



IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT  
CHANDIGARH

242

CRR(F)-151-2021

Date of decision: 18.09.2024

Robin Ladwal

...Petitioner

V/s

Rupakshi Khatak

...Respondent

CORAM: HON’BLE MR. JUSTICE SUMEET GOEL

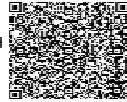
Present: Mr. Viresh Dahiya, Advocate for  
Mr. Sudarshan Kumar, Advocate for the petitioner.  
Mr. Parveen Kaushik, Advocate for the respondent  
(through VC).

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SUMEET GOEL, J. (Oral)

1. Present revision petition has been preferred against the order dated 24.02.2021 passed by the Principal Judge, Family Court, Rohtak (hereinafter to be referred as the ‘concerned Family Court’) praying for setting-aside of the said order. Vide the impugned order; the respondent (herein) has been awarded interim maintenance at the rate of Rs.8,000/- per month to the respondent to be paid by the petitioner (herein) from the date of application.
2. Learned counsel for the petitioner has argued that the Family Court has erroneously assessed the income of the petitioner without properly considering the documentary evidence and the actual financial status of the petitioner. According to the learned counsel, the findings of the Family Court, is based on the conjecture and not on realistic appreciation of the petitioner’s income. Learned counsel has further argued that the respondent is a well qualified woman and is fully capable of earning a respectable income which fact has completely been overlooked by the Family Court. It has been further argued that the respondent, prior to her marriage, was

employed and was earning handsome salary. According to him, with the



substantial experience in the field of Physiotherapy, the respondent is not only capable of sustaining herself but is also likely to increase her income as her career progresses and hence the Family Court has erroneously placed the entire burden of maintenance on the petitioner. Furthermore, the respondent-wife has failed to produce any documentary evidence in support of her financial needs and despite the lack of concrete evidence, the Family Court has adopted a wholly wrong approach while granting the quantum of interim maintenance and the same has been erroneously fastened upon the petitioner. Thus, it has been prayed that the instant petition be accepted and the impugned order be set-aside.

3. *Per contra*, learned counsel for the respondent has argued that the learned Family Court has determined the quantum of maintenance based on the calculation of the income of the petitioner as also taken due consideration of the relevant facts and circumstances of the case. According to him, the petitioner has sufficient means to maintain the respondent as he owns a software company namely Arahan Solutions Pvt. Limited having a substantial turnover. Thus, it has been prayed that the present petition be dismissed.

4. I have heard learned counsel for the petitioner and have perused the record.

5. It would be apposite to refer herein to a judgment passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court titled as ***Rajnish vs. Neha & Anr.: 2021(2) SCC 324***; relevant whereof reads as under:-

***“II Payment of interim Maintenance***

*(i) The proviso to Section 24 of the HMA (inserted vide Act 49 of 2001 w.e.f. 24.09.2001), and the third proviso to Section 125 Cr.P.C., 1973 (inserted vide Act 50 of 2001 w.e.f. 24.09.2001) provide that the proceedings for interim maintenance, shall as far as possible, be disposed of within 60 days' from the*



date of service of notice on the contesting spouse. Despite the statutory provisions granting a time-bound period for disposal of proceedings for interim maintenance, we find that application remain pending for several years in most of the cases. The delays are caused by various factors, such as tremendous docket pressure on the Family Courts, repetitive adjournments sought by parties, enormous time taken for completion of pleadings at the interim stage itself, etc. Pendency of applications for maintenance at the interim stage for several years defeats the very object of the legislation.

(ii)At present, the issue of interim maintenance is decided on the basis of pleadings, where some amount of guess-work or rough estimation takes place, so as to make a prima facie assessment of the amount to be awarded. It s often seen that both parties submit scanty material, do not disclose the correct details, and suppress vital information, which makes it difficult for the Family Courts to make an objective assessment for grant of interim maintenance. While there is a tendency on the part of the wife to exaggerate her needs, there is a corresponding tendency by the husband to conceal his actual income.

