



Crl.O.P.(MD)No.22862 of 2024

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 03.01.2025

CORAM

THE HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE M.NIRMAL KUMAR

Crl.O.P.(MD)No.22862 of 2024

and

Crl.M.P.(MD)No.14346 of 2024

- 1.Jeya Priston
- 2.Xavier Rinaldo
- 3.Anto Ajizh
- 4.Aswin Joseph
- 5.Jeffrin George
- 6.Deva Castro
- 7.Anton Joel
- 8.Vasikaran
- 9.Arunnavin
- 10.Subesh
- 11.Manikandan
- 12.Sanjaykumar @ Sanjay
- 13.Cherin Mugunthan @ Cherin
- 14.Akash Lingam @ Akash
- 15.Linga Abin
- 16.Vellapandi

... Petitioners

Vs.

State through,
The Inspector of Police,
Valliyoore Police Station,
Tirunelveli District.
(Crime No.288 of 2023)

... Respondent



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PRAYER : Criminal Original Petition filed under Section 528 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, to call for the records of the impugned F.I.R. in Crime No.288 of 2023, dated 02.08.2023, and quash the same as illegal.

For Petitioners : Ms.C.Geetha

For Respondent : Mr.K.Sanjai Gandhi
Government Advocate
(Criminal side)

ORDER

This Criminal Original Petition has been filed seeking to quash the proceedings in Crime No.288 of 2023, on the file of the respondent Police.

2. The case of the prosecution is that on 02.08.2023 at about 10:00 a.m. while the de-facto complainant along with his subordinates were doing regular patrol in order to prevent law and order problem, the petitioners were abusing each other in filthy language and quarrelled in front of TDMNS College, Kallikulam and disturbing the peace and tranquility in that area. Upon noticing the respondent Police, all the petitioners were ran away from the occurrence place. Based on the



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complaint given by the Sub-Inspector of Police, a First Information Report came to be registered against the petitioners in Crime No.289 of 2023, on the file of the respondent for offence under Section 160 I.P.C.

3. Heard Ms.C.Geetha, learned counsel for the petitioners and Mr.K.Sanjai Gandhi, learned Government Advocate (Criminal side) appearing for the respondent.

4. On carefully reading the allegations made in the First Information Report, it is seen that the petitioners were hurling verbal abuse against each other in front of TDMNS College, Kallikulam, and were trying to attack each other. The issue to be considered is as to whether an offence has been made out by satisfying the ingredients under Section 159 I.P.C.

5. This Court had an occasion to deal with the scope of Section 159 I.P.C. in **Nagarajan v. State [Crl.O.P.(MD)No.17260 of 2018, dated 27.09.2018]**, wherein this Court has held as follows:-

"3.The learned counsel for the petitioners relied upon the



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*following judgments in order to substantiate the points raised by him. The first judgment relied upon by the learned counsel for the petitioners is reported in **A.I.R 1938 MADRAS 924** in **P.Rami Reddy and others vs. Chintha Chinna Narasi Reddy**. The relevant portions of the judgment is extracted here under:*

"....I am of opinion that fighting connotes necessarily a contest or struggle for mastery between two or more persons against one another. A struggle or a contest necessarily implies that there are two sides each of which is trying to obtain the mastery, so that unless there is some violence offered or threatened against one another, there could be no fight but only a mere assault or beating. In these circumstances, I am prepared to follow the view adopted by Horwill J. in the connected case and find that there was no fighting in the present case. It was merely a case of beating by members of one party of certain members of another party for which no doubt they could have been charged and punished, but as the prosecution deliberately chose to amend the charge, and rest their case entirely on the charge of affray, the case must stand or fall by what the prosecution has done. The offence of affray not having been established, the petitioners were entitled to be acquitted of that charge. Their convictions and sentences under S.160, I.P.C, are therefore set aside and they are acquitted. ..."

