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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

+ W.P.(CRL) 1315/2024

AYUSH PANWAR & ANR.

.....Petitioners

Through: Mr. Vaibhav Choudhary,
Mr. Sushil Kumar Singh
& Mr. Harsh Rana,
Advocates.

versus

STATE (GNCTD) & ANR.

.....Respondents

Through: Ms. Rupali Bandhopadhy,
ASC-CRL for the State with
Mr. Sagar Mehlawat,
Advocate.
SI Akash (P.S. Bhajanpura).
Mr. Naveen, Ms. Mahima
Solanki & Ms. Aakriti
Verma, Advocates for
Complainant.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE AMIT MAHAJAN

ORDER

10.07.2024

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1. The present petition is filed seeking quashing of FIR No. 226/2024 dated 05.04.2024, registered at Police Station Bhajan Pura, for offences under Sections 323/341/34 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 ('IPC') and for offence under Section 3 of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 ('SC & ST Act'). The FIR was registered on a complaint filed by Respondent No. 2. The Chargesheet is not filed in the present case.

2. It is averred that on 01.04.2024 at around 12:05 AM, when the complainant/ Respondent No.2 was wandering after having dinner near his house, the petitioners came there along with eight

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to ten persons and started quarreling with Respondent No.2. It was alleged that the quarrel led to an altercation, where the petitioners had beaten Respondent No.2 and hit him with the butt of a country made pistol. It was alleged that the petitioners had cursed Respondent No.2 in filthy language and also abused him by using the caste names– ‘Chamar’ and ‘Gittal’. The complaint given by Respondent No.2 culminated into the aforementioned FIR.

3. The learned counsel submits that the parties are known to each other and they live in the same locality. He submits that the altercation took place between the parties due to some petty dispute.

4. He submits that the petitioners had made no casteist remarks against Respondent No.2. He further submits that the petitioners were not carrying any pistol at the time of the incident.

5. He submits that the petitioners have unconditionally apologized for their behaviour and undertake to not indulge into any such activity in future.

6. The learned Additional Public Prosecutor for the State submits that the status report has been filed.

7. The status report indicates that during the course of investigation, the statements of various public eye-witnesses were recorded which do not reflect that the petitioners had made any casteist remarks against Respondent No.2 at the time of the incident.

8. The present petition is filed on the ground that the parties have settled all their disputes and have entered into Settlement Agreement dated 12.04.2024, with the intervention of their families and elders from the neighbourhood, on their own free

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will, without any force, pressure, coercion, inducement, compulsion, misrepresentation, or threat.

9. The parties are present in person in Court and have been duly identified by the Investigating Officer.

10. Respondent No.2 submits that he is satisfied with the unconditional apology tendered by the petitioners for their misbehaviour. He further submits that he misunderstood that the petitioners were carrying a country made pistol. He submits that he does not have any remaining grievance or grudge against the petitioners.

11. On being pointedly asked, he states that he does not wish to pursue any proceedings arising out of the present FIR and has no objection if the same is quashed.

12. Offences under Sections 323/ 341 of the IPC are compoundable whereas offence under Section 3 of the SC & ST Act is non-compoundable in nature.

13. It is well settled that the High Court while exercising its powers under Section 482 of the CrPC can quash offences which are non-compoundable under the Code to secure the ends of justice on the ground that there is a compromise between the accused and the complainant. The Hon'ble Apex Court has laid down parameters and guidelines for High Court while accepting settlement and quashing the proceedings. In **Narinder Singh & Ors. v. State of Punjab & Anr. : (2014) 6 SCC 466**, the Hon'ble Apex Court has observed as under :-

“29. In view of the aforesaid discussion, we sum up and lay down the following principles by which the High Court would be guided in giving adequate treatment to the settlement between the parties and exercising its power under Section 482 of the Code while accepting the settlement and quashing the proceedings or refusing to accept the

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settlement with direction to continue with the criminal proceedings:

29.1. *Power conferred under Section 482 of the Code is to be distinguished from the power which lies in the Court to compound the offences under Section 320 of the Code. No doubt, under Section 482 of the Code, the High Court has inherent power to quash the criminal proceedings even in those cases which are not compoundable, where the parties have settled the matter between themselves. However, this power is to be exercised sparingly and with caution.*

29.2. *When the parties have reached the settlement and on that basis petition for quashing the criminal proceedings is filed, the guiding factor in such cases would be to secure:*

(i) ends of justice, or

(ii) to prevent abuse of the process of any court.

While exercising the power the High Court is to form an opinion on either of the aforesaid two objectives. 29.3. Such a power is not to be exercised in those prosecutions which involve heinous and serious offences of mental depravity or offences like murder, rape, dacoity, etc. Such offences are not private in nature and have a serious impact on society. Similarly, for the offences alleged to have been committed under special statute like the Prevention of Corruption Act or the offences committed by public servants while working in that capacity are not to be quashed merely on the basis of compromise between the victim and the offender.

