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IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH

CRR-1227-2016 (O&M)
Date of Decision: 25.04.2024

MANOJ VASUDEV

... Petitioner

Versus

DARBI PRINT PACK & OTHERS

...Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE JASJIT SINGH BEDI

Present: Mr. Akshay Jain, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Anhit Choudhari, Advocate for
Mr. PIP Singh, Advocate
for respondent No.1.

Ms. Ramta K Chaudhary, DAG, Punjab
for respondent No.2.

JASJIT SINGH BEDI, J (Oral)

The present revision petition has been filed against the judgment dated 11.03.2016 passed by the Additional Sessions Judge, Patiala, vide which the appeal preferred by the petitioner against the judgment of conviction and order of sentence dated 01.06.2015 passed by the Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Rajpura, has been dismissed.

2. The brief facts of the case are that in discharge of his legal liability, the petitioner/accused issued a cheque bearing No.611248 dated 28.06.2013 for an amount of Rs.92,459/- in favour of respondent No.1-complainant which came to be dishonoured. Pursuant thereto, the accused/petitioner came to be summoned under the provisions of the 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 vide order dated 01.06.2015 passed by the Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Rajpura.

3. The evidence was led and ultimately, the accused/petitioner was held guilty and accordingly, convicted for the offence punishable under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 and sentenced to undergo simple imprisonment for a period of 01 year. The accused/petitioner was also ordered to pay an amount of Rs.500/- as compensation to respondent No.1/complainant.

4. Aggrieved against the said judgment of conviction and order of sentence, the accused preferred an appeal before the Additional Sessions Judge, Patiala, which came to be dismissed on 11.03.2016.

5. Still aggrieved, the present revision petition has been preferred by the accused. During the pendency of the present criminal revision petition, a compromise has been arrived at between the parties on 02.11.2023 before the Mediation and Conciliation Centre of this Court in furtherance of which payment has been made to the respondent No.1-complainant of Rs.92,459/- and Rs.13,870/-. It would be relevant to mention here that a combined reading of Section 147 of the Negotiable Instruments Act alongwith Section 320 Cr.P.C. would establish that where a settlement has been effected, the offence under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act can be compounded on account of the fact that a mutual compromise has been effected between the parties.

6. The learned counsel for respondent No.1-complainant has accepted the factum of the compromise and has stated that he has no objection if the petitioner is acquitted of the charges framed against him.

7. I have heard the learned counsel for the parties.

8. This Court in 'Ramesh Chander Vs. State of Haryana and another, 2007(1) RCR (Criminal) 245' held as under:-

“4. As per the provisions of Section 147 of the Act, the offence under Section 138 is compoundable. Section 147 reads as under:-

“Offence to be compoundable-

Notwithstanding anything contained in the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973(2 of 1974), every offence punishable under this Act shall be compoundable”.

5. The compounding of the offence under Section 138 can be done during the trial of the case as well as by the High Court or Court of Session while acting in the exercise of its power of revision under Section 401 Criminal Procedure Code Reference may be made to Section 320(6) Criminal Procedure Code in this regard.

6. Further, under Section 320(8) Criminal Procedure Code the composition of an offence shall have the effect of acquittal of the accused with whom the offence has been compounded.”

9. This Court in 'Vatsa Electronics Vs. Pala Ram & Anr. decided on 09.03.2022 in CRR-1585-2019' has also held that once a settlement is being effected, then in terms of Section 147 of the Negotiable Instruments Act and Section 320 Cr.P.C., the accused ought to be acquitted as the offence stands compounded.

10. The admitted position is that the matter stands settled and the compromise/settlement between the parties dated 02.11.2023 is already on record.

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11. In view of the above, since, the parties have voluntarily settled the disputes between themselves, it is a fit case for allowing them to compound the offence.

12. Accordingly, the revision petition is allowed and the judgment dated 11.03.2016 passed by the Additional Sessions Judge, Patiala and the judgment of conviction and order of sentence dated 01.06.2015 passed by the Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Rajpura, are hereby set aside. The petitioner is acquitted of the charges under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act.

(JASJIT SINGH BEDI)
JUDGE

25.04.2024
JITESH

Whether speaking/reasoned:- Yes/No

Whether reportable:- Yes/No