



225 IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA  
AT CHANDIGARH

CRR(F)-661-2022 (O&M)  
Date of decision: 05.08.2024

JASBIR SINGH

...PETITIONER

V/S

REETA RANI

...RESPONDENT

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE HARPREET SINGH BRAR**

Present: Mr. Prince Saini, Advocate for  
Mr. Salinder Kumar Saini, Advocate  
for the petitioner.

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**HARPREET SINGH BRAR J. (ORAL)**

1. The present revision petition has been preferred against the impugned orders dated 06.01.2020, vide which petitioner was proceeded against ex-parte and interim maintenance amount of Rs. 6,000/- per month was awarded in favour of respondent-wife as well as order dated 18.06.2020 vide which final maintenance amount of Rs. 6,000/- has been awarded by learned Family Court, Ambala and also seeking setting aside of the impugned order dated 23.05.2022, vide which ex-parte application CRM-14 of 2021 for setting aside the order dated 06.01.2020 as well as judgment dated 18.06.2022 has been rejected.

2. The marriage between the petitioner-husband and respondent-wife was solemnized on 29.05.2005 and two children i.e. one male and one female child were born from the wedlock on 17.03.2007 and 29.09.2008 respectively. However, matrimonial dispute ensued between the couple and the respondent filed a petition under Section 125 Cr.P.C. seeking maintenance. The petitioner-



husband filed a reply and contested the claim made by the respondent. The learned Family Court vide impugned order dated 06.01.2020 granted interim maintenance of Rs. 6,000/- per month in favour of respondent-wife. Learned Family Court, Ambala vide judgment dated 18.06.2020 awarded maintenance amount of Rs. 6,000/- per month in favour of respondent-wife by proceeding the husband-petitioner as ex-parte vide order dated 06.01.2020. Aggrieved by the said orders, petitioner-husband has preferred this revision petition.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner-husband *inter alia* contends that learned Family Court, Hisar has gravely erred in awarding Rs. 6,000/- as maintenance amount in favour of the respondent-wife as respondent has left the company of the petitioner with her own free will and without any justifiable cause, therefore, she is not entitled to claim any maintenance from the petitioner. It is further contended that petitioner is a simple labourer and is neither a building contractor nor earns Rs. 45,000/- per month, therefore, the amount of maintenance awarded by learned Family Court below is on the higher side. Therefore, prayer was made for setting aside/quashing the impugned order dated 18.06.2020.

4. I have heard the learned counsel for the petitioner and gone through the case file with his able assistance. In spite of passing of almost two years of order regarding depositing Rs. 25,000/- as litigation expenses, petitioner has not been able to comply with the said order. Therefore, this Court is left with no other option but to decide the present case on its own merits.

5. The object and purpose behind granting maintenance is to ensure that the dependent spouse is not reduced to destitution or vagrancy on account



of failure of marriage. At the same time, a just and careful balance must be struck to ensure that this provision does not degenerate into a weapon to punish the other spouse. The Courts are required to conduct the maintenance proceedings while being alive to the legislative intent behind the provision under Section 125 Cr.P.C in its true spirit, which is to provide speedy assistance and social justice to women, children and infirm parents. The provisions of Section 125 Cr.P.C. were enacted as a measure to further social justice and protect dependent women, children and parents, which also fall within the constitutional sweep of Article 15(3) reinforced by Article 39 of the Constitution of India.

6. A three-Judge Bench of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Vimala (K.) v. Veeraswamy (K.) (1991) 2 SCC 375***, speaking through Justice Fatima Beevi, opined that as follows:

*“3. Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure is meant to achieve a social purpose. The object is to prevent vagrancy and destitution. It provides a speedy remedy for the supply of food, clothing, and shelter to the deserted wife.”*

A two-Judge Bench of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Kirtikant D. Vadodaria v. State of Gujarat (1996) 4 SCC 479***, speaking through Justice Faizan Uddin, opined as follows:

*“15. ... While dealing with the ambit and scope of the provision contained in Section 125 of the Code, it has to be borne in mind that the dominant and primary object is to give social justice to the woman, child and infirm parents, etc. and to prevent destitution and vagrancy by compelling those who can support those who are unable to support themselves but have a moral claim for support. The provisions in Section 125 provide a speedy remedy to those women, children and destitute parents who are in distress. The provisions in Section 125 are intended to achieve this special purpose. The dominant purpose behind the benevolent provisions contained in Section 125 clearly is that the wife, child and parents should not be left in a helpless state of distress, destitution and starvation.”*



7. Another objective the legislature has sought to achieve by this provision is to provide maintenance *pendente lite* to the applicant spouse during proceedings emerging out of matrimonial disputes so that the she/he can maintain herself/himself, have sufficient funds to pursue the litigation, and not suffer at the instance of the affluent spouse.

