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IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI

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CRL.REV.P.(NI) 106/2025 & CRL.M.(BAIL) 877/2025

MANJU GROVER

.....Petitioner

Through: Mr. Manu Bakshi, Adv.
(through VC)

versus

SANJEEV JUNEJA

.....Respondent

Through: Mr. H.S. Sharma, Adv.
(through VC)
Respondent (through VC)

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE AMIT MAHAJAN

ORDER

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09.09.2025

1. The present petition is filed by the petitioner challenging the judgment dated 21.02.2025 (hereafter '**impugned judgment**'), passed by the learned Additional Sessions Judge ('**ASJ**'), South East District, Saket Courts, New Delhi, in Criminal Appeal No. 311/2024 whereby the appeal filed by the petitioner challenging the judgment of conviction dated 27.08.2024 and order on sentence dated 29.08.2024 passed by the learned Metropolitan Magistrate ('**MM**') in CC No. 8460/2021 was dismissed.

2. By judgment dated 27.08.2024, the petitioner was convicted for the offence under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 ('**NI Act**'). By order on sentence dated 29.08.2024, the petitioner was sentenced to undergo simple imprisonment for a period of one month, and was also directed to pay compensation to the respondent for an amount of ₹12,00,000/- and in default of payment of compensation, was



directed to undergo simple imprisonment for a period of six months.

3. The learned counsel for the petitioner submits that since the passing of the impugned judgment, the parties have amicably settled all their disputes before the Delhi High Court Mediation and Conciliation Centre. He submits that in terms of the Settlement Agreement dated 28.05.2025, the entire settlement amount has been paid to the respondent.

4. The respondent is present through video-conference.

5. On being asked, the respondent confirms the fact that the parties have settled their disputes and that he has received the entire settlement amount. He further states that he has no objection if the offence under Section 138 of the NI Act is compounded.

6. Offence under Section 138 of the NI Act is compoundable in nature.

7. Even though an attempt for compounding of the offence under NI Act should be made at the initial stage rather than the later stage, however, there is no bar against seeking compounding of the offence even after conviction [Ref. **Raj Reddy Kallem v. The State of Haryana & Anr. : 2024 INSC 347**, **K.M Ibrahim v. K.P Mohammed & Anr. : (2010) 1 SCC 798**, etc.].

8. The Hon'ble Apex Court in the case of **Damodar S. Prabhu v. Sayed Babalal H. : (2010) 5 SCC 663** had highlighted that the compensatory aspect of the proceedings under the NI Act take precedence over the punitive aspect and stipulated certain guidelines for compounding the offences under the NI Act. The relevant portion of the judgment is reproduced hereunder:



“4... What must be remembered is that the dishonour of a cheque can be best described as a regulatory offence that has been created to serve the public interest in ensuring the reliability of these instruments. The impact of this offence is usually confined to the private parties involved in commercial transactions.

18. It is quite obvious that with respect to the offence of dishonour of cheques, it is the compensatory aspect of the remedy which should be given priority over the punitive aspect. There is also some support for the apprehensions raised by the learned Attorney General that a majority of cheque bounce cases are indeed being compromised or settled by way of compounding, albeit during the later stages of litigation thereby contributing to undue delay in justice delivery. The problem herein is with the tendency of litigants to belatedly choose compounding as a means to resolve their dispute...

21. With regard to the progression of litigation in cheque bouncing cases, the learned Attorney General has urged this Court to frame guidelines for a graded scheme of imposing costs on parties who unduly delay compounding of the offence. It was submitted that the requirement of deposit of the costs will act as a deterrent for delayed composition, since at present, free and easy compounding of offences at any stage, however belated, gives an incentive to the drawer of the cheque to delay settling the cases for years. An application for compounding made after several years not only results in the system being burdened but the complainant is also deprived of effective justice. In view of this submission, we direct that the following guidelines be followed:

THE GUIDELINES

- (i) In the circumstances, it is proposed as follows:*
- (a) That directions can be given that the writ of summons be suitably modified making it clear to the accused that he could make an application for compounding of the offences at the first or second hearing of the case and that if such an application is made, compounding may be allowed by the court without imposing any costs on the accused.*
 - (b) If the accused does not make an application for compounding as aforesaid, then if an application for compounding is made before the Magistrate at a subsequent stage, compounding can be allowed subject to the condition that the accused will be required to pay 10% of the cheque amount to be deposited as a condition*



for compounding with the Legal Services Authority, or such authority as the court deems fit.

(c) Similarly, if the application for compounding is made before the Sessions Court or a High Court in revision or appeal, such compounding may be allowed on the condition that the accused pays 15% of the cheque amount by way of costs.

(d) Finally, if the application for compounding is made before the Supreme Court, the figure would increase to 20% of the cheque amount.”

9. In the present case, the parties have settled the matter at the appellate stage. It is relevant to note that the respondent has duly consented to compounding of the offence in the present case. Moreover, the entire settlement amount has been duly received by the respondent.

10. Considering the above, the CC No. 8460/2021 is compounded and the judgment of conviction dated 27.08.2024 and order on sentence dated 29.08.2024 are set aside, subject to the payment of a cost of ₹40,000/- by the petitioner, to be deposited with the Delhi High Court Legal Services Committee within a period of six weeks from date.

11. Let the proof of deposit of cost be submitted with the Registry of this Court.

12. Pending application(s) also stand disposed of.

AMIT MAHAJAN, J

SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

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