

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT PATNA
CRIMINAL MISCELLANEOUS No.146 of 2024

Arising Out of PS. Case No.-16 Year-2022 Thana- MAHILA P.S. District- Munger

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1. Deepa Sinha Wife of Late Ambar Kumar Sinha, Resident of Flat no 304, Ambuj Tower, Hanuman Path, Mohalla PS-Tilka Manjhi, District-Bhagalpur
 2. Perna Sinha @ Chinki, Wife of Saroj Kumar Residento fo At- J.P. Regency, Manik Sarkar Lane, P.S.- Adampur, District- Bhagalpur,

... .. Petitioner/s

Versus

1. The State of Bihar
2. Pragati Mitra Wife of Ranjan Anand, Resident of Flat no. 304, Ambuj Tower, Hanuman Path, Mohalla P.S- Tilka Manja, District- Bhagalpur, At present D/O- Sri Purushotam Kumar Mitra, Resident of Shastrinagar, Road no. 9, P.S.- Kasimbazar, District- Munger

... .. Opposite Party/s

Appearance :

For the Petitioner/s	:	Ms. Roona, Adv.
For the State	:	Mr. Uma Shankar Prasad Singh, APP
For the Opposite Party/s :		Mr. Sanjiv Kr. Singh, Adv.

CORAM: HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE CHANDRA SHEKHAR JHA
ORAL JUDGMENT

Date : 07-07-2025

1. Heard learned counsel appearing on behalf of the parties.

2. The present petition is being filed on behalf of the petitioners for quashing of cognizance order dated 21.12.2022 passed in Mahila P.S. Case No. 16 of 2022 by Learned S.D.J.M Munger, whereby and whereunder cognizance has been taken against petitioners for offences u/s 498A of the IPC and Section 4 of D.P. Act.



3. As per the case of prosecution, O.P. no. 2 submitted a written report regarding her ousting from in-laws house due to non-fulfillment of demand of dowry after assaulting her physically and torturing her mentally alleging therein *inter alia* that O.P. no.2 solemnized marriage with one Rajan Anand son of petitioners as per Hindu rituals and customs. The father of O.P. no. 2 gave Rs. 3 lacs in cash for marriage expenses and Rs. 4 lacs for jewelry and other articles to petitioners. Informant/O.P. no. 2 after marriage went to her in-laws house whereafter two months, her husband Rajan Anand, mother-in-law (petitioner No.1) and sister-in-law (petitioner no. 2), in connivance with each other started taunting her for bringing less dowry and low quality of articles and demanded further Rs. 2 lacs in cash and one Apache Motorcycle and only thereafter she would be allowed to live in the house. Finding no way, O.P. no. 2 informed her parents about the incident then her father and brother visited her in-laws house and tried to make them



understand but in-laws people refused to listen them.

4. Ms. Roona, learned counsel appearing for the petitioner submitted that allegation against petitioner no. 1 who is mother-in-law and petitioner no. 2 who is sister-in-law is very general and omnibus and they are living separately. It is pointed out that occurrence took place during COVID-19 when the husband of O.P. No. 2 was working from home at Bhagalpur. It is submitted that the petitioners were implicated with harassing approach out of ulterior and oblique motive. It is submitted that police after investigation not even submitted charge-sheet for petitioner no. 2 namely, Prerna Sinha @ Chinki but the learned Magistrate took cognizance against petitioner no. 2 through impugned order dated 21.12.2022 without assigning any reasons. It is submitted that O.P. No. 2 is working as a government teacher. Learned counsel further submitted that O.P. No. 2 left her matrimonial home on her own out of dispute and differences with her husband in month of December, 2021 and thereafter



present FIR was lodged on 24.06.2022 in planned manner implicating petitioners, who are not on fault. It is also pointed out that apprehending false implication petitioner no. 1 filed informatory petition before the court of learned CJM, Bhagalpur i.e., much before the lodging of this FIR under Section 39 of Cr.P.C. It is submitted that the thrust of allegation is available against the husband of O.P. No. 2 and, therefore, the cognizance order dated 21.12.2022 *qua* petitioners is fit to be quashed/ set aside.

