

203

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

CRR-1049-2014

Date of decision: 13.05.2025

Ram Pal

....Petitioner

Versus

State of Haryana

...Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE HARPREET SINGH BRAR

Present: Ms. Gurpreet Kaur, Advocate (*Amicus Curiae*)
for the petitioner.

Mr. Vikas Bhardwaj, AAG, Haryana.

HARPREET SINGH BRAR, J. (ORAL)

1. The present revision petition is preferred against the judgment dated 25.03.2014 passed by the learned Sessions Judge, Kurukshetra, vide which the appeal against judgment of conviction dated 29.07.2011 and order of sentence dated 30.07.2011 passed by the learned Judicial Magistrate 1st Class, Kurukshetra, in FIR No.140 dated 28.08.2009 registered under Sections 279/337/338/304-A of IPC, registered at Police Station Ladwa, has been dismissed.

2. The petitioner was convicted and sentenced as mentioned below:

Offence	Sentence
Section 279 of IPC	Rigorous imprisonment for a period of 06 months and to pay fine of Rs.200/-.
Section 337 of IPC	Rigorous imprisonment for a period of 06 months and to pay fine of Rs.200/-.
Section 338 of IPC	Rigorous imprisonment for a period of 01 year and to pay fine of Rs.660/-.
Section 304-A of IPC	Rigorous imprisonment for a period of 01 year and to pay fine of Rs.1,000/-.

In default of payment of fine, further simple imprisonment of one month.



All the sentences were ordered to run concurrently.

3. After assessing the material available on record, the learned trial Court convicted the petitioner vide judgment dated 29.07.2011. Aggrieved by the same, the petitioner preferred an appeal before the learned lower Appellate Court which has been dismissed vide judgment dated 25.03.2014.

4. Learned *amicus curiae* for the petitioner *inter alia* contends that both the Courts below have not appreciated the fact that none of the witnesses has been examined by the prosecution to prove that the petitioner was driving the offending vehicle in a rash and negligent manner at the relevant time. The complainant, Ved Pal, has not disclosed the name of the petitioner neither in his complaint nor in his statement to the police. He has not even stated in his statement that he saw the petitioner on spot while driving the vehicle or even after the accident and it is a settled proposition of law that identification of the accused for the first time in Court is not sufficient to conclude the involvement of the petitioner in the alleged offence. Lastly, she submits that the petitioner has already undergone a total period of 03 months and 21 days in custody and is not involved in any other criminal activity.

5. *Per contra*, learned State counsel opposes the prayer of the petitioner as the learned Courts below have passed well-reasoned judgments based on correct appreciation of evidence available on record and as such, he does not deserve any leniency. However, he could not controvert the fact that the petitioner is not involved in any other case.

6. Having heard learned counsel for the parties and after perusing the record with their able assistance, it transpires that the petitioner was convicted under Sections 279/337/338/304-A of IPC for which no minimum punishment



has been prescribed. As per his custody certificate, petitioner has already undergone a period of 03 months and 21 days in custody out of total sentence of 01 year, in the instant case. Since there is no minimum punishment prescribed under Sections 279/337/338/304-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.

7. In *Deo Narain Mandal vs. State of U.P. (2004) 7 SCC 257*, 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 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.

8. Further, the Hon'ble Supreme Court in *Ravada Sasikala vs. 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

**CRR-1049-2014****-4-**

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.

9. A perusal of the judgment of conviction passed by the learned trial Court indicates no perversity in its findings and the same is based on correct appreciation of evidence available on record. However, the FIR (supra) was lodged on 28.08.2009 and the petitioner has been suffering the agony of trial for last more than 15 years. Since his conviction, he has grown into a law-abiding citizen and desires to live a peaceful life.

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

(i) The judgment dated 25.03.2014 passed by the learned Sessions Judge, Kurukshetra, is upheld and sentence of 01 year and fine awarded by the learned trial Court is reduced to the period of sentence already undergone by the petitioner.

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

12. The High Court Legal Services Authority is directed to pay remuneration to the learned *Amicus Curiae*/Legal Aid Counsel, as per rules.

(HARPREET SINGH BRAR)
JUDGE

13.05.2025*Neha*

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