

2025:PHHC:161449



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

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CRM-M-53227-2024
Date of Decision: 18.11.2025

RAJEEV RANJAN KUMAR @ RAJIV RANJAN KUMAR

... Petitioner

VERSUS

STATE OF PUNJAB AND ANOTHER

... Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE H.S. GREWAL.

Present: Mr. Sukhwinder Singh Dhillon, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. P.S. Pandher, AAG, Punjab.

Mr. Impinder Singh Dhaliwal, Advocate
for respondent No.2.

H.S.GREWAL, J (ORAL)

This petition has been filed under Section 528 of Bhartiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 seeking quashing of FIR No.134 dated 09.09.2017 under Section 174-A IPC registered at Police Station Sadar Sri Muktsar Sahib, District Sri Muktsar Sahib (P-1) as well as order dated 17.01.2017 (Annexure P-2) arising out of FIR No.6 dated 24.01.2015 under Sections 420, 465, 467 and 471 of IPC registered at Police Station Sadar Sri Muktsar Sahib, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, passed by learned Chief Judicial Magistrate, Sri Muktsar Sahib, whereby the petitioner was declared as proclaimed person.

2. Learned counsel for the petitioner contended that the present FIR is the outcome of a criminal case bearing FIR No.6 dated 24.01.2015 under Sections

420, 465, 467 and 471 of IPC registered at Police Station Sadar Sri Muktsar Sahib, District Sri Muktsar Sahib against the petitioner. He further submits that the petitioner was declared proclaimed person vide order dated 17.01.2017 and in pursuance thereto FIR No.134 dated 09.09.2017 under Section 174-A IPC was registered and in which the petitioner was arrested on 17.09.2023 and was thereafter granted regular bail on 03.10.2023. Counsel further contends that a compromise had been effected between the parties on 15.09.2023, on the basis whereof, both the parties approached this High Court and filed petition bearing No.CRM-M-9424 of 2024 for quashing of main FIR No.6 dated 24.01.2015 under Sections 420, 465, 467 and 471 of IPC registered at Police Station Sadar Sri Muktsar Sahib, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, which was eventually allowed vide order dated 15.04.2024. Now the parties have approached this Court by way of filing instant petition seeking quashing of FIR No.134 dated 09.09.2017 under Section 174-A IPC registered at Police Station Sadar Sri Muktsar Sahib, District Sri Muktsar Sahib (P-1) as well as order dated 17.01.2017 (Annexure P-2) on the ground of compromise arrived at between the parties coupled with the fact that main FIR has also been quashed by this Court on the basis alleged settlement between the parties. Learned counsel for the petitioner, therefore, prays for quashing of the present FIR as the continuation of proceedings under Section 174-A IPC would be an abuse of process of law. He has relied upon the judgment passed by this Court in CRM-M-41656 of 2023, decided on 23.08.2023 wherein the FIR registered under Section 174-A IPC arising out of the main FIR between the parties has been quashed. In support of his submissions, he has further relied upon the judgment of Hon'ble the Supreme Court in the case of ***Daljit Singh versus State of Haryana and another***, bearing ***Criminal Appeal No.4359 of 2024***, decided on

02.01.2025 and the judgments of this Court in the cases of ***Soni Kumar versus State of Punjab***, bearing **CRM-M-55315-2024**, decided on 10.01.2025 and ***Deepak versus State of Haryana and another***, bearing **CRM-M-14623-2021**, decided on 17.02.2022.

3. On the other hand, learned State counsel submits that the petitioner was rightly declared as proclaimed person, pursuant to which FIR in question was registered against him under Section 174-A IPC as he had failed to appear before the Court without any reasonable cause.

4. I have heard learned counsel for the parties and have carefully gone through the material available on record.

5. By way of the instant petition, the petitioner is seeking quashing of the present FIR registered under Section 174-A IPC on the ground that the initial FIR has been quashed as the matter has been settled between the parties and the continuation of proceedings under Section 174-A IPC would be an abuse of process of law.

7. Hon'ble the Supreme Court in the case of ***Daljit Singh versus State of Haryana and another (supra)*** has quashed the impugned FIR therein registered under Section 174-A IPC on the ground that the initial FIR complaint under Sections 420, 465, 467, 468 and 471 of IPC had been quashed on account of settlement arrived at between the parties. The relevant extract thereof is reproduced hereunder:-

7.3 Now, what happens if the status under Section 82 Cr.P.C. is nullified i.e., the person subjected to such proclamation, by virtue of subsequent developments is no longer required to be presented before a Court of law. Then, can the prosecution still proceed against such a person for having not appeared before a Court during the time that

the process was in effect. The answer is in the affirmative. We say so for the following reasons:-

- (i) The language of Section 174A, IPC says “whoever fails to appear at the specified place and the specified time as required by proclamation...”. This implies that the very instance at which a person is directed to appear, and he does not do so, this Section comes into play;*
- (ii) What further flows from the language employed is that the instance of non-appearance becomes an infraction of the Section, and therefore, prosecution therefor would be independent of Section 82, Cr.P.C. being in effect;*
- (iii) So, while proceedings under Section 174A IPC cannot be initiated independent of Section 82, Cr.P.C., i.e., can only be started post the issuance of proclamation, they can continue if the said proclamation is no longer in effect.*
- (iv) We find that the Delhi High Court has taken this view, i.e., that Section 174A, IPC is a stand-alone offence in Mukesh Bhatia v. State (NCT of Delhi)¹⁹; Divya Verma v. State²⁰; Sameena & Anr. v. State GNCT of Delhi & Anr.²¹ For the reasons afore-stated, we agree with the findings made in these judgments/orders. At the same time, it stands clarified that we have not commented on the merits of the cases.*
- (v) Granted that the offence prescribed in Section 174A IPC is indeed stand-alone, given that it arises out of an original offence in connection with which proceedings under Section 82 Cr.P.C. is initiated and in the said offence the accused stands, subsequently, acquitted, it would be permissible in law for the Court seized of the trial under such offence, to take note of such a development and treat the same as a ground to draw the proceedings to a close, should such a prayer be made and the circumstances of the case so warrant.*