5. In support of his submission learned counsel relied upon the legal report of Hon'ble Supreme Court as available through ***Abhishek vs. State of Madhya Pradesh*** as reported in ***2023 SCC OnLine SC 1083***.

6. Learned APP appearing for the State duly assisted by Mr. Sanjiv Kr. Singh, learned counsel appearing for the O.P. No. 2 submitted that the date of occurrence is specific and the petitioners indulged in physical assault of O.P. No. 2 but he could not disputed



the factual submission as submitted above.

7. It would be further apposite to reproduce paragraph Nos. 12, 13, 14 ,15, 16 & 17 of **Abhishek Case (supra)**, which read as:-

12. *The contours of the power to quash criminal proceedings under Section 482 Cr.P.C. are well defined. In V. Ravi Kumar v. State represented by Inspector of Police, District Crime Branch, Salem, Tamil Nadu [(2019) 14 SCC 568], this Court affirmed that where an accused seeks quashing of the FIR, invoking the inherent jurisdiction of the High Court, it is wholly impermissible for the High Court to enter into the factual arena to adjudge the correctness of the allegations in the complaint. In Neeharika Infrastructure (P). Ltd. v. State of Maharashtra [Criminal Appeal No. 330 of 2021, decided on 13.04.2021], a 3-Judge Bench of this Court elaborately considered the scope and extent of the power under Section 482 Cr.P.C. It was observed that the power of quashing should be exercised sparingly, with circumspection and in the rarest of rare cases, such standard not being confused with the norm formulated in the context of the death penalty. It was further observed that while examining the FIR/complaint, quashing of which is sought, the Court cannot embark upon an enquiry as to the reliability or genuineness or otherwise of the allegations made therein, but if the Court thinks fit, regard being had to the parameters of quashing and the self-restraint imposed by law, and more particularly, the parameters laid down by this Court in R.P. Kapur v. State of Punjab (AIR 1960 SC 866) and State of Haryana v. Bhajan Lal [(1992) Supp (1) SCC 335], the Court would have jurisdiction to quash the FIR/complaint.*

13. *Instances of a husband's family members filing a petition to quash criminal proceedings launched against them by his wife in the midst of matrimonial disputes are neither a rarity nor of recent origin. Precedents aplenty abound on this score. We may now take note of some decisions of particular relevance. Recently, in Kahkashan Kausar alias Sonam v. State of Bihar [(2022) 6 SCC 599], this Court had occasion to deal with a similar situation where the High Court had refused to quash a FIR registered for various offences, including Section 498A IPC. Noting that the foremost*



issue that required determination was whether allegations made against the in-laws were general omnibus allegations which would be liable to be quashed, this Court referred to earlier decisions wherein concern was expressed over the misuse of Section 498A IPC and the increased tendency to implicate relatives of the husband in matrimonial disputes. This Court observed that false implications by way of general omnibus allegations made in the course of matrimonial disputes, if left unchecked, would result in misuse of the process of law. On the facts of that case, it was found that no specific allegations were made against the in-laws by the wife and it was held that allowing their prosecution in the absence of clear allegations against the in-laws would result in an abuse of the process of law. It was also noted that a criminal trial, leading to an eventual acquittal, would inflict severe scars upon the accused and such an exercise ought to be discouraged.

14. *In Preeti Gupta v. State of Jharkhand [(2010) 7 SCC 667], this Court noted that the tendency to implicate the husband and all his immediate relations is also not uncommon in complaints filed under Section 498A IPC. It was observed that the Courts have to be extremely careful and cautious in dealing with these complaints and must take pragmatic realities into consideration while dealing with matrimonial cases, as allegations of harassment by husband's close relations, who were living in different cities and never visited or rarely visited the place where the complainant resided, would add an entirely different complexion and such allegations would have to be scrutinised with great care and circumspection.*

15. *Earlier, in Neelu Chopra v. Bharti [(2009) 10 SCC 184], this Court observed that the mere mention of statutory provisions and the language thereof, for lodging a complaint, is not the 'be all and end all' of the matter, as what is required to be brought to the notice of the Court is the particulars of the offence committed by each and every accused and the role played by each and every accused in the commission of that offence. These observations were made in the context of a matrimonial dispute involving Section 498A IPC.*

