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IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI

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CRL.M.C. 2163/2020

RITESH KUMAR SINGH

.....Petitioner

Through: Mr. R.S. Rathi, Mr. Amit
Khanna & Ms. Kusum,
Advs.

versus

THE STATE

.....Respondent

Through: Mr. Pradeep Gahlot, APP
for the State.
SI P. Buno, PS Madhu
Vihar.
Complainant in person.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE AMIT MAHAJAN

ORDER

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26.03.2025

1. The present petition is filed seeking quashing of FIR No. 35/2020 dated 18.02.2020, registered at Police Station Madhu Vihar for offences under Sections 376(2)(n) of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 ('IPC').

2. Briefly stated, the FIR was registered at the behest of Respondent No. 2/complainant, who alleged that the petitioner who was her distant relative, used to often visit her house and also had friendly relations with the husband of Respondent No. 2. She alleged that during the course of time, the petitioner molested her and established forceful relations with her.

3. The present petition is filed on the ground that complainant / Respondent No. 2 has given an affidavit wherein she has deposed that she has no ill will against the petitioner and she is now residing with the petitioner and has a child with him.

4. The complainant is present in the Court today. She states that her husband had taken a loan from the petitioner and when



the same was not returned, he quarrelled with the petitioner. She states that she was pressurized to give a false complaint against the petitioner so that her husband could escape the liability to repay. She states that the petitioner is an innocent person. She further states that her husband had abandoned her and she has been staying with the petitioner since.

5. Offence under Sections 376(2)(n) of the IPC is non-compoundable in nature.

6. It is well settled that the High Court while exercising powers under Section 482 of the CrPC can quash offences which are non-compoundable on the ground that there is a compromise between the accused and the complainant. The Hon'ble Apex Court has laid down parameters and guidelines for High Courts exercising jurisdiction under Section 482 of the CrPC for quashing of proceedings on the ground of settlement.

7. In ***State of Haryana v. Bhajan Lal* : 1992 Supp (1) SCC 335**, the Hon'ble Apex Court has laid down the test to discern when quashing is appropriate in exercise of the discretion under Section 482 of the CrPC. The relevant portion of the said judgment is reproduced hereunder:

“102. In the backdrop of the interpretation of the various relevant provisions of the Code under Chapter XIV and of the principles of law enunciated by this Court in a series of decisions relating to the exercise of the extraordinary power under Article 226 or the inherent powers under Section 482 of the Code which we have extracted and reproduced above, we give the following categories of cases by way of illustration wherein such power could be exercised either to prevent abuse of the process of any court or otherwise to secure the ends of justice, though it may not be possible to lay down any precise, clearly defined and sufficiently channelised and inflexible guidelines or rigid formulae and to give an exhaustive list of myriad kinds of cases wherein such power should be exercised.



(1) Where the allegations made in the first information report or the complaint, even if they are taken at their face value and accepted in their entirety do not prima facie constitute any offence or make out a case against the accused.

(2) Where the allegations in the first information report and other materials, if any, accompanying the FIR do not disclose a cognizable offence, justifying an investigation by police officers under Section 156(1) of the Code except under an order of a Magistrate within the purview of Section 155(2) of the Code.

(3) Where the uncontroverted allegations made in the FIR or complaint and the evidence collected in support of the same do not disclose the commission of any offence and make out a case against the accused.

(4) Where, the allegations in the FIR do not constitute a cognizable offence but constitute only a non-cognizable offence, no investigation is permitted by a police officer without an order of a Magistrate as contemplated under Section 155(2) of the Code.

(5) Where the allegations made in the FIR or complaint are so absurd and inherently improbable on the basis of which no prudent person can ever reach a just conclusion that there is sufficient ground for proceeding against the accused.

(6) Where there is an express legal bar engrafted in any of the provisions of the Code or the concerned Act (under which a criminal proceeding is instituted) to the institution and continuance of the proceedings and/or where there is a specific provision in the Code or the concerned Act, providing efficacious redress for the grievance of the aggrieved party.

