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

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CRM-M-32915-2024 (O&M)
Date of decision: 16.07.2024

Ranjit Singh ...Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab and another ...Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE MANISHA BATRA

Present:- Mr. Sourabh Arora, Advocate
for the petitioner.

MANISHA BATRA, J. (Oral)

1. The instant petition has been filed by the petitioner under Section 482 Cr.P.C. for quashing of order dated 12.03.2021, passed by the Judicial Magistrate First Class, Samana in complaint bearing No. NIACT 109 of 2018, titled as *The Patran Primary Cooperative Agriculture Development Bank Ltd. vs. Ranjit Singh*, whereby the petitioner had been declared a proclaimed person.
2. The present petition has been filed by the petitioner on the grounds and it has been argued by his counsel that the petitioner has been falsely implicated in the said complaint as he had never issued any cheque. The notice issued by the trial Court was never served upon the petitioner. Even the bailable/non-bailable warrants issued against the petitioner were received back by the trial Court that the petitioner did not meet as the petitioner, in connection with his work, used to remain outside the State. The petitioner had been declared a proclaimed person without following the proper

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procedure prescribed under Section 82 Cr.P.C. Hence, it is urged that the impugned order is liable to be set aside.

3. I have heard learned counsel for the petitioner and have also gone through the material placed on record.

4. On giving due deliberations to the contentions as raised by learned counsel for the parties and on an overall perusal of the orders passed by the trial Court from the date of initiating proceedings under Section 82 Cr.P.C. as against the petitioner till the date of declaring him a proclaimed person, I am of the considered opinion that the impugned order dated 12.03.2021 suffers from material illegalities and is liable to be quashed with all the consequential proceedings arising therefrom.

5. There are catena of judgments of different High Courts discussing the requirements necessary for issuance and publication of proclamation against an absconder under Section 82 Cr.P.C. and for declaring him as a proclaimed person/offender. These requirements have been discussed from time to time in ***Rohit Kumar Vs. State of Delhi : 2008 CrL J. 2561, Rohit Kumar Vs. State of Delhi : 2008 CrL J. 2561, Bishundayal Mahton and others Vs. Emperor : AIR 1943 Patna 366, Devender Singh Negi Vs. State of U.P. : 1994 CrL LJ (Allahabad HC) 1783, Gurappa Gugal and others Vs. State of Mysore : 1969 CriLJ 826, Shokat Ali Vs. State of Haryana : 2020(2) RCR (Criminal) 339, Dilbagh Singh Vs. State of Punjab : (P&H) 2015 (8) R.C.R. (criminal) 166, Ashok Kumar Vs. State of Haryana and another : 2013 (4) RCR (Criminal) 550, Pawan Kumar Gupta Vs. The State of W.B. : 1973 CriLJ 1368, Birad Dan Vs. State : 1958 CriLJ 965,***

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Negi alias Debu Vs. State of U.P. and another, 1994 Cri LJ 1783 and Pal Singh Vs. The State : 1955 CriLJ 318.

6. After going through the material placed on record as well as the copies of zimini orders passed by the trial Court, it is revealed that on 17.12.2019, since the non-bailable warrants issued against the petitioner were received back unserved, the trial Court had ordered for issuance of proclamation against him for 11.02.2020. Thereafter, in pursuance of order dated 17.12.2019, proclamation was not issued, the trial Court again ordered for issuance of proclamation for 10.04.2020. Thereafter, the matter was adjourned on three consecutive dates due to outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. The case was then taken up on 23.12.2020 and the trial Court again ordered for issuance of proclamation against the petitioner for 12.02.2021. A perusal of these orders shows that the trial Court before ordering for publication of proclamation has not recorded its satisfaction much less proper satisfaction that that the petitioner had absconded or was concealing himself so that the warrant of arrest, previously issued, cannot be executed, despite reasonable diligence, which was in violation of the provisions of Section 82(1) of Cr.P.C. Reliance in this regard can be placed upon ***Rohit Kumar Vs. State of Delhi : 2008 CrL J. 2561.***

7. When the case was taken up on 12.02.2021, the proclamation was received back executed. However, since the statutory period of 30 days had not expired, the case was adjourned to 12.03.2021 awaiting the appearance of the petitioner. However, while adjourning the case to 12.03.2021 to await the appearance of the petitioner as the statutory period of 30 days had not elapsed by then, the trial Court failed to consider the fact that it could not have

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extended the time by simply adjourning the case as a fresh proclamation was required to be published once the period between issuance of publication of proclamation and the specified period of hearing was less than 30 days. Reference in this context can be made to ***Dilbagh Singh Vs. State of Punjab (P&H) : 2015 (8) R.C.R. (criminal) 166.***

8. Further, a perusal of the statement of the serving police official ASI Nachatter Singh reveals that the proclamation was executed on 09.02.2021 requiring the petitioner to cause his appearance on 12.02.2021 before the trial Court, which means that he was not granted statutory period of 30 days to cause his appearance before the trial Court. Hence, the same was in clear violation of the provisions of Section 82(1) Cr.P.C., as per which, a specified time of not less than 30 days is required to be given to the accused from the date of publishing such proclamation which is mandatory in nature. Reliance in this regard can be placed upon ***Gurappa Gugal and others Vs. State of Mysore : 1969 CriLJ 826*** and ***Shokat Ali Vs. State of Haryana : 2020(2) RCR (Criminal) 339.***

9. Accordingly, in view of the discussion as made above and also in view of the ratio of law as laid down in above cited authorities, the present petition is allowed and the impugned order dated 12.03.2021, passed by the Judicial Magistrate First Class, Samana in complaint bearing No. NIACT 109 of 2018, titled as ***The Patran Primary Cooperative Agriculture Development Bank Ltd. vs. Ranjit Singh***, whereby the petitioner had been declared a proclaimed person, is quashed with all consequential proceedings arising therefrom.

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10. However, the petitioner is directed to surrender before the Court concerned within a period of four weeks, subject to order for grant of anticipatory bail, if any passed on his petition to be filed under Section 438 of the Cr.P.C. In the absence of any order for grant of anticipatory bail and on such surrender, the petitioner shall be liable to be remanded to judicial custody subject to any order for grant of regular bail to be passed by the concerned Court in accordance with law.

11. Needless to observe that in case any application is filed before the concerned Court for grant of regular bail, then the concerned Court shall be bound to dispose of the same expeditiously and that nothing in this order shall be treated as expression of any opinion on merits so as to bind or influence the concerned Court in disposal of the same.

12. Till the appearance of the petitioner before the trial Court, his arrest shall remain stayed.

13. It is made clear that in case the petitioner fails to appear before the trial Court within a period of four weeks from today, this petition shall be deemed to be dismissed.

16.07.2024

Waseem Ansari

(MANISHA BATRA)
JUDGE

Whether speaking/reasoned

Yes/No

Whether reportable

Yes/No