16. *Of more recent origin is the decision of this Court in Mahmood Ali v. State of U.P. (Criminal Appeal No. 2341 of 2023, decided on 08.08.2023) on the legal principles applicable apropos Section 482 Cr.P.C. Therein, it was observed that when an accused comes before the High Court, invoking either the inherent power under Section 482 Cr.P.C. or the extraordinary jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution, to get*



the FIR or the criminal proceedings quashed, essentially on the ground that such proceedings are manifestly frivolous or vexatious or instituted with the ulterior motive of wreaking vengeance, then in such circumstances, the High Court owes a duty to look into the FIR with care and a little more closely. It was further observed that it will not be enough for the Court to look into the averments made in the FIR/complaint alone for the purpose of ascertaining whether the necessary ingredients to constitute the alleged offence are disclosed or not as, in frivolous or vexatious proceedings, the Court owes a duty to look into many other attending circumstances emerging from the record of the case over and above the averments and, if need be, with due care and circumspection, to try and read between the lines.

17. *In Bhajan Lal (supra), this Court had set out, by way of illustration, the broad categories of cases in which the inherent power under Section 482 Cr.P.C. could be exercised. Para 102 of the decision reads as follows:*

“102. In the backdrop of the interpretation of the various relevant provisions of the Code under Chapter XIV and of the principles of law enunciated by this Court in a series of decisions relating to the exercise of the extraordinary power under Article 226 or the inherent powers under Section 482 of the Code which we have extracted and reproduced above, we give the following categories of cases by way of illustration wherein such power could be exercised either to prevent abuse of the process of any court or otherwise to secure the ends of justice, though it may not be possible to lay down any precise, clearly defined and sufficiently channelised and inflexible guidelines or rigid formulae and to give an exhaustive list of myriad kinds of cases wherein such power should be exercised.

(1) Where the allegations made in the first information report or the complaint, even if they are taken at their face value and accepted in their entirety do not prima facie constitute any offence or make out a case against the accused.

(2) Where the allegations in the first informant report and other materials, if any, accompanying the FIR do not disclose a cognizable offence, justifying an investigation by police officers under Section 156(1) of the Code except under an order of a Magistrate within the purview of Section 155(2) of the Code.

(3) Where the uncontroverted allegations made in the FIR or complaint and the evidence collected in support of the same do not disclose the commission of any offence and make out a case against the accused.



(4) Where, the allegations in the FIR do not constitute a cognizable offence but constitute only a non-cognizable offence, no investigation is permitted by a police officer without an order of a Magistrate as contemplated under Section 155(2) of the Code.

(5) Where the allegations made in the FIR or complaint are so absurd and inherently improbable on the basis of which no prudent persons can ever reach a just conclusion that there is sufficient ground for proceeding against the accused.

(6) Where there is an express legal bar engrafted in any of the provisions of the Code or the concerned Act (under which a criminal proceeding is instituted) to the institution and continuance of the proceedings and/or where there is a specific provision in the Code or the concerned Act, providing efficacious redress for the grievance of the aggrieved party.

(7) Where a criminal proceeding is manifestly attended with mala fide and/or where the proceeding is maliciously instituted with an ulterior motive for wreaking vengeance on the accused and with a view to spite him due to private and personal grudge.”

8. In view of aforesaid factual and legal submission

and by taking note of fact as it appears that the allegation qua petitioners appears very much general and omnibus where with same allegation police exonerated petitioner no. 2 but without assigning any reason learned trial court took cognizance against petitioners and moreover thrust of allegation is available against husband where *prima-facie* implication of petitioners appears out of their relation with husband of O.P. No. 2.

9. Accordingly, by taking a guiding note of *Abhishek case (supra)*, the impugned order of cognizance dated 21.12.2022 passed by Learned S.D.J.M, Munger in



Mahila P.S. Case No. 16 of 2022 *qua* above-named both petitioners is hereby quashed/set aside, with all its consequential proceedings.

10. Accordingly, the petition stands allowed.

11. Let a copy of the judgment be sent to the learned trial court forthwith.

(Chandra Shekhar Jha, J)

Sudha/-

AFR/NAFR	NAFR
CAV DATE	NA
Uploading Date	08.07.2025
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