(7) Where a criminal proceeding is manifestly attended with mala fide and/or where the proceeding is maliciously instituted with an ulterior motive for wreaking vengeance on the accused and with a view to spite him due to private and personal grudge.”

(emphasis supplied)

8. In *Narinder Singh & Ors. V. State of Punjab & Anr. : (2014) 6 SCC 466*, the Hon’ble Supreme Court has observed as
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under :-

“29. In view of the aforesaid discussion, we sum up and lay down the following principles by which the High Court would be guided in giving adequate treatment to the settlement between the parties and exercising its power under Section 482 of the Code while accepting the settlement and quashing the proceedings or refusing to accept the settlement with direction to continue with the criminal proceedings:

29.1. Power conferred under Section 482 of the Code is to be distinguished from the power which lies in the Court to compound the offences under Section 320 of the Code. No doubt, under Section 482 of the Code, the High Court has inherent power to quash the criminal proceedings even in those cases which are not compoundable, where the parties have settled the matter between themselves. However, this power is to be exercised sparingly and with caution.

29.2. When the parties have reached the settlement and on that basis petition for quashing the criminal proceedings is filed, the guiding factor in such cases would be to secure:

- (i) ends of justice, or*
- (ii) to prevent abuse of the process of any court.*

While exercising the power the High Court is to form an opinion on either of the aforesaid two objectives.

29.3. Such a power is not to be exercised in those prosecutions which involve heinous and serious offences of mental depravity or offences like murder, rape, dacoity, etc. Such offences are not private in nature and have a serious impact on society. Similarly, for the offences alleged to have been committed under special statute like the Prevention of Corruption Act or the offences committed by public servants while working in that capacity are not to be quashed merely on the basis of compromise between the victim and the offender.

29.4. On the other hand, those criminal cases having overwhelmingly and predominantly civil character, particularly those arising out of commercial transactions or arising out of



matrimonial relationship or family disputes should be quashed when the parties have resolved their entire disputes among themselves.

29.5. While exercising its powers, the High Court is to examine as to whether the possibility of conviction is remote and bleak and continuation of criminal cases would put the accused to great oppression and prejudice and extreme injustice would be caused to him by not quashing the criminal cases.

*29.6. Offences under Section 307 IPC would fall in the category of heinous and serious offences and therefore are to be generally treated as crime against the society and not against the individual alone. However, the High Court would not rest its decision merely because there is a mention of Section 307 IPC in the FIR or the charge is framed under this provision. **It would be open to the High Court to examine as to whether incorporation of Section 307 IPC is there for the sake of it or the prosecution has collected sufficient evidence, which if proved, would lead to proving the charge under Section 307 IPC. For this purpose, it would be open to the High Court to go by the nature of injury sustained, whether such injury is inflicted on the vital/delicate parts of the body, nature of weapons used, etc. Medical report in respect of injuries suffered by the victim can generally be the guiding factor. On the basis of this prima facie analysis, the High Court can examine as to whether there is a strong possibility of conviction or the chances of conviction are remote and bleak. In the former case it can refuse to accept the settlement and quash the criminal proceedings whereas in the latter case it would be permissible for the High Court to accept the plea compounding the offence based on complete settlement between the parties. At this stage, the Court can also be swayed by the fact that the settlement between the parties is going to result in harmony between them which may improve their future relationship.***

*29.7. While deciding whether to exercise its power under Section 482 of the Code or not, timings of settlement play a crucial role. **Those cases where the settlement is arrived at immediately after the alleged commission of offence and the matter is still under investigation, the High Court may be liberal in accepting the settlement to quash the criminal proceedings/investigation. It is because***



of the reason that at this stage the investigation is still on and even the charge-sheet has not been filed. Likewise, those cases where the charge is framed but the evidence is yet to start or the evidence is still at infancy stage, the High Court can show benevolence in exercising its powers favourably, but after prima facie assessment of the circumstances/material mentioned above. On the other hand, where the prosecution evidence is almost complete or after the conclusion of the evidence the matter is at the stage of argument, normally the High Court should refrain from exercising its power under Section 482 of the Code, as in such cases the trial court would be in a position to decide the case finally on merits and to come to a conclusion as to whether the offence under Section 307 IPC is committed or not. Similarly, in those cases where the conviction is already recorded by the trial court and the matter is at the appellate stage before the High Court, mere compromise between the parties would not be a ground to accept the same resulting in acquittal of the offender who has already been convicted by the trial court. Here charge is proved under Section 307 IPC and conviction is already recorded of a heinous crime and, therefore, there is no question of sparing a convict found guilty of such a crime.”