74.It has therefore, become necessary to lay down a procedure to streamline, the proceedings, since a dependant wife, who has no other source of income, has to take recourse to borrowings from her parents/relatives during the interregnum to sustain herself and the minor children, till she begins receiving interim maintenance.

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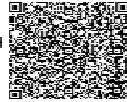
(j) The concerned Family Court /District Court/Magistrate’s Court must make an endeavour to decide the I.A. for Interim Maintenance by a reasoned order, within a period of four to six months at the latest, after the Affidavits of Disclosure have been filed before the court.

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| xxx | xxx | xxx | xxx | xxx |

132. The Affidavit of Disclosure of Assets and Liabilities annexed at Enclosures I, II and III of this judgment, as may be applicable, shall be filed by the parties in all maintenance proceedings, including pending proceedings before the concerned Family Court/District Court/Magistrate’s Court, as the case may be, throughout the country;

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| xxx | xxx | xxx | xxx | xxx  |
| xxx | xxx | xxx | xxx | xxx” |

6. Vide the impugned order passed by the Family Court, the aspect of interim maintenance has been decided. It goes without saying that



a decision upon the aspect (especially quantum) of interim maintenance, being result of some element of estimation, has to be construed accordingly as the entitlement of the applicant (making a plea for grant of interim maintenance) cannot be based upon exact arithmetical calculations at such stage. The order granting interim maintenance is, indubitably, subject to final adjudication and it is a provisional step subject to final determination to be made on the conclusion of proceedings. In other words, the interim maintenance is only tentative & is subject to fixation of final maintenance.

7. Relationship between the parties is not in dispute. The facts of the instant case reflect that vide the impugned order; the respondent (herein), who is the wife of the petitioner, has been granted interim maintenance at the rate of Rs.8,000/- per month. While going through the impugned order, it transpires that the interim maintenance has been awarded keeping in mind the financial responsibilities of the petitioner as well as the reasonable needs of the respondent. The interim maintenance awarded to the wife should neither be so extravagant which becomes oppressive and unbearable for the husband, nor should it be so meager that it drives the wife to penury. Upon reviewing the impugned order, it is evident that the petitioner owns a software company and is purportedly earning a handsome income, although no cogent proof has been produced on record to substantiate this claim. Moreover, the petitioner has also not placed on record any document to substantiate that the respondent-wife is earning specific income from any particular source of employment or business in her individual capacity. The contentions raised by learned counsel for the petitioner in the present petition with regard to factual aspect, are matter of trial and no comment on the same can be made at this stage. The same can be ascertained only after



adducing evidence by the parties. At the stage of interim maintenance, the Family Court role is only limited to ensuring that the interim maintenance awarded is based on the available evidence and a fair assessment of both the parties’ financial conditions. It is also apparent from the record that the order under challenge is only an interim in nature and not a final decision of the maintenance petition. The amount of maintenance awarded is always subject to the adjustment which will depend on the final outcome of the maintenance petition filed by the respondent/wife.

7.1           Considering the factual matrix of the case, income of the petitioner; status of the parties; their standard of living and requirements of the wife-respondent, the amount of Rs.8000/- per month, which has been directed to be paid by the petitioner (herein), vide the impugned order cannot be said to be on the higher side and is rather just and appropriate in the facts/circumstances of the case.

8.           In view of above, the interim maintenance granted by the Family Court does not call for any interference. Accordingly, the instant petition is hereby dismissed.

9.           Any observations made and/or submissions noted hereinabove shall not have any effect on merits of the case and the Family Court shall proceed further, in accordance with law, without being influenced with them.

10.           Pending application(s), if any, shall also stand disposed of.

(SUMEET GOEL)  
JUDGE

September 18, 2024  
*Ajay*

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|----------------------------|--------|
| Whether speaking/reasoned: | Yes/No |
| Whether reportable:        | Yes/No |