



**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH**

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**CRM-A-1461-2024 (O&M)
Date of decision: 29.10.2025**

NARENDER SINGH

...Applicant

VERSUS

ASHWANI GUPTA

...Respondent

CORAM : HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE VINOD S. BHARDWAJ

Present :- Mr. Arjun Sawhni as Legal Aid Counsel,
for the applicant.

VINOD S. BHARDWAJ, J. (Oral)

The present application has been preferred under Section 378(4) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (hereinafter 'CR.P.C.') seeking grant of leave to appeal against the judgment of acquittal dated 10.09.2024 passed by the learned Judicial Magistrate First Class, Kalka stemming out from complaint dated 13.08.2020 filed under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

2. It is noticed that the instant application pertains to the year 2024, however, no one has entered appearance on behalf of the applicant, hence, it is deemed expedient to nominate a Legal Aid Counsel. Mr. Arjun Sawhni, Enrollment No. PH-2522-2024, who is present in the Court, is appointed as the Legal Aid Counsel to represent the case on behalf of applicant to arrive at a decision. He has gone through the case file and submits that the present application has been filed against the judgment of acquittal dated 10.09.2024 passed by the Judicial Magistrate 1st Class, Kalka, in Criminal Complaint No. 1262 of 2020 filed under Section 138

of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881. He fairly submits that in view of the judgment passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in *M/s. Celestium Financial vs. A. Gnanasekaran Etc., 2025(3) RCR (Criminal) 208*, the applicant would have a remedy before the Court of Sessions.

3. The complaint (supra) was filed on the ground of dishonour of cheque issued by the accused-respondent bearing No. 025704 dated 01.07.2020 amounting to Rs. 6,40,000/-. After assessing all the material available on the record, the learned trial Court acquitted the respondent(s) vide judgment dated 10.09.2024.

4. In view of the judgment rendered by the Apex Court in *Celestium Financial (supra)*, the present application seeking leave to appeal is **remanded** to the learned Sessions Judge, Panchkula with a direction to treat the same as an appeal filed under Section 372 of the Cr.P.C. (now Section 413 of BNSS) and entrust the same to appropriate Court for its disposal on merits.

5. The Registry is directed to send the complete paper-book and the record of the case to the learned Sessions Judge, Panchkula forthwith.

6. Disposed of accordingly. Pending miscellaneous applications, if any, also stand disposed of.

7. A copy of this order be sent to the High Court Legal Service Committee for information and necessary action.

(VINOD S. BHARDWAJ)
JUDGE

OCTOBER 29, 2025

Vishal Sharma

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