

IN THE HIGH COURT FOR THE STATES OF PUNJAB AND
HARYANA AT CHANDIGARH

CRM-M-2061-2024 (O&M)
Date of decision: 19.01.2024

Hari Chand and another ...Petitioners

Versus

State of Haryana and another ...Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE MANISHA BATRA

Present:- Mr. Bhisham Kumar, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Arjun Lakhanpal, Addl. A.G., Haryana.

MANISHA BATRA, J. (Oral)

1. The instant petition has been filed by the petitioners under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. seeking quashing of FIR No. 31 dated 03.03.2022 registered under Sections 323, 34, 406, 498-A and 506 of the IPC at Women Police Station, Ballabhgarh, District Faridabad and the proceedings having emanated subsequently therefrom.
2. Brief facts of the case relevant for the purpose of disposal of the present petition are that the aforementioned FIR had been registered on the basis of written complaint filed by the complainant-respondent No.2 Anita alleging therein that her marriage was performed with Anil Kumar, who is the son of the present petitioners, on 30.06.2018. Sufficient dowry articles were

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given in the marriage. However, her husband Anil Kumar, sister-in-law Anju as well as present petitioners, who are her parents-in-law, started harassing her on account of demand of dowry and started taunting that her father had not given Bullet motorcycle in the marriage. She was harassed mentally as well as physically by them and even was extended beatings on account of non-fulfillment of their demand. On 22.04.2019, the complainant was blessed with a daughter, with which the petitioners and other family members were not happy. A panchayat was convened, in which, her husband and in-laws had given an assurance that they would not harass her. Her father had given them an amount of Rs. 50,000/- to settle her married life and she was taken to Gurugram, where for a few days, she was kept in good condition but after sometime, they again started harassing her on account of demand of dowry. Her husband Anil Kumar had tried to kill her by strangulating her in the night but somehow she managed to save her life. Her brother Jai Prakash had come to her matrimonial home, wherein her husband Anil Kumar, father-in-law Hari Chand, mother-in-law Phoolwati and sister-in-law Anju extended beatings to her in front of her brother. When her brother tried to save her, he too was given beatings. The complainant was thrown out of the house and her ornaments and other dowry articles were kept by them. She as well as her brother were extended threats that if they would initiate any legal action, they would be killed. The husband of the complainant and her in-laws told her that she would be allowed to live in matrimonial house only when their demand of Bullet motorcycle and an amount of Rs. 2 Lacs will be fulfilled. She had prayed for taking action against the culprits. After registration of FIR,

investigation proceedings were initiated. The petitioners, who are parents-in-law of respondent No.2/complainant, have been extended benefit of anticipatory bail. They have joined the investigation. As per the statement made by learned State counsel, the investigation has since been completed.

3. The petitioners have sought quashing of FIR on the grounds and it has been argued by their counsel that they have been falsely implicated in this case. The respondent No.2 was a short tempered and quarrelsome person. She was pregnant even before her marriage with the son of the petitioners. In the evening of 17.09.2018, brother of respondent No. 2 had come and had taken her on the pretext that their mother was not well and that she would come back after one month, but she did not return so far. The son of the petitioners had gone to his father-in-law on many occasions to bring her wife (complainant) back but the complainant had refused to do so. Even in order to save his marriage with respondent No. 2, he had filed a petition under Section 9 of the Hindu Marriage Act for restitution of conjugal rights and vide order dated 21.10.2020 (Annexure P-3), the said petition was allowed by the Principal District Judge, Family Court, Gurugram and a decree in favour of the son of the petitioners was passed. However, still respondent No. 2 had refused to join the company of son of the petitioners. Thereafter, the son of the petitioners, under compelling circumstances, had filed a divorce petition and a counter-blast to the same, respondent No. 2 had got registered the aforementioned FIR with false and baseless allegations. It is further argued that both the petitioners are old age persons and are suffering from several age related health problems. The allegations as levelled by the complainant are

general in nature as she had nowhere stated that as to when she had left the matrimonial house and was extended beatings by the petitioners. She had even not specified as to when the demand of dowry was made by the petitioners. Even if all the allegations in the FIR are taken to be true, there would be no chances of the petitioners being convicted. Therefore, it was argued that the petition deserved to be allowed.