8. There is a general tendency on the part of the wife to amplify her needs and the husband to conceal his actual income, making it difficult to determine the earning capacity of the rival claimants with exactitude. The rival claimants must scrupulously bring on record their actual respective earning capacities in order for the Court to arrive at quantum of maintenance which is just and fair in terms of principle of equistatus. The quantum of maintenance must be justifiable and realistic to provide succour to the dependent spouse and also to avoid occurrence of the two extremes of the maintenance being either paltry or extravagant, ensuring that neither of the two is reduced to a life of penury. The adequacy of the maintenance allowance has to be determined by the yardstick of the dependent spouse being able to lead a life of reasonable comfort.

9. While dealing with the issue of maintenance *in extenso*, a two Judge bench of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in **Rajnesh v. Neha and another (2021) 2 SCC 324**, laid down the criteria for determining quantum of maintenance and issued the following directions:

***"VI Final Directions***

*130. In view of the foregoing discussion as contained in Part B -I to V of this judgment, we deem it appropriate to pass the following directions in exercise of our powers under Article 142 of the Constitution of India:*

***(a) Issue of overlapping jurisdiction***



131. To overcome the issue of overlapping jurisdiction, and avoid conflicting orders being passed in different proceedings, it has become necessary to issue directions in this regard, so that there is uniformity in the practice followed by the Family Courts/District Courts/Magistrate Courts throughout the country. We direct that:

(i) where successive claims for maintenance are made by a party under different statutes, the Court would consider an adjustment or setoff, of the amount awarded in the previous proceeding/s, while determining whether any further amount is to be awarded in the subsequent proceeding;

(ii) it is made mandatory for the applicant to disclose the previous proceeding and the orders passed therein, in the subsequent proceeding;

(iii) if the order passed in the previous proceeding/s requires any modification or variation, it would be required to be done in the same proceeding

**(b) Payment of Interim Maintenance**

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

**(c) Criteria for determining the quantum of maintenance**

133. For determining the quantum of maintenance payable to an applicant, the Court shall take into account the criteria enumerated in Part B III of the judgment.

134. The aforesaid factors are however not exhaustive, and the concerned Court may exercise its discretion to consider any other factor/s which may be necessary or of relevance in the facts and circumstances of a case.

**(d) Date from which maintenance is to be awarded**

135. We make it clear that maintenance in all cases will be awarded from the date of filing the application for maintenance, as held in Part B-IV above.

**(e) Enforcement/Execution of orders of maintenance**

136. For enforcement/execution of orders of maintenance, it is directed that an order or decree of maintenance may be enforced under Section 28A of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1956; Section 20(6) of the D.V. Act; and Section 128 of Cr.P.C may be applicable. The order of maintenance may be enforced as a money decree of a civil court as per the provisions of the CPC more particularly Sections 51, 55, 58, 60 r.w. Order XXI."

10. It is trite law that an able-bodied husband is legally and morally bound to maintain his wife. However, if the husband is unemployed or documentary proof qua his income is not available, it can be reasonably assumed

that he can work as a labourer and earn the prevalent minimum wage. Reliance in this regard can be placed on judgments rendered by the Hon’ble Supreme Court in *Bhuwan Mohan Singh vs. Meena* 2014(3) R.C.R(Criminal) 723 and this Court in *Amanjot Singh vs. Rajwant Kaur* 2017(1) R.C.R(Criminal) 1070, *Satish @Bittoo vs. Suresh Devi* 2018(1) Law Herald 595, *Dalip Kumar @ Deepa vs. Sunita and another* 2012(2) R.C.R.(Criminal) 434 and *Sandeep vs. Suman* in *CR-1802-2023* decided on 22.03.2023.

11. Having heard learned counsel for the parties and after perusing the record, this Court is of the opinion that learned Family Court, Hisar has rightly awarded Rs. 6,000/- as maintenance in favour of respondent-wife, after assessing the monthly income of the petitioner as Rs. 14,000/- per month being a daily wage worker as per Collector rate. A careful and just balance has been drawn, keeping in view the spiralling inflation rates and high cost of living corresponding to the reasonable needs of the respondent-wife. Learned counsel for the petitioner has not been able to indicate any perversity in the impugned order which warrants interference by this Court. Accordingly, this revision petition is hereby dismissed being bereft of any merit.

August 05, 2024  
Ajay Goswami

(HARPREET SINGH BRAR)  
JUDGE

|      |                           |        |
|------|---------------------------|--------|
| (i)  | Whether speaking/reasoned | Yes/No |
| (ii) | Whether reportable        | Yes/No |