Serial No.20
Daily List

# HIGH COURT OF MEGHALAYA
# AT SHILLONG

Crl.Petn.No.150/2026

Date of Decision: 28.10.2026
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1. Shri Obenshon Lyngshiang, S/o Shri Sephrin Nongrum, aged about 27 years, R/o Jatah Lakadong, Smit, East Khasi Hills District-793015, Meghalaya.

2. Smti. XYZ (victim), aged about 24 years. .... Petitioners

Vs

1. State of Meghalaya, represented by its Secretary to the Government of Meghalaya, Home (Police) Department.

2. Investigating Officer, Women Police, Women PS, East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya.

3. Dr. S. Das, Medical Officer, office to the Medical Health Officer, Government of Meghalaya, Jatah PHC/PPP/NRHM, East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya.

..... Respondents

**Coram:**
**Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Revati Mohite Dere, Chief Justice**

**Appearance:**

For the Petitioners : Mr. P.A. Dohkrut, Adv

For the Respondents : Mr. H. Kharmih, AAG with
Ms. P. Chettri, GA

i) Whether approved for reporting in Law journals etc.: Yes/No

ii) Whether approved for publication in press: Yes/No

**JUDGMENT: (Oral)**

Heard learned counsel for the parties.

2. Rule. Rule is made returnable forthwith with the consent of the parties in all the aforesaid petitions and is taken up for final disposal.

3. By this petition, the petitioners i.e. petitioner No.1 (original accused) and petitioner No.2 (survivor), seek quashing of the FIR registered with the Madanriting Police Station, being Madanriting P.S. Case No.114(12) 2020, as against the petitioner No.1 for the alleged offences punishable under Section 5 (j)(ii) read with Section 6 of the POCSO Act and consequently, the proceeding pending before the learned Special Judge (POCSO), East Khasi Hills District, Shillong, being Special (POCSO) Case No.109 of 2021.

4. Quashing is sought on the premise that the relationship between the petitioner Nos.1 and 2 was consensual. It appears that at the relevant time, the petitioner No.1 was 19 years and 8 months and petitioner No.2, 16 years and 10 months. Today, the petitioner No.1 is aged 26 years 6 months and petitioner No.2, 22 years and 8 months. It further appears that from the said relationship, the petitioners have two children, one aged five

years and the other three years. It further appears that the petitioners are living together as husband and wife since 2020 and that the petitioner No.2 is pregnant for the third time. It further appears that the families of both the petitioners have no objection to the said relationship.

5. Vide order dated 5th October, 2026, the petitioners were directed to appear before the Secretary, High Court Legal Services Committee to enable the Secretary to submit her report as to whether the consent given by the petitioner No.2 was an informed consent and whether the petitioner No.2 has received any benefits from any of the Schemes, either under the State or Central Government etc.

6. Learned AAG was also directed to submit a report of the concerned police station, as to whether the contents mentioned in the petition are true and correct i.e., the petitioners were living together as husband and wife with their two children and is pregnant for the third time.

7. Pursuant thereto, the Secretary, High Court Legal Services Committee has submitted her report in a sealed

envelope. The said envelope is opened and the report dated 9th October, 2026 is taken on record.

8. From a perusal of the said report, it appears that the petitioner Nos.1 and 2, entered into a romantic relationship in 2019 and that the relationship was consensual. The report further reveals that according to the petitioner No.2, in her birth certificate her age was reduced. The report further reveals that the petitioners have two children and that the petitioner No.2 is pregnant for the third time. It further appears from the report that the petitioner No.2 does not desire to resume her education nor is she interested in any vocational training. The report further reveals that neither she nor her children have received any benefit from any schemes either of the State or Central Government or compensation under the Victim Compensation Scheme.

9. Learned AAG has also tendered a report of the Officer-in-Charge, Madanriting Police Station. From the said report, it appears that the petitioners are living together as husband and wife since 2020 and are blessed with two children, one aged 5

years and 6 months and the other aged 3 years and 3 months. The said report is also taken on record.