4. Learned State counsel, on the other hand, had argued that the investigating agency had conducted thorough investigation in the matter and had thereafter presented the challan qua commission of offences punishable under Sections 323, 34, 406, 498-A and 506 of the IPC as against the present petitioners. There were specific allegations against them. Therefore, he has argued that no case for quashing of the FIR and other consequential proceedings arising therefrom has been made out.

5. I have heard learned counsel for the petitioners as well as learned State counsel at considerable length and have also perused the material placed on record.

6. At the outset, it will be profitable to look into the scope and ambit of the Court's power under Section 482 Cr.P.C. as spelt out in several judicial pronouncements of Hon'ble Supreme Court as well as different High Courts. The well settled proposition of law is that in exercise of inherent powers under Section 482 Cr.P.C., the High Court is not expected to analyze all the facts, which are to be placed before the High Court. The power conferred under this section is very specific and to secure the ends of justice or to prevent the abuse of process of Court or to make any such orders as may

be necessary to give effect to any order under the Code, such power can be exercised to prevent abuse of process of Court. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has drawn up some guidelines in some categories of cases by way of illustration to circumscribe the exercise of inherent power under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. to prevent abuse of process of any Court or to secure the ends of the justice or to give effect to an order of the Court. A celebrated pronouncement on this point is the case cited as *State of Haryana vs. Bhajan Lal : 1992 SUPP (1) SCC 335*, wherein several guidelines have been laid down. Some of them, which are relevant for the purpose of disposal of the present petition, are reproduced as under:

“(a) where the allegations made in the First Information Report or the complaint, even if they are taken at their face value and accepted in their entirety do not prima facie constitute any offence or make out a case against the accused;

xxx xxx xxx xxx

(c) where the uncontroverted allegations made in the FIR or complaint and the evidence collected in support of the same do not disclose the commission of any offence and make out a case against the accused;

xxx xxx xxx xxx

(e) where the allegations made in the FIR or complaint are so absurd and inherently improbable on the basis of which no prudent person can ever reach a just conclusion that there is sufficient ground for proceeding against the accused;

xxx xxx xxx xxx

(g) where a criminal proceeding is manifestly attended with mala fide and/or where the proceeding is maliciously instituted with an ulterior motive for wreaking vengeance on the accused and with a view to spite him due to private and personal grudge.

7. Reference can further be made to ***Gian Singh vs. State of Punjab : (2012) 10 SCC 303***, wherein Hon'ble Supreme Court has observed that the power of the High Court in quashing a criminal complaint or an FIR, 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 accordance with the guidelines engrafted in such power viz; (i) to secure the ends of justice or (ii) to prevent abuse of the process of any Court. Reference can also be made to ***Padal Venkata Rama Reddy @ Ramu vs Kovvuri Satyanarayana Reddy and others : (2011) 12 SCC 437***, wherein it was observed that the inherent power under Section 482 Cr.P.C. can be exercised only when no other remedy is available to the litigant and not in a situation where a specific remedy is provided by the statute. Reliance can further be placed upon ***State of Andhra Pradesh vs. Gourishetty Mahesh and others, 2010 Criminal Law Journal 3844***, wherein the Apex Court has propounded that while exercising jurisdiction under Section 482 Cr.P.C., the High Court would not ordinarily embark upon an enquiry whether the evidence in question is reliable or not or whether on a reasonable

appreciation of it, accusation would not be sustained as that is the function of the trial Court.