29.4. *On the other hand, those criminal cases having overwhelmingly and predominantly civil character, particularly those arising out of commercial transactions or arising out of matrimonial relations or family disputes should be quashed when the parties have resolved their entire disputes among themselves.*

29.5. *While exercising its powers, the High*



Court is to examine as to whether the possibility of conviction is remote and bleak and continuation of criminal cases would put the accused to great oppression and prejudice and extreme injustice would be caused to him by not quashing the criminal cases.”

(emphasis supplied)

14. Similarly, in ***Parbatbhai Aahir & Ors v. State of Gujarat & Anr.*** : (2017) 9 SCC 641, the Hon’ble Apex Court has observed as under :-

“16. The broad principles which emerge from the precedents on the subject, may be summarised in the following propositions:

16.1. Section 482 preserves the inherent powers of the High Court to prevent an abuse of the process of any court or to secure the ends of justice. The provision does not confer new powers. It only recognises and preserves powers which inhere in the High Court. 16.2. The invocation of the jurisdiction of the High Court to quash a first information report or a criminal proceeding on the ground that a settlement has been arrived at between the offender and the victim is not the same as the invocation of jurisdiction for the purpose of compounding an offence. While compounding an offence, the power of the court is governed by the provisions of Section 320 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. The power to quash under Section 482 is attracted even if the offence is non-compoundable.

16.3. In forming an opinion whether a criminal proceeding or complaint should be quashed in exercise of its jurisdiction under Section 482, the High Court must evaluate whether the ends of justice would justify the exercise of the inherent power.

16.4. While the inherent power of the High



Court has a wide ambit and plenitude it has to be exercised (i) to secure the ends of justice, or (ii) to prevent an abuse of the process of any court.

16.5. The decision as to whether a complaint or first information report should be quashed on the ground that the offender and victim have settled the dispute, revolves ultimately on the facts and circumstances of each case and no exhaustive elaboration of principles can be formulated.

16.6. In the exercise of the power under Section 482 and while dealing with a plea that the dispute has been settled, the High Court must have due regard to the nature and gravity of the offence. Heinous and serious offences involving mental depravity or offences such as murder, rape and dacoity cannot appropriately be quashed though the victim or the family of the victim have settled the dispute. Such offences are, truly speaking, not private in nature but have a serious impact upon society. The decision to continue with the trial in such cases is founded on the overriding element of public interest in punishing persons for serious offences.

16.7. As distinguished from serious offences, there may be criminal cases which have an overwhelming or predominant element of a civil dispute. They stand on a distinct footing insofar as the exercise of the inherent power to quash is concerned. 16.8. Criminal cases involving offences which arise from commercial, financial, mercantile, partnership or similar transactions with an essentially civil flavour may in appropriate situations fall for quashing where parties have settled the dispute.

16.9. In such a case, the High Court may quash the criminal proceeding if in view



of the compromise between the disputants, the possibility of a conviction is remote and the continuation of a criminal proceeding would cause oppression and prejudice; and

16.10. There is yet an exception to the principle set out in propositions 16.8. and 16.9. above. Economic offences involving the financial and economic well-being of the State have implications which lie beyond the domain of a mere dispute between private disputants. The High Court would be justified in declining to quash where the offender is involved in an activity akin to a financial or economic fraud or misdemeanour. The consequences of the act complained of upon the financial or economic system will weigh in the balance.”

(emphasis supplied)

15. Even though serious allegations have been made in the present FIR, however, this Court cannot ignore that Respondent No.2 has stated that certain allegations were made on misunderstanding and the status report also indicates that no castiest remarks were made by the petitioners. Moreover, once the victim does not wish to pursue the proceedings, it is improbable that the trial would lead to any conviction. In such circumstances, the continuance of the proceedings would be an abuse of the process of Court.

16. Keeping in view the nature of dispute and that the parties have amicably entered into a settlement, this Court feels that no useful purpose would be served by keeping the dispute alive and continuance of the proceedings would amount to abuse of the process of Court. I am of the opinion that this is a fit case to exercise extraordinary power under Article 226 of the Constitution of India.

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17. However, keeping in mind the fact that the State machinery has been put to motion, this Court feels that the ends of justice would be served if the petitioners are put to cost.

18. In view of the above, FIR No. 226/2024 and all consequential proceedings arising therefrom are quashed, subject to payment of a total cost of ₹20,000/- by the petitioners (that is, ₹10,000/- by each petitioner), to be deposited with the Delhi Police Welfare Society, within a period of ten weeks from date.

19. The petitioners are directed to furnish the proof of deposit of cost to the concerned SHO.

20. The present petition is allowed in the aforesaid terms.

AMIT MAHAJAN, J

JULY 10, 2024

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