HC-KAR

NC: 2026:KHC:60432
CRL.P No. 1017 of 2025

CNR: KAHC010038862025

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA AT BENGALURU

DATED THIS THE 30TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2026

BEFORE

THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SURAJ GOVINDARAJ

CRIMINAL PETITION NO. 1017 OF 2025 (482(Cr.PC) /

528(BNSS)-)

BETWEEN:

SMT. JYOTHI. G
W/O. NAGARAJU,
AGED ABOUT 37 YEARS,
RESIDING AT NO. 495,
ULLAL BASHTI ULLAL,
ULLAL UPANAGARA, ULLAL,
BANGALORE URBAN,
BENGALURU-560 056,
WORKING AS HOME MAKER.

...PETITIONER

(BY SRI. YATHISHA K J.,ADVOCATE)

AND:

1. STATE OF KARNATAKA
   BY JNANABHARATHI POLICE STATION,
   (REPRESENTED BY THE
   STATE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR,
   HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA,
   BENGALURU-560 001)

2. SMT. BHAGYAMMA
   W/O. LATE LINGARAJU,
   AGED ABOUT 45 YEARS,
   R/AT NO. 41, 5TH CROSS,
   5TH MAIN, JNANAJYOTHI NAGARA,
   BENGALURU-560 056.

Digitally Signed By:
SURAJ GOVINDA RAJ
02/11/2026, 13:42, Bengaluru
Verified

…RESPONDENTS

(BY SMT. RASHMI PATEL., HCGP FOR R1;
R2-SERVED & UNREPRESENTED)

THIS CRL.P IS FILED U/S 482 CR.PC (FILED U/S 528 BNSS) PRAYING TO QUASH THE ENTIRE PROCEEDINGS IN S.C.NO.1323/2022 ARISING OUT OF IN CRIME NO.276/2021 OF JNANABHARATHI POLICE STATION, FOR THE OFFENCES PUNISHABLE UNDER SECTION 498(A), 304(B), R/W 34 OF INDIAN PENAL CODE, 1860 AND SECTION 3 AND 4 OF DOWRY PHOHIBITION ACT 1961, ON THE FILE OF ADDL. CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE, (CCH-46) AT BENGALURU.

THIS CRIMINAL PETITION, COMING ON FOR ADMISSION, THIS DAY, ORDER WAS MADE THEREIN AS UNDER:

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SURAJ GOVINDARAJ

ORAL ORDER

1. The petitioner is before this Court seeking for the following reliefs;

   a) *Quash the entire proceedings in S.C.No.1323/2022 arising out of in Crime No.276/2021 of Jnanabharathi Police Station, for the offences punishable under section 498(A), 304(B), r/w 34 of Indian Penal Code, 1860 and section 3 and 4 of Dowry Phohibition Act 1961, on the file of Addl. City Civil and Sessions Judge, (CCH-46) at Bengaluru.*

   b) *Pass such other orders as this Hon'ble Court may deem fit and proper in the interest of justice and equity.*

2. A complaint came to be lodged by respondent No.2 on 20.12.2021, on the basis of which FIR in Crime No.276/2021 was registered by Janabharathi Police

Digitally Signed By:
SURAJ GOVINDA RAJ
02/11/2026, 13:42, Bengaluru
Verified

Station for the offences punishable under Sections 3 and 4 of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, and Sections 304B, 498A, 149, 302 and 506 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

3. The allegation in the complaint is that the daughter of respondent No.2, namely, Ranjitha, had fallen in love with Manjunath. Though there was initially opposition from the family, they subsequently consented to the marriage, which was solemnised in the year 2017. Thereafter, Ranjitha started residing with Manjunath at Ullal Basti, and the couple had two children.

4. It is alleged that, at the time of the birth of the second child, when Ranjitha had come to her parental home for confinement, she disclosed that her husband Manjunath was having an illicit relationship with his sister-in-law. This allegedly led to several altercations between the husband and wife, as well as with the mother, brother-in-law and sister of Manjunath.

5. It is further alleged that Ranjitha was physically assaulted and subjected to harassment by them.

Digitally Signed By:
SURAJ GOVINDA RAJ
02/11/2026, 13:42, Bengaluru
Verified

Ranjitha is stated to have conveyed these incidents to respondent No.2 over telephone and also personally to her elder sister and elder brother-in-law.

6. Ultimately, on 20.12.2021, Ranjitha is alleged to have committed suicide, unable to bear the harassment meted out to her by her husband and his family members. Upon completion of investigation, the charge sheet came to be laid on 11.03.2022. The petitioner, who is the sister of Manjunath, has approached this Court seeking quashing of the proceedings.