8. In conclusion, we hold that Section 174A IPC is an independent, substantive offence, that can continue even if the proclamation

under Section 82, Cr.P.C. is extinguished. It is a stand-alone offence. That being the position of 2022 SCC OnLine Del 1023 2023 SCC OnLine Del 2619 CrI. M.C No, 1470 of 2021, Dated 17th May, 2022 law, let us now turn to the present facts. As we have already noted supra, the Appellant stands acquitted of the main offence.”

8. A Coordinate Bench of this Court, in similar circumstances, in the case of **Soni Kumar versus State of Punjab (supra)** has quashed the FIR under Section 174-A IPC stating that where the main complaint has been withdrawn, the continuation of proceedings would be an abuse of process of law. The relevant extract thereof is as under: -

“The inherent jurisdiction under Section 528 BNSS, 2023/Section 482 Cr.P.C., 1973 is primarily aimed at preventing abuse of judicial process and securing the ends of justice. Thus, when the dispute is essentially personal in nature and a genuine compromise has been reached, the High Court may intervene to quash the criminal proceedings recognizing the continuation thereof would be non-productive and unjust in the given circumstances. The inherent powers of a High Court are powers which are incidental replete powers, which if did not so exist, the Court would be obliged to sit still and helplessly see the process of law and Courts being abused for the purposes of injustice. In other words; such power(s) is intrinsic to a High Court, it is its very life immanent attribute. Without such power(s), a High Court would have form but lack the substance. These powers of a High Court hence deserve to be construed with the widest possible amplitude. These inherent powers are in consonance with the nature of a High Court which ought to be, and has infact been, invested with power(s) to maintain its authority to prevent the process of law/Courts being obstructed or abused. It is a trite posit of jurisprudence that though laws attempt to deal with all cases that may arise, the infinite variety of circumstances which shape events and the imperfections of language make it impossible to lay down provisions capable of

governing every case, which in fact arises. A High Court which exists for the furtherance of justice in an indefatigable manner, should therefore, have unfettered power(s) to deal with situations which, though not expressly provided for by the law, need to be dealt with, to prevent injustice or the abuse of the process of law and Courts. The juridical basis of these plenary power(s) is the authority; in fact the seminal duty and responsibility of a High Court; to uphold, to protect and to fulfil the judicial function of administering justice, in accordance with law, in a regular, orderly and effective manner. In other words; Section 528 of BNSS, 2023 reflects peerless powers, which a High Court may draw upon as necessary whenever it is just an due process of law, to prevent vexation or oppression, to do justice substantial justice between the parties and to secure the ends of justice.

10. *Keeping in view the entirety of the attending facts and circumstances of the case in hand; especially the original offence being an offence under Section 138 of Negotiable Instruments Act of 1881, the original offence alleged to have been committed in the year 2021, the subject matter of the original offence having been settled amicably between the parties and the criminal complaint under Section 138 of Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 having been withdrawn on the basis of such settlement/compromise; this Court deems it appropriate that the FIR as also all proceedings emanating therefrom deserve to be quashed.”*

9. Another Coordinate Bench of this Court in the case of **Deepak versus State of Haryana and another (supra)**, has also held as under: -

“An affidavit was also filed by respondent No.2, which has been annexed as Annexure R-1, wherein in para 4 of the same, it has been stated that respondent No.2-Bank has no objection, in case, the present FIR is quashed against the petitioner because the Bank has received the cheque amount and consequently, the complaint has been withdrawn. Since, the proceedings under Section 138 of the Act of

1881 has been withdrawn and the present FIR has been registered on account of non-appearance of the petitioner, this Court feels that continuance of the proceedings in the present FIR would be an abuse of process of the Court.

Keeping in view the abovesaid facts and circumstances, as well as the authorities of law referred to above, the present petition is allowed and FIR No.969 dated 04.11.2018 registered under Section 174-A of IPC at Police Station Ballabgarh City, District Faridabad (Annexure P-3) and all the consequential proceedings arising therefrom, are ordered to be quashed qua the petitioner.”

10. In the present case, since the original FIR has already been quashed as the matter has been settled between the parties, no useful purpose would be served by continuing the proceedings under Section 174-A IPC against the petitioner.

11. Resultantly, the petition is allowed and the impugned FIR No.134 dated 09.09.2017 under Section 174-A IPC registered at Police Station Sadar Sri Muktsar Sahib, District Sri Muktsar Sahib (P-1) and all consequential proceedings arising therefrom against the petitioner are quashed. The order dated 17.01.2017 declaring the petitioner as “proclaimed person” passed by the learned Chief Judicial Magistrate, Sri Muktsar Sahib is also quashed.

NOVEMBER 18, 2025.

Rajender

**(H.S. GREWAL)
JUDGE**

Whether speaking/reasoned : Yes/No

Whether reportable : Yes/No