8. It is also well settled proposition of law that the exercise of powers under Section 482 Cr.P.C. to quash proceedings is an exception and not a rule. In ***Dr. Monica Kumar and another vs. State of U.P. and others : (2008) 8 SCC 781***, the Apex Court has propounded that the inherent jurisdiction under Section 482 Cr.P.C., though wide, is to be exercised sparingly, carefully and with caution, only when such exercise is justified by the test specifically laid down in the section itself and appreciation of evidence is not permissible at the stage of quashing of proceedings in exercise of this power. The inherent powers do not confer an arbitrary jurisdiction upon the High Court to act according to whims and caprice. In ***Taramani Parakh vs. State of M.P. and others : 2015 (2) RCR (Criminal) 445***, Hon'ble Supreme Court has held that Quashing of a charge is an exception to the rule of continuous prosecution. Where the offence is even broadly satisfied, the Court should be more inclined to permit continuation of prosecution rather than its quashing at that initial stage. The Court is not expected to marshal the records with a view to decide admissibility and reliability of the documents or records but on an opinion formed prima facie. Where the factual foundation for an offence has been laid down, the courts should be reluctant and should not hasten to quash the proceedings even on the premise that one or two ingredients have not been stated or do not appear to be satisfied, if there is substantial compliance with the requirements of the offence.

9. It is also well settled that if a petition under Section 482 Cr.P.C. has been filed at the stage of investigation, then it is only required to be considered whether a cognizable offence is disclosed or not. However, when the statements of the witnesses are recorded, evidence is collected and the chargesheet is filed after conclusion of investigation/enquiry, the matter stands on a different footing and the Court is required to consider the material/evidence collected through investigation. Even at that stage, the High Court is not required to go into the merits of the allegations and/or entering into the merits of the case as if it is exercising the appellate jurisdiction and/or conducting trial. If in order to examine as to whether the factual contents of the FIR disclose any cognizable offence or not, the High Court cannot act like investigating agency nor can exercise the powers like an appellate court. The said question is required to be examined keeping in view the contents of the FIR and prima facie material, if any, requiring any proof. At this stage, the High Court cannot appreciate the evidence as to whether it can draw its own inference from the contents of the FIR and the material relied on it. The appreciation of evidence is not permissible at the stage of quashing of proceedings in exercise of powers under Section 482 Cr.P.C. Reference in this regard can also be made to the observations made by Hon'ble Supreme Court in *Kaptan Singh vs. State of U.P. and others*, 2021 SCC Online SC 580 and *Dhruvaram Murlidhar Sonar vs. State of Maharashtra* :, (2020) 3 SCC (Criminal) 672, wherein Hon'ble Supreme Court has observed that exercise of powers under Section 482 Cr.P.C. to quash the proceedings is an exception and not a rule. Inherent jurisdiction under Section 482 Cr.P.C. though wide is

to be exercised sparingly, carefully and with caution and only when such exercise is justified by the tests specifically laid down in the section itself.

10. I have considered the contentions raised by learned counsel for the parties in the wake of above discussed position of law. In view of the arguments raised by the parties, the foremost issue, which in the opinion of this Court requires determination, is whether the allegations made against the petitioners are general/omnibus and are liable to be quashed. On applying the ratio of law as laid down in the above cited cases to the facts and circumstances of the present case, I am of the considered opinion that no case for quashing the FIR or the consequential proceedings arising therefrom has been made out. Respondent No. 2/complainant, in her complaint filed before the police, had levelled specific allegations against the petitioners qua her being harassed by them on account of bringing insufficient dowry, qua demand of dowry and also to the effect that her *istridhan* in the form of ornaments etc., which was in the custody of the petitioners, has not been given to her. The allegations of her being assaulted at the hands of the petitioners and his other family members had also been levelled. On the basis of these allegations, it cannot be stated that no case for commission of offences punishable under Section 323, 406, 498-A and 506 of the IPC of the IPC has been made out against the petitioners. It would be pre-mature to say so and the aforesaid aspect is to be considered during trial.

11. Keeping in view the facts and circumstances of the case, this Court finds no ground whatsoever to interfere at this stage for quashing of the FIR as well as consequent proceedings emanating therefrom. The petition is

accordingly dismissed. The trial is directed to be conducted further in accordance with law and on its own merits.

12. It is, however, clarified that no observations made herein above are the reflection on the merits of the case and shall have no bearing on trial. The same are confined for the decision of the present petition only.

19.01.2024
Waseem Ansari

(MANISHA BATRA)
JUDGE

<i>Whether speaking/reasoned</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Whether reportable</i>	<i>Yes</i>