, inasmuch the one under Section 177 is non-compoundable.

6. Furthermore, they also state at the bar, that the investigations into the FIR, though has resulted in an affirmative report, under Section 173 Cr.P.C. becoming instituted by the Investigating Officer concerned, before the learned Court concerned, but no charges yet have been drawn against the accused by the learned trial Judge concerned.

7. The learned State counsel vehemently opposes, the acceptance of the present petition, on the ground, that since the petitioner obtained the second passport, from the Regional Passport Office concerned, through concealing the factum of hers earlier obtaining a passport from the Regional Passport Office concerned. Therefore, he contends that the above factum makes a breach of the mandate of Section 12 of the Passport Act, and, also has severe penal consequences. He also obviously submits, that dehors the compromise arrived at amongst the concerned, the above breach pertains to, and also involves the Regional Passport Office concerned, office whereof cannot compound the offence, therefore, the present quashing petition on the basis of compromise cannot be allowed.

8. However, for the reasons to be assigned hereinafter, the above made prayer cannot be accepted. The initial passport, as, became obtained by the petitioner from the Regional Passport Office concerned, was in the capacity of hers being unmarried, and, thereafter she obtained the second passport, when she had entered into a wedlock with her husband. Though, she was required to unfold in the successive passport application, the factum of hers initially obtaining a passport from the Regional Passport Office concerned, yet the afore concealment, does not hold any vices of hers actively practising the vices of suggestio falsi or suppressio veri, unless evidence become adduced, hence displaying that in the both passports endorsements were made by the embassy of the country whereto she intended to travel.

9. In the above regard, the learned counsel for the petitioner has stated with the completest confidence and firmness, before this Court, that in the successive passport, as became issued by the Regional Passport Office

concerned, therein occur(s) no endorsement by the embassy of the country concerned, whereto she intended to travel.

10. Consequently, when the procurement of the successive passport by the present petitioner purportedly through hers allegedly practising the vices of suggestio falsi, and, suppressio veri, rather did not result in any wrongful gain emanating to the petitioner nor also any wrongful loss became encumbered upon the Regional Passport Office concerned, rather when she may opt to keep one passport alive, and, may choose to surrender her second passport or may be also when she may become subjected to initiation of relevant processes appertaining to cancellation of the passport concerned. Therefore also the effect penal, inculpability, if any, as emanating from procurement of the second passport by the petitioner, does become subsumed, moreso, also when a compromise has been arrived at amongst the relevant concerned.

11. The effect of the afore statement, as made with extreme vehemence by the learned counsel for the petitioners, and, also the effect of the abovestatement made by the learned counsel appearing for the State of Punjab, is that the relevant parameters as encapsulated in a verdict of the Hon'ble Apex Court, rendered in case titled as, ***Gian Singh versus State of Punjab and another 2012(4) RCR (Criminal) 543***, inasmuch as a postulate/occurring therein, that the inherent power under Section 482 Cr.P.C., as vested in the High Court, for quashing of criminal proceedings, as/of FIR or complaint, through recourse being made to the provisions of Section 482 Cr.P.C., rather being distinct and different from the power given to a criminal Court, hence for compounding the relevant offence, being enjoined to become tested vis-a-vis the facts in hand, for apposite application thereons. However, it has also been held therein, the afore power vested in the High Court, is of the widest plenitude,

with no statutory limitation, being placed thereon, yet it has to be exercised to secure the ends of justice, and, to prevent the abuse of process of any Court. Though no straightjacket formula, has been contemplated therein, for recourse being made to the mandate of Section 482 Cr.P.C., hence for quashing of an FIR, or criminal proceedings or complaint, yet the essential rubric viz-a-viz its valid exercising, is comprised in the principle, that if the accused and the complainant rather enter into a valid *ad idem* settlement, and, when thereupon the conviction of the accused becomes remote and bleak. Consequently, it has been mandated, that unless the offences sought to be quashed, through the exercising of the power vested under Section 482 Cr.P.C., are not serious and heinous, inasmuch as the afore, do not embody offences appertaining to murder, rape, dacoity etc., and, or when the offences are in relation to special statutes like Prevention of Corruption Act or offences committed by public servants, while working in that capacity, thereupon it can be permissibly exercised. However, upon evident existences of embargos (supra), spelt in the verdict (supra), thereupon, the High Courts are barred, through recouring the mandate of Section 482 Cr.P.C., hence, to quash the FIR or quash the criminal proceedings appertaining to serious/heinous offences (supra).