10. This Court in its judgment in the case of ***Shri Shalenbor Wahlang and anr. v. State of Meghalaya & anr***, passed in ***Crl.Petn. No. 92 of 2023*** dated **10th April, 2026**, in paragraphs 31, 33, 34 and 35 has observed as hereunder:

> "31. The ground realities in the State of Meghalaya cannot be ignored and lost sight of. It shows high incidents of adolescent consensual relationships culminating in elopement and early marriage or living together, as husband and wife, which is recognised by the society. Infact, cases of adolescent relationships where the parties i.e., the victim and the boy have got married or are living together as husband and wife and have a child from the said relationship are far too many, resulting in parties filing petitions under Section 528 BNSS (earlier, Section 482 Cr.P.C.) seeking quashing of the proceeding by consent of the parties.
> 32. .....
>
> 33. What also cannot be lost sight of is, that in Meghalaya, matrilineal system is a rare, ancient societal structure among the Khasi, Garo and Jaintia tribes, where lineage and inheritance pass through the mother. Children take their mother's surname, the youngest daughter inherits the property (is the custodian of ancestral property) and the husband often moves into the wife's house. The system is believed to have originated from an agrarian society and the need to protect the family structure, ensuring women's economic security, social stability and the preservation of tribal identity. Infact, in the Khasi community, women have more independence than women in many patriarchal communities, including the freedom to select their

partners, remarry without shame and take an active role in public places like market place and businesses. It is in this background that this Court would have to consider a case seeking quashing of a POCSO case by consent, keeping in mind all factors, including the girl's (victim's) and her child's social security, by ensuring that she and the child get the benefit of the government schemes, including under the POCSO Act.

34. Thus, from the aforesaid discussion, quashing of a POCSO case under Section 528 BNSS by consent, is permissible even if it is a special statute and there is no specific exclusion of any present law/custom. However, the said discretion has to be used with due care and caution and circumspection in exceptional cases, to do justice. As noted earlier, there cannot be any straitjacket formula as to in which cases the said discretion can or cannot be exercised, inasmuch as, that would depend on the facts and circumstances of each case i.e., the age of the parties coming before the court; whether the consent given by the victim is an informed consent and not under coercion of the family members or the boy; that the victim and the accused are married and have a child or are living together as husband and wife, as per the customs in the State of Meghalaya, etc. Where parties are living together as husband and wife or are married, a police report, or a report from any authority, be called for, verifying the said claim. Also, while considering whether the consent of the victim is an 'informed consent', it is necessary that the victim places her affidavit on record giving her 'No Objection' to the quashing of the case. That, before such an affidavit is accepted, in order to ensure that the consent is an informed consent, the victim may be sent before the Secretary, MLSA or Secretary, DLSA to ascertain whether the consent is an informed consent, by giving her time to ponder over the same; and a report be called for, before such quashing petition is considered. While quashing the case, the Government schemes that may be available to a victim in a POCSO Act and the child born from the said relationship also be given due weightage as suggested and

directed by the Apex Court in the case of ***Re: Right to Privacy of Adolescents*** (supra)**.**

35. No doubt, we are conscious of the fact that a case under POCSO Act, is not a case against an individual, but is an offence against the society as a whole, however, the administration or enforcement of the law cannot be divorced from lived realities. Rendering justice demands not only that the law be applied with precision, but also that it be tempered with fairness, compassion and empathy when the situation/facts of a case, warrant it. Thus, it is necessary to maintain a fine balance between the competing interests of justice, deterrence and rehabilitation. Where the victim and the boy are married or are living together as husband and wife (and recognised), and have a child/children, sending the boy to jail would not serve the cause of justice, rather it would cause great injustice to the victim and the child born from the said consensual relationship, as ultimately, the aim of the law is to do justice. Thus, in cases where the court comes to the conclusion, that the consent given by the victim is a genuine and informed consent and that it would be greater injustice to send the boy to jail, instead of letting the parties live together as one family, the Court may consider quashing the case, pending trial, keeping in mind what is stated aforesaid. We may note, considering the large number of POCSO cases, in particular *Romeo – Juliet* cases, it is the responsibility of the State Government to create awareness amongst the people, including the children about the provisions of the POCSO Act, its punishment, etc., not only in the cities but also in the interior and remote places, including schools, colleges, etc."