4. The second judgment that is relied upon by the



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*learned counsel for the petitioners is reported in **2007 CRI. L.J. 4747 in Pushpa & Ors. V. Ravi & Ors.** The relevant portions of the judgment is extracted here under:-*

"4.To constitute an offence under Section 160 IPC, three ingredients must be satisfied:

"A reading of Section 159 IPC would clearly indicate that in order to bring home the guilt of the accused for an offence of affray, the prosecution should satisfy the three essentials. Firstly, fighting must be between two or more persons. Secondly, fighting must take place in a public place, and thirdly, such fighting must also result in disturbance of public peace. In the absence of even one of these ingredients, it cannot be stated that there was either an affray or the accused facing the trial, should be held responsible."

*5.The third judgment that is relied upon by the learned counsel for the petitioners is reported in **1989 CRI. L. J. 2080 in Gadadhar Guru and another v. State of Orissa**, Opposite Party. The relevant portions of the judgment is extracted here under:*

"3.An offence of affray in essence consists of three ingredients, the first being fighting by two or more persons, secondly, the fighting must take place in a public place and thirdly such fighting must also result in disturbance of the public peace. Only if such ingredients are satisfied an offence of affray can be said to have occasioned for which the persons



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causing the same would be responsible. The learned S.D.J.M on an analysis of the evidence came to the conclusion that the two groups of petitioners had fought with each other on the village Danda which was a public place and thereafter observed that since the fight was at such a place, it was natural that due to the fight annoyance would have been caused in the locality and being of such view, he convicted the petitioners.

4. Even if the conclusions reached by the learned S.D.J.M as regards mutual fight between the two groups and that the place of the fight was the village Danda are upheld, yet the conclusion reached that the fight must have necessarily caused annoyance to the public and hence satisfied the third ingredient of S.159, I.P.C would not be justified.

*5. In the first place annoyance to public, if at all, is not necessarily also disturbance of public peace which is more pervasive and of wider reach. In a prosecution under S.159, I.P.C there must be positive evidence of public peace having been disturbed which would mean that by the action of the accused the even tempo of life of the public was disturbed resulting in affecting the peace and tranquility of the locality. No such evidence has admittedly been led. It was observed in **(1962) 1 Cri LJ 339 (Ker), Podan v. State of Kerala**, that mere causing inconvenience to the public is not disturbance of public peace the two being entirely different notions.*



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6. In the second place, there is also no conclusive evidence that because of the fight any annoyance has resulted to the public.

7. In view of such fact, it has to be held that the charge under S.160, I.P.C has not been established against the petitioners and therefore the conviction is liable to be set aside."

5.The judgments relied upon by the learned counsel for the petitioners, squarely applies to the facts of this case. There is no averment in the complaint that the dispute between the two groups had resulted in the disturbance of the public peace. As held by the Hon'ble Orissa High Court, merely because there is a fight between two parties, that cannot give rise an automatic presumption that it has resulted in disturbance of the public peace. This Court is convinced that the F.I.R registered against the petitioners is unsustainable and the same is deserves to be quashed by this Court, in exercise of its jurisdiction under Section 482 of Cr.P.C."

6. In the instant case, it is seen that there was fight between two parties and there is nothing to show that it had disturbed the public peace in that area. A mere disturbance caused to the public is not enough to satisfy the ingredient that there was disturbance to the public peace. It is



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not a matter of presumption and it has to be established based on the materials placed before the Court. This important ingredient has not been satisfied in this case.

7. In the light of the above discussion, this Criminal Original Petition is allowed and the proceedings in Crime No.288 of 2023, dated 02.08.2023, pending against the petitioners, on the file of the respondent Police, is hereby quashed. Consequently, connected Miscellaneous Petition is closed.

03.01.2025

NCC : Yes / No
Index : Yes / No
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To

- 1.The Inspector of Police,
Valliyoor Police Station,
Tirunelveli District.
- 2.The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
Madurai.



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M.NIRMAL KUMAR, J.

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Order made in
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