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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**
+ **CRL.M.C. 6969/2025 & CRL.M.A. 29261/2025**

AMIT KHERA

.....Petitioner
Through: Mr. Govind Singh, Adv.
Petitioner in person

versus

THE STATE OF NCT OF
DELHI AND ORS

.....Respondents
Through: Mr. Raj Kumar, APP for
the State
SI Kirandeep, PS- K.M.
Pur
R2 to R4 in person

CORAM:
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE AMIT MAHAJAN

ORDER
26.09.2025

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1. The present petition is filed seeking quashing of FIR No. 97/2024 dated 22.02.2024, registered at Police Station K.M. Pur, for offences under Section 354 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 ('IPC') and Section 8 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 ('POCSO Act').
2. Chargesheet in the present case has been filed under Sections 323/354 of the IPC and Section 8 of the POCSO Act.
3. The FIR in the present case was registered pursuant to a complaint given by the prosecutrix, wherein, she alleged that she was inappropriately touched by the petitioner who is stated to be her uncle.
4. The present petition is filed on the ground that the matter has amicably been settled between the parties, out of their own free will, without any undue influence or duress.



5. The learned counsel for the petitioner submits that during the course of investigation, the statement of the victim under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 ('CrPC') was recorded wherein she stated that on the day of incident, her mother and the petitioner's wife had some altercation and when the petitioner intervened, his hand had touched the prosecutrix's shoulder. She stated that the petitioner's hand touched inadvertently.

6. He submits that the victim's father also gave a statement under Section 161 of CrPC wherein he stated that on 17.02.2024, an altercation took place between his wife and the petitioner's wife and that he was told by his daughter (victim) that nothing inappropriate had happened with her.

7. The parties are present in person and have been duly identified by the Investigating Officer.

8. On being asked, the prosecutrix who is present with her mother states that the hand of the petitioner inadvertently touched her shoulder when he was trying to intervene in the fight between her mother and aunt.

9. Offence under Section 354 of the IPC and Section 8 of the POCSO Act are non-compoundable whereas offence under Section 323 is compoundable.

10. It is well settled that the High Court while exercising its powers under Section 528 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 ('BNSS') (erstwhile Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973) can compound 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 Court



while accepting settlement and quashing the proceedings.

11. In **Narinder Singh & Ors. v. State of Punjab & Anr. : (2014) 6 SCC 466**, the Hon'ble Apex Court has observed as 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.”

(emphasis supplied)

12. Similarly, in ***Parbatbhai Aahir & Ors v. State of Gujarat & Anr. : (2017) 9 SCC 641***, the Hon’ble Apex Court has observed as under :-

“16. The broad principles which emerge from the precedents on the subject, may be summarised in the following propositions:

16.1. Section 482 preserves the inherent powers of the High Court to prevent an abuse of the process of any court or to secure the ends of justice. The provision does not confer new powers. It only recognises and preserves powers which inhere in the High Court.

16.2. The invocation of the jurisdiction of the High Court to quash a first information report or a criminal proceeding on the ground that a settlement has been arrived at between the offender and the victim is not the same as the invocation of jurisdiction for the purpose of compounding an offence. While compounding an offence, the power of the court is governed by the



provisions of Section 320 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. The power to quash under Section 482 is attracted even if the offence is non-compoundable.

16.3. In forming an opinion whether a criminal proceeding or complaint should be quashed in exercise of its jurisdiction under Section 482, the High Court must evaluate whether the ends of justice would justify the exercise of the inherent power.

16.4. While the inherent power of the High Court has a wide ambit and plenitude it has to be exercised (i) to secure the ends of justice, or (ii) to prevent an abuse of the process of any court.

16.5. The decision as to whether a complaint or first information report should be quashed on the ground that the offender and victim have settled the dispute, revolves ultimately on the facts and circumstances of each case and no exhaustive elaboration of principles can be formulated.

16.6. In the exercise of the power under Section 482 and while dealing with a plea that the dispute has been settled, the High Court must have due regard to the nature and gravity of the offence. **Heinous and serious offences involving mental depravity or offences such as murder, rape and dacoity cannot appropriately be quashed though the victim or the family of the victim have settled the dispute. Such offences are, truly speaking, not private in nature but have a serious impact upon society. The decision to continue with the trial in such cases is founded on the overriding element of public interest in punishing persons for serious offences.**

16.7. As distinguished from serious offences, there may be criminal cases which have an overwhelming or predominant element of a civil dispute. They stand on a distinct footing insofar as the exercise of the inherent power to quash is concerned.

16.8. Criminal cases involving offences which



arise from commercial, financial, mercantile, partnership or similar transactions with an essentially civil flavour may in appropriate situations fall for quashing where parties have settled the dispute.

16.9. In such a case, the High Court may quash the criminal proceeding if in view of the compromise between the disputants, the possibility of a conviction is remote and the continuation of a criminal proceeding would cause oppression and prejudice; and

16.10. There is yet an exception to the principle set out in propositions 16.8. and 16.9. above. Economic offences involving the financial and economic well-being of the State have implications which lie beyond the domain of a mere dispute between private disputants. The High Court would be justified in declining to quash where the offender is involved in an activity akin to a financial or economic fraud or misdemeanour. The consequences of the act complained of upon the financial or economic system will weigh in the balance.”

(emphasis supplied)

13. Undisputedly, the offences under Section 354 of the IPC and Section 8 of the POCSO Act are heinous in nature and involve mental depravity. Offences of such nature cannot be quashed merely because the victim 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.

14. In the present case, as noted above, the prosecutrix was a minor at the time of the alleged offence. The prosecutrix on being asked, has stated that the hand of the petitioner had inadvertently touched her shoulder.

15. Even though the chargesheet has already been filed, but keeping in view the facts of the case, 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.

16. In the peculiar circumstances of this case, it is unlikely that the present FIR will result in a conviction when the prosecutrix does not wish to pursue the case arising out of the present FIR.

17. In view of the above, FIR No. 97/2024 and all consequential proceedings arising therefrom are quashed.

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

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

AMIT MAHAJAN, J

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

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