12. It is apt to extract the relevant paragraph of the verdict made by the Hon'ble Apex Court in ***Gian Singh***'s case (supra).

“The position that emerges from the above discussion can be summarised thus: the power of the High Court in quashing a criminal proceeding or FIR or complaint in exercise of its inherent jurisdiction is distinct and different from the power given to a criminal court for compounding the offences under Section 320 of the Code. Inherent power is of wide plenitude with no statutory limitation but it has to be exercised in accord with the guideline engrafted in such power viz; (i) to secure the ends of

justice or (ii) to prevent abuse of the process of any Court. In what cases power to quash the criminal proceeding or complaint or F.I.R may be exercised where the offender and victim have settled their dispute would depend on the facts and circumstances of each case and no category can be prescribed. However, before exercise of such power, the High Court must have due regard to the nature and gravity of the crime. Heinous and serious offences of mental depravity or offences like murder, rape, dacoity, etc. cannot be fittingly quashed even though the victim or victim's family and the offender have settled the dispute. Such offences are not private in nature and have serious impact on society. Similarly, any compromise between the victim and offender in relation to the offences under special statutes like Prevention of Corruption Act or the offences committed by public servants while working in that capacity etc; cannot provide for any basis for quashing criminal proceedings involving such offences. But the criminal cases having overwhelmingly and predominatingly civil flavour stand on different footing for the purposes of quashing, particularly the offences arising from commercial, financial, mercantile, civil, partnership or such like transactions or the offences arising out of matrimony relating to dowry, etc. or the family disputes where the wrong is basically private or personal in nature and the parties have resolved their entire dispute. In this category of cases, High Court may quash criminal proceedings if in its view, because of the compromise between the offender and victim, the possibility of conviction is remote and bleak and continuation of criminal case would put accused to great oppression and prejudice and extreme injustice would be caused to him by not quashing the criminal case despite full and complete settlement and compromise with the victim. In other words, the High Court must consider whether it would be

unfair or contrary to the interest of justice to continue with the criminal proceeding or continuation of the criminal proceeding would tantamount to abuse of process of law despite settlement and compromise between the victim and wrongdoer and whether to secure the ends of justice, it is appropriate that criminal case is put to an end and if the answer to the above question(s) is in affirmative, the High Court shall be well within its jurisdiction to quash the criminal proceeding.”

13. Since the offence under Section 177 of IPC, does not, *prima facie*, appear to be so grave and nor is so heinous, so as to attract the rigour of the embargo (supra) foisted upon the High Court in verdict (supra). Therefore, the settlement/compromise, as validly entered into, enjoins its being revered. Consequently, even if the afore offence is non-compoundable, this Court does not deem it fit to accept the contention(s) of the learned State counsel, that this Court, may not through recouring the mandate of Section 482 Cr.P.C., quash the FIR. In aftermath when rather thereupons, the chances of the petitioners being convicted are remote as well as bleak. In sequel, the ordering for the trial of the accused, would result in harassment and humiliation, being caused to the accused, besides would defeat the ends of justice.

14. Furthermore, an immense support to the afore made view, is also derived from the judgment rendered by the Punjab and Haryana High Court in case titled as ***Vinod @ Boda and others versus State of Haryana and another 2017(1) R.C.R. (Criminal) 571***, wherein also, the above view has been reiterated.

15. There is merit in the petition. Consequently, after accepting the report of the learned Magistrate concerned, this Court proceeds to quash the FIR (supra).

16. Consequently, the present petition is allowed, and, the FIR (supra),
and, also all subsequent proceedings arising therefrom, are quashed *qua* the
petitioners.
17. The pending applications, if any, also stand disposed of.

(SURESHWAR THAKUR)
JUDGE

20.04.2022

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Whether speaking/reasoned:-	Yes/No
Whether reportable:-	Yes/No