

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH

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CRM-M-16369-2022 (O&M)

Date of Decision : 08.12.2023

Manish Kumar Kochhar and Others

..... Petitioner(s)

Versus

State of Punjab and Another

..... Respondent(s)

CORAM : HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE ALKA SARIN

Present : Mr. Arjun Veer Sharma, Advocate for the petitioners.

Mr. Harjinder Singh Sidhu, AAG Punjab for respondent No.1.

Ms. Manpreet Kaur, Advocate for respondent No.2.

ALKA SARIN, J. (ORAL)

1. The present petition has been filed under Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 for quashing of FIR No.159 dated 09.04.2021 registered at Police Station City Barnala, District Barnala under Sections 498-A, 120-B of Indian Penal Code, 1860, and all subsequent proceedings arising out of the said FIR, on the basis of compromise dated 07.03.2022 (Annexure P-2).

2. On 22.04.2022 the following order was passed :

“Through this petition, the petitioners seek quashing of FIR No.159 dated 09.04.2021, registered at Police Station City Barnala, District Barnala, under Sections 498-A, 120-B IPC, along with all the consequential proceedings arising therefrom, on the basis of

compromise dated 07.03.2022 (Annexure P-2) arrived at between the parties.

Learned counsel for the petitioners submits that it is a matrimonial dispute between the parties; that petitioner No.1 to 3 are husband, father-in-law and mother-in-law of respondent No.2, respectively; that petitioner No.1 and respondent No.2 have filed a divorce petition under Section 13-B of the Hindu Marriage Act, in which 1st motion statement has already been recorded. The 2nd motion statement is to be recorded on 31.10.2022. He further submits that the parties have now settled the matter and decided to bury the hatchet enabling them to live with peace and harmony.

Notice of motion.

On the asking of this Court, Mr. Ajay Pal Singh Gill, DAG Punjab, accepts notice on behalf of respondent No.1-State.

At this stage, Mr. Hitesh Verma, Advocate puts in appearance on behalf respondent No.2, and does not dispute the factum of compromise effected between the parties.

In view of the above, the parties are directed to appear before the Illaqa Magistrate/trial Court on 17.05.2022 or any other date convenient to the Court concerned, for

getting their statements recorded with regard to the compromise. The Illaqa Magistrate/trial Court shall submit the report on or before the next date of hearing. The report be forwarded to this Court specifying the followings:-

1. the number of accused arraigned in the FIR and how many have appeared before it and have made statements and whether any accused is absconding/P.O. in the case;

2 the name of the complainant and injured/aggrieved and whether all of them have appeared and made their statements in support of the compromise;

3. the stage of trial/proceedings;

4. If the compromise is genuine, voluntary and out of free will of the parties.

Report of the Illaqa Magistrate/trial Court be awaited for 07.11.2022.”

3. Pursuant to the order dated 22.04.2022, a report dated 18.05.2022 of the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Barnala has been received by this Court wherein it has been stated that the statements of the parties have been recorded and the parties have stated that they have compromised the matter voluntarily without any threat, pressure, undue influence or fraud and that the complainant/respondent No.2 has no objection to the quashing of the

present FIR. Statements of the parties have also been appended with the report.

4. Learned counsel for the petitioners has also pointed out that the parties have since obtained a decree of divorce under Section 13-B of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955.

5. Learned counsel for respondent No.2 has reiterated that the parties have since compromised the matter and that he has no objection if the present FIR is quashed.

6. The Apex Court in the case of **Gian Singh vs. State of Punjab & Anr. [2012 (10) SCC 303]** has held as under :

“57.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 pre-dominatingly 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.”

7. Learned counsel for the petitioners has also referred to the law laid down by this Court in **Kulwinder Singh & Ors. vs. State of Punjab & Anr. [2007 (3) RCR (Criminal) 1052]** wherein it has been held that even in non-compoundable offences, if the parties have entered into a compromise, this Court has wide powers under Section 482 CrPC to quash the proceedings to prevent abuse of law and secure the ends of justice.

8. In view of the above and keeping in view the report by the Trial Court that the parties have genuinely entered into a compromise and all the disputes between the parties have been resolved, it would not be in the interest of justice to continue the criminal proceedings.

9. Resultantly, FIR No.159 dated 09.04.2021 registered at Police Station City Barnala, District Barnala under Sections 498-A, 120-B of Indian Penal Code, 1860 is quashed, including all subsequent proceedings arising out of the said FIR, on the basis of compromise dated 07.03.2022 (Annexure P-2).

10. The petition is accordingly allowed. Pending applications, if any, also stand disposed off.

08.12.2023

Deepak Patwal

(ALKA SARIN)
JUDGE

NOTE: Whether speaking/non-speaking: Speaking
Whether reportable: YES/NO