7. The submission of learned counsel for the petitioner is that the petitioner is not residing in the matrimonial home of Manjunath and Ranjitha, but is residing in her own matrimonial home. It is contended that the allegations in the complaint, even if taken at their face value, do not disclose any specific involvement of the petitioner in the alleged harassment of the deceased. According to learned counsel, the allegations, at the most, could be directed against the husband Manjunath and the mother-in-law, and the petitioner has been

Digitally Signed By:
SURAJ GOVINDA RAJ
02/11/2026, 13:42, Bengaluru
Verified

implicated merely on account of her relationship with Manjunath. It is further submitted that the petitioner had been married even prior to the marriage of Manjunath and was residing separately.

8. Learned HCGP, on the other hand, submits that the statements of the mother and sister of the deceased, recorded during the course of investigation, implicate the petitioner in the alleged offences. It is further submitted that Ranjitha died within seven years of her marriage and that the allegations made in the complaint and the material collected during investigation warrant continuation of the proceedings against the petitioner.

9. Respondent No.2, though served, has chosen to remain unrepresented.

10. Heard Sri. Yathisha K.J., learned counsel for the petitioner, and Ms. Rashmi Patel, learned HCGP for respondent No.1, and perused the records.

11. The facts relating to the marriage of the deceased with Manjunath, the birth of their children and the

Digitally Signed By:
SURAJ GOVINDA RAJ
02/11/2026, 13:42, Bengaluru
Verified

death of Ranjitha on 20.12.2021 are not in dispute. The principal contention urged on behalf of the petitioner is that she was residing separately in her matrimonial home and, therefore, could not have been involved in the alleged harassment of the deceased. It is contended that the petitioner has been implicated only on account of being a member of the family of the husband.

12. Ordinarily, the contention that a relative of the husband was residing separately and had no involvement in the matrimonial affairs of the deceased would require consideration, particularly where the allegations are general and do not disclose any specific role attributable to such relative. However, in the present case, a perusal of the material placed before this Court indicates that the petitioner was also residing with her husband at Ullal Basti, in close proximity to the residence of Manjunath and the deceased Ranjitha, where the mother of Manjunath and the Petitioner also resided. Thus, the contention that the petitioner was residing at a distant place and could not have been involved in the alleged incidents cannot, at this stage, be

Digitally Signed By:
SURAJ GOVINDA RAJ
02/11/2026, 13:42, Bengaluru
Verified

accepted as an undisputed circumstance warranting quashing of the proceedings.

13. The complaint alleges that the deceased had been subjected to harassment and physical assault by the husband and his family members, including the Mother and sister of the Husband, and that she had conveyed the said incidents to her mother and other relatives. The material collected during investigation, as referred to by the learned HCGP, includes statements of the mother and sister of the deceased which are stated to implicate the petitioner. At this stage, this Court cannot undertake a detailed evaluation of the veracity or evidentiary value of those statements, nor can it determine whether the petitioner had in fact participated in the alleged acts of harassment. Such questions would require consideration by the competent Court during trial.

14. The fact that the petitioner is the sister of the husband, by itself, would not be sufficient to sustain the prosecution. Equally, the fact that she was married and residing in her own matrimonial home would not, in the facts of the present case, by itself, establish that she had no involvement in the alleged

Digitally Signed By:
SURAJ GOVINDA RAJ
02/11/2026, 13:42, Bengaluru
Verified

incidents. The material on record, including the allegations in the complaint and the statements referred to by the prosecution, does not permit this Court to conclude, at this stage, that the petitioner was wholly unconnected with the alleged harassment of the deceased.

15. Having regard to the nature of the allegations, the circumstances in which the deceased died, and the material collected during investigation, this Court is of the considered opinion that it would not be appropriate to terminate the proceedings against the petitioner at this stage. Whether the petitioner had any role in the alleged harassment, and whether the prosecution is able to establish the ingredients of the offences alleged against her, are matters to be determined by the trial Court upon appreciation of the evidence.

16. In the circumstances, this Court is not inclined to exercise its jurisdiction to quash the proceedings against the petitioner. The petition is accordingly dismissed. It is made clear that the observations made herein are confined to the consideration of the prayer for quashing and shall not influence the trial

Digitally Signed By:
SURAJ GOVINDA RAJ
02/11/2026, 13:42, Bengaluru
Verified

Court in its independent appreciation of the evidence or determination of the guilt or otherwise of the petitioner.

17. In that view of the matter, this Court passes the following:

ORDER

(i) Criminal petition is ***dismissed***.

(ii) Liberty is reserved to the petitioner to agitate all defences during the course of trial.

Digitally Signed By:
SURAJ GOVINDA RAJ
02/11/2026, 13:42, Bengaluru
Verified

(SURAJ GOVINDARAJ)
JUDGE

PRS
List No.: 1 Sl No.: 20