11. Keeping in mind the observations made in the aforesaid judgment; the report of the Secretary, High Court Legal Services Committee; the report of the concerned police station i.e.

Madanriting Police Station, Shillong, the fact that the petitioners are living together as husband and wife, alongwith their two children and that the petitioner No.2 is pregnant for the third time and also keeping in mind the no objection given by the petitioner No.2 to the quashing of the FIR and consequently, the proceeding, there is no impediment if the petition is allowed.

12. Accordingly, the petition is allowed and the FIR registered with the Madanriting Police Station, being Madanriting P.S. Case No.114(12) 2020, as against the petitioner No.1 for the alleged offences punishable under Section 5 (j)(ii) read with Section 6 of the POCSO Act and consequently, the proceeding pending before the learned Special Judge (POCSO), East Khasi Hills District, Shillong, being Special (POCSO) Case No.109 of 2021, are quashed and set aside.

13. The petition is allowed and Rule is made absolute on the aforesaid terms.

14. Petition is disposed of accordingly.

15. Needless to state, that the petitioner No.2 and her children be extended all benefits as may be applicable to them i.e., the Schemes from either the State or Central Government, which are as under;

(i) Scheme for Care and Support to Victims of under Sections 4 and 6 of the POCSO Act (exclusively for POCSO victims) [Nirbhaya Fund];

(ii) Mission Vatsalya Scheme (Child Protection Services);

(iii) Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme;

(iv) Meghalaya Victim Compensation Scheme, 2022;

(v) Meghalaya Health Insurance Scheme;

(vi) Ayushman Bharat-PM-JAY (free health);

(vii) Mission 1000 Days-Meghalaya;

(viii) Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK);

(ix) Chief Minister's Safe Motherhood Scheme or CM-SMS;

(x) Special Training Programme for age-appropriate admission of Out of School Children (OoSC) and Back to School Campaign;

(xi) Samagra Siksha (Back to School);

(xii) NALSA (Child-Friendly Legal Services for Children) Scheme 2024;

(xiii) NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024; and

(xiv) Mission Shakti-Women's Safety, Support and Empowerment; and

(xv) Insurance or any other scheme.

16. In order to enable the petitioner No.2 to get the benefits of the above said schemes, the District Child Protection Officer (DCPO), East Khasi Hills District, Shillong as well as the Secretary, DLSA, East Khasi Hills District, Shillong are directed to ensure that the benefits as may be applicable to the petitioner No.2 and her children are made available to them at the earliest and in any event within eight weeks from the date of receipt of this order. A support person be appointed to assist the petitioner No.2 in availing all the schemes, as she may be entitled to herself and her children.

17. A compliance report of the benefits extended to the petitioner No.2 and her children be placed before this Court on the next date.

18. If compensation under the Victim Compensation Scheme is granted to the petitioner No. 2, the said money received will be kept in a Fixed Deposit till the petitioner No. 2 attains the age of 25 years. However, the petitioner No. 2 would be entitled to quarterly interest on the said amount and would be free to deal with the said amount on attaining the age of 25 years.

19. **The Registry to forward forthwith a copy of this order to both, the Member Secretary, Meghalaya State Legal Services Authority, Shillong and Commissioner and Secretary, Social Welfare Department, Shillong as well as to the District Child Protection Officer (DCPO), East Khasi Hills District, Shillong and the Secretary, DLSA, East Khasi Hills District, Shillong, to enable them to take steps and comply with the same.**

20. Although, the petition is disposed of, list the petition on **21st December, 2026** for recording compliance of the directions given in paragraphs 15 to 18 aforesaid.

21. All parties to act on the authenticated copy of this order.

(**Revati Mohite Dere**)
**Chief Justice**

**Meghalaya**
**28.10.2026**
*"Lam DR-PS"*



Verified
Digitally signed by: LAMPHRANG KHARCHANDY
Signed On: 03-11-2026 16:39:37 IST