

Date of decision: 16.01.2023

...Petitioners

STATE OF PUNJAB AND ANOTHER

...Respondents

Mr. Ravinder Pankaj, Advocate
for respondent No. 2.

DEEPAK MANCHANDA J. (ORAL)

This petition has been filed under Section 482 Cr.P.C. praying for the quashing of FIR No.45 dated 16.06.2022, registered under Sections 323, 325, 341, 506, 148 and 149 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, at Police Station Begowal, District Kapurthala and all the subsequent proceedings emanating therefrom on the basis of compromise (Annexure P-2).

Brief facts of the FIR are that on 29.05.2022, when complainant and his uncle were going to home on their vehicle, one swift car came from behind, stopped the complainant party by putting their vehicle in front of their vehicle. There were five persons, who came out of their vehicle, who were having *dattar* and *dandas* in their hands. When the complainant tried to run from the spot, on seeing the weapons in the hands of the petitioners, then petitioner No. 2 attacked on him with his *dattar* which hit at his right arm and thereafter petitioner No. 1 gave *dattar* blow on the complainant, which hit on his eye brow. The other unknown person, who were with the petitioners, started punching and kicking the complainant and his uncle and the said man took away complainant's mobile.

Mr. Ravinder Pankaj, Advocate has put in appearance on behalf of respondent No. 2 and admitted the factum of compromise. On 17.11.2022, this Court had directed the private parties to appear before the Illaqa Magistrate/trial Court to get recorded their statements and trial court would 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.

In pursuance of the said order, the report forwarded vide letter no. 948 dated 21.12.2022 has been submitted by the Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Bholath, which is on record. The relevant part of the report is reproduced hereinbelow:-

“2. On the basis of the above said statements, the report is submitted as under please:-

1. That the statements of the parties are bonafide and are not result of any pressure or coercion etc. in any manner.

2. That the compromise EX.C1 effected between complainant Bhupinder Singh being minor through his uncle Sukhjinder Singh and accused namely Davinder Singh @ Bugga and Sukhwinder Singh @ Sukhjinder Singh @ Deepa is genuine one and correct and the same is not the result of any fraud or misrepresentation and is result of free will of the parties.

3. That no accused is declared proclaimed offender in the present FIR. No other criminal case is pending against the present accused persons in P.S.Begowal.

3. The attested copies of the statements of the parties and copies of their identity proofs are submitted alongwith this report.”

The State has filed short reply dated 16.11.2022, vide which it is stated that the investigation of the case has been completed and final report under Section 173 Cr. P.C. is yet to be presented.

A perusal of the report received from SDJM, Bholath would show that statements of the concerned persons have been recorded in this case, who have stated that the matter has been compromised and complainant/respondent

No. 2 has no objection in case the FIR in question is quashed. They have further stated that the said compromise is genuine, voluntary, and without any coercion or undue influence.

Learned counsel for the petitioners has submitted that there is no other FIR registered against the petitioners and none of the petitioners have not been declared as proclaimed offenders in this case or in any other case and learned State counsel has not disputed this fact.

Having heard the learned counsel for the parties and after perusing the report submitted by the trial Court, this Court finds that the matter has been amicably settled between the petitioners and the complainant, where the case is at the stage when investigation has been completed, but challan is yet to be presented and by the passage of time, the parties have decided to bury their hatchet and compromise the dispute amicably. Therefore to prevent the abuse of the process of law and to secure the ends of justice, the criminal proceedings deserves to be quashed, under section 482 of Cr. P.C., which has the magnitude of the inherent jurisdiction of the High Court under it and 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.

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 of 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-Debita 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 endeavor to give full effect to the same unless a such compromise is abhorrent to the lawful composition of the society or would promote savagery."*

Hon'ble the Apex Court in the case of “Gian Singh Vs. State of Punjab and another”, 2012 (4) RCR (Criminal) 543, had also observed:-

“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 offenses 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 pre-dominantly 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.”

Hon’ble Apex Court further observed in ***State of Madhya Pradesh v/s Lakshmi Narayan (2019)5 SCC 688*** and the relevant portion of the same is reproduced hereinbelow:-

“xxx...xxx

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.

xxx.....xxx”

In view of the report of Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Bhaloth the compromise (Annexure P-2) and the principles laid down in conspectus of aforesaid judicial precedents, no useful purpose would be served by continuing the proceedings. Therefore, this petition is allowed FIR No. 45 dated 16.06.2022, registered under Sections 323, 325, 341, 506, 148 and 149 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, at Police Station Begowal, District Kapurthala and all the subsequent proceedings emanating therefrom ***are hereby quashed***, qua the petitioners.

(DEEPAK MANCHANDA)
JUDGE

16.01.2023
Ajay Goswami

Whether speaking/reasoned	Yes
Whether reportable	Yes/No