



CRR(F)-1531-2024

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IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT  
CHANDIGARH

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CRR(F)-1531-2024

Date of decision: 04.12.2024

Deepak

...Petitioner

V/s

Poonam and others

...Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUMEET GOEL

Present: Mr. Jainainder Saini, Advocate with  
Ms. Shilpa Saini, Advocate for the petitioner.

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SUMEET GOEL, J. (Oral)

1. Present revision petition has been preferred against the order dated 06.09.2024 passed by the Additional Principal Judge, Family Court, Hisar (hereinafter to be referred as the 'concerned Family Court') praying for setting-aside of the said order. Vide the impugned order; the respondents (herein) have been awarded interim maintenance at the rate of Rs.13,000/- per month (i.e. Rs.6,000/- per month to respondent No.1-wife and Rs.3500/- per month each to respondent Nos.2 and 3 – minor daughters) to be paid by the petitioner-husband (herein) from the date of application alongwith litigation expenses of Rs.5500/-. The respondents (herein) had filed a petition, under Section 125 of Cr.P.C., 1973 before the Family Court, stating that they are the wife and minor daughters, respectively, of the petitioner (herein) and are unable to maintain themselves and hence the interim maintenance ought to be awarded to them.

2. Learned counsel for the petitioner has iterated that the learned Family Court, while determining the quantum of interim maintenance, failed

to consider that the petitioner-husband has never refused to support or



maintain the respondents. According to learned counsel, the respondent-wife has voluntarily left the company of the petitioner-husband without any just or reasonable cause and is herself responsible for creating the circumstances leading to the separation which disentitles her to claim the interim maintenance from the petitioner-husband. It has been further iterated that the Family Court has overlooked the fact that the respondent No.1 is an educated lady; having completed her 10+2 education and qualified as a JBT teacher & hence capable of sustaining herself. According to learned counsel, the Family Court presumed that the petitioner, being educated, could reasonably earn at least Rs.20,000/- per month and consequently granted interim maintenance of Rs.13,000/- per month to the respondents which is contrary to the facts and circumstances of the case. It has been further urged that the Family Court has disregarded the employment history of the petitioner, wherein he worked in the collection department of AU Small Finance Bank from 03.09.2020 to 02.05.2024, earning a monthly salary of Rs.11,000/- plus allowances. However, due to the continuous act of cruelty of the respondent-wife and her regular visits to his Bank and interruptions in the work of the petitioner, he was forced by the Bank authorities to leave the job & as such, the petitioner has to resign from his job on 02.05.2024. According to learned counsel, the Family Court has failed to consider the prevailing high unemployment rates, making it challenging for the petitioner to secure employment and earn such an amount. It has been further urged that the Family Court has not taken into consideration the inability of the petitioner (herein) to pay the excessive amount, given his current financial condition. Learned counsel has further argued that the Family Court ought



to have considered this aspect before fastening the petitioner with the liability to pay the interim maintenance to the respondents. Thus, it has been prayed that the impugned order is patently illegal and suffers from material infirmities and hence the same is liable to be set-aside.

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

4. It would be apposite to refer herein to a judgment passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court titled as ***Rajnesh 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 is 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.*

xxx                      xxx                      xxx                      xxx                      xxx  
xxx                      xxx                      xxx                      xxx                      xxx

*(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.*

xxx                      xxx                      xxx                      xxx                      xxx  
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;*

xxx                      xxx                      xxx                      xxx                      xxx  
xxx                      xxx                      xxx                      xxx                      xxx”

5.                      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.

6.                      It is undisputed that respondent No.1 is the legally wedded wife of the petitioner and respondent Nos.2 and 3 are the minor daughters of the parties, who are living in the care and custody of respondent No.1-wife. The facts of the instant case reflect that vide the impugned order; the



respondents, who are the wife and minor daughters of the petitioner, has been granted interim maintenance at the rate of Rs.13,000/- per month (i.e. Rs.6,000/- per month to respondent No.1-wife and Rs.3500/- per month each to respondent Nos.2 and 3-minor daughters) from the date of the application. While going through the impugned order, it transpires that both the parties (i.e. the petitioner-husband and the respondent-wife), have placed on record their respective affidavits with regard to disclosure of their respective incomes, assets and liabilities in terms of the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court titled as ***Rajnesh*** case (supra). The Family Court upon perusal of the records, respective affidavit(s) and evidence of both the parties in order to fix the interim maintenance, found that the respondent-wife (herein) is not financially independent or capable of maintaining herself and her minor daughters. The respondent-wife has alleged before the Family Court that the petitioner-husband (herein) is employed at A.U. Small Finance Bank; earning a monthly salary of Rs.70,000/- inclusive of commission, incentives, travel allowances and others benefits. She further alleged that the petitioner-husband possesses additional movable and immovable properties. Conversely, the petitioner-husband (herein) claimed before the Family Court that he was previously employed in the bank; earning a monthly salary of Rs.11,000/- and has since resigned from his position. The petitioner-husband (herein) has further submitted that his resignation in April, 2024 was necessitated by the frequent Court appearances in cases filed against him by the respondent-wife, which impacted his professional responsibilities and accordingly he has to tender his resignation. He has further asserted that he is currently unemployed but



the same does not favour with the Family Court. Considering the facts and circumstances of the case, the Family Court observed that there is no conclusive evidence on record to substantiate the claim that the petitioner-husband (herein) is earning Rs.70,000/- per month. However, it is equally difficult to accept the assertion that an educated person employed at a bank would earn only Rs.11,000/- per month as this is even less than the wages of an unskilled labourer. The Family Court further held, even assuming, that the petitioner-husband (herein) had left the job but this does not *ipso facto* absolve him of his obligation to provide maintenance to the respondents (herein). Considering the qualification, prior employment in the banking sector and presumed ability to secure alternative employment of the petitioner-husband, the Family Court held that it is reasonable to estimate that the petitioner-husband (herein) can earn a monthly income of at least Rs.20,000/-. Accordingly, the Family Court had directed the petitioner-husband (herein) to pay the interim maintenance to the respondents as indicated hereinabove.

6.1. Indubitably, the relationship between the parties is undisputed and it is a fundamental legal obligation of the petitioner-husband (herein) to provide financial support to his wife and the minor children, if they are unable to sustain themselves. In the instant case, the respondent-wife is currently unemployed and bears the sole responsibility of caring for their minor children on account of matrimonial discord. The plea raised by the counsel for the petitioner-husband that petitioner is currently unemployed and hence unable to bear the burden of the interim maintenance granted by the Family Court is mis-conceived. It is a well established law that a



husband cannot escape his duty to provide maintenance to his wife and child, especially when they are financially dependent on him. Matrimonial disputes do not absolve a parent of their responsibility toward their children or spouse and of their duty to uphold the financial stability of the family. Therefore, it becomes imperative for the petitioner-husband to fulfill his legal and moral obligations in ensuring the welfare and sustenance of his dependents. Hence, at this juncture, the contentions raised by learned counsel for the petitioner in the present petition with regard to factual aspect, are matter of trial and no ratiocination on the same can be made at this stage. The same can be ascertained only after adducing evidence by the parties. It is also apparent from the record that the order under challenge is only 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. Considering the facts and circumstances of the case, the amount of Rs.13,000/- per month, which has been directed to be paid by the petitioner (herein) to the respondents, 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

December 04, 2024  
*Ajay*

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