

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

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CRM-M No.3230 of 2024
Date of Decision: 08.04.2024

Mandeep Sharma @ Mandeep @ Mani ... Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab and another ... Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE MANISHA BATRA

Present: Mr. Sunny K.Singla, Advocate,
for the petitioner.

Ms. Ruchika Sabherwal, Sr. DAG, Punjab.

Mr. Mahipal S.Yadav, Advocate,
for respondent No.2.

MANISHA BATRA, J.(Oral)

1. The instant petition has been filed under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. by the petitioner seeking quashing of FIR No.169 dated 01.10.2023 registered under Section 376 of IPC at Police Station Bhawanigarh, District Sangrur, on the basis of compromise dated 18.10.2023 (Annexure P-2).
2. Brief facts of the case relevant for the purpose of disposal of this petition are that the aforementioned FIR was registered on the basis of statement recorded by the prosecutrix "S" (name withheld) alleging therein that she is a home maker. Her marriage was performed with Gurtej Singh about ten years back and two children were born out of the said wedlock. She alleged that about four years ago, she took Panchayati divorce from her husband Gurtej Singh. Her mother has already expired.

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She has no good relations with her father. She is residing with her mami/aunt from the last four years. She alleged that on 25.09.2023, she met the petitioner in a shop of readymade garments at Bhawanigarh. She went to Patiala in the car of the petitioner as the petitioner wanted to talk with her. On 30.09.2023 again, she had gone with the petitioner in his car towards Bhawanigarh and thereafter in the way, the petitioner stopped his car and offered cold drink to her. After drinking cold drink, she felt sick/unwell and asked the petitioner to drop her at her home. While assuring her to do so, the petitioner instead committed rape upon her. She disclosed about the entire incident to her mami and thereafter her mami got her admitted at Civil Hospital, Sangrur when her treatment was going on. Therefore, she prayed for taking action against the petitioner. After registration of FIR, investigation proceedings were initiated. The petitioner has been extended benefit of anticipatory bail.

3. The present petition has been filed by the petitioner on the grounds that a compromise has been effected between the respondent No.2 and himself. They are major. No useful purpose would be served by keeping the criminal proceedings pending against the petitioner as chances of his conviction are remote and bleak. Therefore, it is urged that the petition deserves to be allowed.

4. It will not be out of place to mention here that learned counsel for respondent No.2 has also affirmed the fact that a compromise has been effected between the respondent No.2 and the petitioner. He has submitted that the respondent No.2 has no objection, if the FIR is quashed.

5. Learned State counsel has opposed the prayer of the petitioner by arguing that the chargesheet has been filed against the petitioner for

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commission of offences punishable under Section 376 of IPC which is quite serious in nature and falls within the category of heinous crime. The compromise between the parties is not permissible in law. While stressing that the petition is misconceived, she has urged that the same is liable to be dismissed.

6. It will also be relevant to mention here that vide order dated 09.02.2024 passed by this Court, the parties were directed to appear before the learned trial Court on 11.03.2024 for recording their statements with regard to the compromise/settlement. The trial Court was directed to submit its report. A report has been submitted by the trial Court as per which the statements of the respondent No.2-complainant, the present petitioner and the Investigating Officer had been recorded on 11.03.2024. It is also reported that the trial Court was satisfied that the compromise between the parties was genuine and without any undue influence.

7. There are catena of judgments of Hon'ble Supreme Court whereby, parameters governing the exercise of jurisdiction of Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure are well settled. In a celebrated judgment cited as *State of Haryana Vs. Bhajan Lal, 1992 SUPP (1) SCC 335*, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has discussed different categories of cases wherein, the power under Section 482 Cr.P.C. could be exercised either to prevent abuse of process of law or otherwise to secure the ends of justice, while observing that it might not be possible to lay down any precise, clearly defined, sufficiently channelized, inflexible guidelines or rigid formulae and to give an exhaustive list or myriad kind of cases where such powers should be exercised. The following principles have been culled out:-

“102 (1) Where the allegations made in the First Information

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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;

(2) Where the allegations in the First Information Report and other materials, if any, accompanying the FIR do not disclose a cognizable offence, justifying an investigation by police officers under Section 156(1) of the Code except under an order of a Magistrate within the purview of Section 155(2) of the Code;

(3) 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;

(4) Where the allegations in the FIR do not constitute a cognizable offence but constitute only a non-cognizable offence, no investigation is permitted by a police officer without an order of a Magistrate as contemplated under Section 155 (2) of the Code;

(5) 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;

(6) Where there is an express legal bar engrafted in any of the provisions of the Code or the concerned Act (under which a criminal proceeding is instituted) to the institution and continuance of the proceedings and/or where there is a specific provision in the Code or the concerned Act, providing efficacious redress for the grievance of the aggrieved party;

(7) 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.”

8. Reference can also be made to ***Narinder Singh and Ors. Vs. State of Punjab and another, (2014) 6 SCC 466***, wherein the Hon’ble Supreme Court had observed that while exercising power under Section 482 of Cr.P.C., the High Court has to examine as to whether the possibility of conviction of accused is remote and bleak and continuation of criminal case would put him into great oppression and prejudice and injustice would be

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caused to him by not quashing criminal case.

9. It is also considered to be important to mention here that the inherent power given to High Court under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. is with the purpose and object of advancement of justice. The touchstone for exercising that power would be to secure the ends of justice. The ends of justice are higher than the ends of mere law though justice has got to be administered in accordance with the law enacted by the Legislature. The concept of justice is elastic and imperceptible. There can be no hard and fast line constricting the power of the High Court to do substantial justice. The restrictive construction of inherent powers under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. may lead to rigid or specious justice, which in the given facts and circumstances of a case, may instead lead to grave injustice. Nonetheless such powers of wide amplitude ought to be exercised carefully in the context of quashing proceedings, bearing in mind, the nature and effect of the offence on the consciousness of the society; the seriousness of the injury, if any; voluntary nature of compromise between the accused and the victim; and conduct of the accused persons, prior to and after the occurrence of the purported offence or other relevant considerations. Reference in this regard can be made to a recent judgment of High Court of Kerala pronounced on 16.11.2023 in CrI. MC No.7497 of 2023, ***Kahar and others v. State of Kerala and others***, wherein it was observed that the viability of quashing a criminal proceeding on the ground that the accused and victim of sexual assault settles the dispute, resolves ultimately around the facts and circumstances of each case and no straitjacket formula can be formulated. It was further observed that where the High Court has such facts on record which clearly exhibit that the criminal prosecution involving non-

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compoundable sexual offences against women and children will result in greater injustice to the victim, its closure would only promote her well being, and the possibility of a conviction is remote, it can indubitably evaluate the consequential effects of the offence beyond the body of an individual and thereafter adopt a pragmatic approach and very well decide to quash such proceeding upon a compromise between the accused and the victim after taking into account all relevant facts.

10. On considering the peculiar facts and circumstances of the case as noted above, while keeping in view the well established position of law coupled with the reasons aforementioned and the fact that the matter stands amicably settled between the parties and they have recorded their statements to that effect before the trial Court, I am of the considered opinion that it is a fit case for exercising inherent jurisdiction of this Court under Section 482 of the Code, so as to secure the ends of justice and the quashing of FIR would be for the welfare of the parties.

11. Accordingly, the present petition is allowed and FIR No.169 dated 01.10.2023 registered under Section 376 of IPC at Police Station Bhawanigarh, District Sangrur along with all the consequential proceedings arising therefrom, are ordered to be quashed qua the petitioner.

08.04.2024
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(MANISHA BATRA)
JUDGE

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