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206 IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

CRR-1207-2011 (O&M)
Date of Decision: 01.07.2025

RANJIT SINGH ...PETITIONER

Versus

STATE OF PUNJAB ...RESPONDENT

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE HARPREET SINGH BRAR

Present: Mr. N.G. Sharma, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Sandeep Kumar, DAG Punjab.

Harpreet Singh Brar, J. (Oral)

1. The prayer in the present revision petition is to set aside the judgment dated 17.02.2011 passed by learned Sessions Judge, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar, vide which judgment of conviction and order on quantum of sentence dated 21.03.2009 passed by learned Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Balachaur have been upheld wherein the petitioner has been convicted under Sections 279 and 304-A of Indian Penal Code in the case stemming from FIR No.95 dated 03.04.2006 registered at Police Station Balachaur.

2. The petitioner was sentenced for causing accident by driving his vehicle rashly, wherein death of one person took place, as mentioned below:

Offence under Section	Sentence	Fine	Sentence in default of payment of fine
279 of IPC	Rigorous imprisonment for 03 months	Rs. 1,000/-	Further imprisonment for 07 days
304 of IPC	Rigorous imprisonment for 01 year	Rs. 1,000/-	Further imprisonment for 15 days
Both the sentences were ordered to run concurrently			

3. Learned Counsel for the petitioner submits that he is not assailing the impugned judgment of conviction dated 17.02.2011 passed by learned



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Sessions Judge, SBS Nagar on merits and restricts his prayer to modification of the order on quantum of sentence dated 21.03.2009 passed by learned Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Balachaur to that of sentence already undergone by the petitioner as he has already undergone a period of 06 months and 29 days out of total sentence of 01 year imposed upon him.

4. Per contra, learned State counsel opposes the prayer of the petitioner on the ground that learned Courts below have passed a well-reasoned judgment based on correct appreciation of evidence available on record and as such, the petitioner does not deserve any leniency.

5. Having heard learned counsel for the parties and after perusing the record with their able assistance, it transpires that the petitioner was convicted for causing accident by driving his vehicle rashly, wherein death of one person took place, attracting the offences under Sections 279 and 304-A of IPC, for which no minimum punishment has been prescribed. As per his custody certificate, he is not involved in any other case and has already undergone an actual sentence of 06 months and 29 days out of total sentence of 01 year in the instant case. Moreover, learned counsel for the petitioner has not assailed the judgment of conviction on merits. Rather, he has restricted his prayer only qua modification of order on quantum of sentence. Since there is no minimum punishment prescribed under Sections 279 and 304-A of IPC this Court is of the opinion that it would be in the interest of justice, if the sentence awarded to the petitioner is reduced to the period already undergone by him.

6. In **Deo Narain Mandal v. State of UP (2004) 7 SCC 257**, a three Judge bench of the Hon'ble Supreme Court has opined that awarding of sentence is not a mere formality in criminal cases. When a minimum and maximum term is prescribed by the statute with regard to the period of sentence, a discretionary



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element is vested in the Court. Background of each case, which includes factors like gravity of the offence, manner in which the offence is committed, age of the accused, should be considered while determining the quantum of sentence and this discretion is not to be used arbitrarily or whimsically. After assessing all relevant factors, proper sentence should be awarded bearing in mind the principle of proportionality to ensure the sentence is neither excessively harsh nor does it come across as lenient.

7. Further, a two Judge Bench of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in **Ravada Sasikala v. State of AP AIR 2017 SC 1166**, has reiterated that the imposition of sentence also serves a social purpose as it acts as a deterrent by making the accused realise the damage caused not only to the victim but also to the society at large. The law in this regard is well settled that opportunities of reformation must be granted and such discretion is to be exercised by evaluating all attending circumstances of each case by noticing the nature of the crime, the manner in which the crime was committed and the conduct of the accused to strike a balance between the efficacy of law and the chances of reformation of the accused.

8. A perusal of the judgment of conviction passed by the learned lower Appellate Court indicates no perversity in its findings and the said judgment is based on correct appreciation of evidence available on record. However, the FIR (supra) was lodged on 03.04.2006 and the petitioner has been suffering the agony of trial for last more than 19 years. Since his conviction, he has grown into a law-abiding citizen and desires to live a peaceful life.

9. Therefore, in view of the discussion above, the present revision petition is disposed of in the following terms:-

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(i) The judgment dated 17.02.2011 passed by learned Sessions Judge, SBS Nagar is upheld.

(ii) The order of sentence dated 21.03.2009 passed by learned Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Balachaur is modified to the extent that the sentence of rigorous imprisonment for 01 year along with total fine of Rs. 2,000/- with default mechanism awarded to the petitioner is reduced to the period of sentence already undergone by him.

10. Pending miscellaneous application(s), if any, shall also stand disposed of.

(HARPREET SINGH BRAR)
JUDGE

01.07.2025*Ajay Goswami**Whether speaking/reasoned*
*Whether reportable**Yes/No*
Yes/No