(emphasis supplied)

9. The Hon’ble Apex Court in ***Kapil Gupta vs. State of NCT of Delhi and Another*** : 2022 SCC OnLine SC 1030 while quashing an FIR under Section 376 of the IPC had observed as under:

“12. It can thus be seen that this Court has clearly held that though the Court should be slow in quashing the proceedings wherein heinous and serious offences are involved, the High Court is not foreclosed from examining as to whether there exists material for incorporation of such an offence or as to whether there is sufficient evidence which if proved would lead to proving the charge for the offence charged with. The Court has also to take into consideration as to whether the settlement between the parties is going to result into harmony between them which may improve their mutual relationship.

X-X-X

15. In both the cases, though the charge-sheets have been filed, the charges are yet to be framed and as such, the trial has not yet commenced. It is further to be noted that since



Respondent 2 herself is not supporting the prosecution case, even if the criminal trial is permitted to go ahead, it will end in nothing else than an acquittal. If the request of the parties is denied, it will be amounting to only adding one more criminal case to the already overburdened criminal courts.”

(emphasis supplied)

10. It is not in doubt that the offence under Sections 376(2)(n) of the IPC is heinous in nature and involve mental depravity. Offences of such nature cannot be quashed merely because the prosecutrix has settled the dispute. Such offences, in true sense, cannot be said to be offences *in personam* as the same are crimes against the society.

11. It is relevant to note that admittedly, the FIR in the present case was registered under coercion and pressure by the husband of Respondent No.2 who has since abandoned her. It is stated that the petitioner and Respondent No.2 have been living together happily and have a child. The present petition is duly supported with the affidavit given by Respondent No.2 stating that she has no remaining grievance.

12. She states that the petitioner is an innocent person. In the peculiar circumstances of this case, it is unlikely that the present FIR will result in a conviction when Respondent No.2 does not wish to pursue the case arising out of the present FIR.

13. It is an abysmal state of affairs that litigants have resorted to making a mockery of the judicial system by preferring false complaints of such a serious nature to arm twist the other side and gain leverage in commercial disputes.

14. Undoubtedly, the Courts should not come in aid of litigants who have admittedly misused the criminal justice system, in order to settle their personal and commercial disputes, however, the case in hand presents peculiar facts.



15. The prosecutrix in the present case admits to have given a false complaint at the instance of her then husband. The husband has since abandoned her and the prosecutrix is now living with the petitioner himself and has also given birth to a child. The prosecutrix now prays that the proceedings be quashed since the pendency of the same is causing grave turmoil and harassment in her life.

16. Thus, even though it is apparent that entire criminal justice system has been misused, in the peculiar facts that the prosecutrix has since move on in life, this Court feels that no useful purpose will be served by keeping the dispute alive and continuance of the proceedings would amount to abuse of the process of Court. The parties have a long life ahead and have a minor child, thus, a humanitarian approach is required to be taken in such peculiar facts. Therefore, I am of the considered opinion that this is a fit case to exercise extraordinary discretionary jurisdiction under Section 482 of the CrPC.

17. However, keeping in mind the fact that the State machinery has been put to motion, ends of justice would be served if the parties are put to cost.

18. In view of the above, FIR No. 35/2020 and all consequential proceedings arising therefrom are quashed, subject to payment of a total cost of ₹20,000/- by the petitioner, to be deposited with Delhi Police Welfare Society.

19. Let the proof of deposit of cost be submitted before the concerned SHO.

20. The present petition is allowed in the aforesaid terms.

AMIT MAHAJAN, J

MARCH 26, 2025/“SK”

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