

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

Date of Decision: 21.07.2023

109 (1)

CRM-M-25772-2023 (O&M)

Davinder Pal @ Binder and others

...Petitioners

Versus

State of Punjab and another

...Respondents

109 (2)

CRM-M-24281-2023 (O&M)

Manjit Singh and others

...Petitioners

Versus

State of Punjab and others

...Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE VIKAS SURI

Present:- Mr. Rahul Garg, Advocate,
for the petitioners in CRM-M-25772-2023 &
for respondent Nos.2 to 4 in CRM-M-24281-2023.

Mr. Naveen Batra, Advocate
for the petitioners in CRM-M-24281-2023 &
for respondent No.2 in CRM-M-25772-2023.

Mr. Sanish Girdhar, AAG, Punjab

VIKAS SURI, J.

CRM-28120-2023 &
CRM-28083-2023

Prayer in these applications under Section 482 Cr.P.C. is for
preponement of the date of hearing of main petitions, which are fixed for
18.09.2023.

For the reasons mentioned in these applications which are supported by affidavit of the applicant(s), the same are allowed. The date of hearing of the main petitions is preponed from 18.09.2023 to today.

With the consent of learned counsel for the parties, the main petitions are taken on board for hearing.

Main cases

1. By this order, I propose to dispose of two petitions preferred under Section 482 Cr.P.C. i.e. CRM-M-25772-2023 and CRM-M-24281-2023, as the FIR and DDR in question, quashing of which has been sought in these petitions, have arisen out of the same incident.

In these petitions, prayer is for quashing of FIR No.154 dated 28.12.2019, under Sections 307, 323, 341, 506, 148 and 149 IPC (challan presented under Sections 323, 325, 341, 506, 148 and 149 IPC) registered at Police Station Nurpurbedi, District Rupnagar, and DDR No.21 dated 28.12.2019, registered under Sections 341, 323, 506, 148 and 149 IPC, recorded in the abovenoticed FIR, alongwith all subsequent proceedings emanating therefrom, on the strength of a written compromise dated 28.03.2023 (Annexure P-2) entered into between the parties.

2. Learned counsel for the respective parties submit that the parties have entered into a compromise dated 28.03.2023 (Annexure P-2) and they do not wish to pursue the FIR and DDR in question and have no objection if the same are quashed.

3. This Court, after issuance of notice of motion in these petitions,

directed the parties to appear before the Illaqa Magistrate/trial Court (as the case may be) on 02.06.2023 to get their statements recorded and Court below was directed to satisfy itself about the authenticity of the compromise and the fact that it has been arrived at without any kind of undue influence or pressure, and would thereafter send its report to this Court, before the next date of hearing.

4. In pursuance thereto, separate reports have been submitted by the Judicial Magistrate Ist Class, Sri Anandpur Sahib, in each case, wherein it is submitted that the compromise entered into between the parties is genuine, voluntary, out of their free will and consent and without any threat or pressure or undue influence.

5. Though, no reply has been filed by the State, however, learned State counsel does not seriously oppose if the FIR and DDR in question are quashed on the basis of compromise effected between the private parties.

6. Having heard the learned counsel for the parties and after perusing the reports submitted by the Court below, this Court is satisfied that the matter has been amicably settled between the parties and they have decided to bury the hatchet and compromise the dispute amicably. Therefore, to prevent abuse of the process of law and to secure the ends of justice, criminal proceedings deserve to be quashed under section 482 of Cr.P.C. This Court has inherent power under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. to quash an F.I.R. even when the offences are non-compoundable, with the driving force being the object of securing ends of justice.

7. As per the Full Bench judgment of this Court in ***Kulwinder Singh and others vs. State of Punjab, (2007) 3 RCR (Criminal) 1052***, it is

held that:-

“27. 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 the exercise of such plenary and unfettered power inherently vested in it while donning the cloak of compassion to achieve the ends of justice. No embargo, be it in the shape of Section 320(9) of the Criminal Procedure Code, or any other such curtailment, can whittle down the power under Section 482 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

28. The compromise, in modern society, is the *sine qua non* of harmony and orderly behavior. It is the soul of justice and if the power under Section 482 of the Criminal Procedure Code is used to enhance such a compromise which, in turn, enhances social amity and reduces friction, then it truly is the "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 Criminal Procedure Code 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.

29. The only inevitable conclusion from the above discussion is that there is no statutory bar under the Criminal Procedure Code 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 if the Criminal Procedure Code, in order to prevent the abuse of law and to secure the ends of justice.

30. The power under Section 482 of the Criminal Procedure Code is to be exercised Ex-Debitia Justitia to

prevent abuse of the process of Court. There can neither be an exhaustive list nor the defined parameters 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 Criminal Procedure Code has no limits and the Court is a vital and extraordinary effective instrument to maintain and control social order and play a 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 a such compromise is abhorrent to the lawful composition of the society or would promote savagery.”

8. Hon'ble the Apex Court in the case of ***Gian Singh vs. State of Punjab and another, (2012) 4 RCR (Criminal) 543***, has observed 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 exercising 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 a 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.”

9. The aforesaid quoted precept has also been followed in *State of Madhya Pradesh vs. Lakshmi Narayan, (2019) 5 SCC 688:-*

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12. Now so far as the conflict between the decision of this Court in the cases of Narinder Singh (supra) and Shambhu Kewat (supra) is concerned, in the case of Shambhu Kewat (supra), this Court has noted the difference between the power of compounding of offences conferred on a Court under Section 320 Cr.P.C., 1973 and the powers conferred under Section 482 Cr.P.C., 1973 for quashing of criminal proceedings by the High Court. In the said decision, this Court further observed that in compounding the offences, the power

of a criminal Court is circumscribed by the provisions contained in Section 320 Cr.P.C, 1973 and the Court is guided solely and squarely thereby, while, on the other hand, the formation of opinion by the High Court for quashing a criminal proceedings or criminal complaint under Section 482 Cr.P.C., 1973 is guided by the material on record as to whether ends of justice would justify such exercise of power, although ultimate consequence may be acquittal or dismissal of indictment. However, in the subsequent decision in the case of Narinder Singh (supra), the very Bench ultimately concluded in paragraph 29 as under:

29.xxxx

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.

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10. Keeping in view of the report(s) of Judicial Magistrate Ist Class, Sri Anandpur Sahib, compromise dated 28.03.2023 (Annexure P-2) and the principles laid down in conspectus of aforesaid judicial precedents, no useful purpose would be served by continuing the proceedings before the Court below. Therefore, these petitions are allowed and FIR No.154 dated 28.12.2019, under Sections 307, 323, 341, 506, 148 and 149 IPC (challan presented under Sections 323, 325, 341, 506, 148 and 149 IPC) registered at Police Station Nurpurbedi, District Rupnagar, and DDR No.21 dated

28.12.2019, registered under Sections 341, 323, 506, 148 and 149 IPC, recorded in the abovenoticed FIR, alongwith all the subsequent proceedings emanating therefrom are hereby quashed, qua the petitioners only.

11. Pending applications, if any, are also disposed of.

July 21, 2023
Harish

(VIKAS SURI)
JUDGE

Whether speaking/reasoned	Yes/No
Whether reportable	Yes/No