



Crl.O.P.No.3303 of 2026

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 25.02.2026

CORAM:

THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE A.D.JAGADISH CHANDIRA

Crl.O.P.No.3303 of 2026
and Crl.M.P.No.2322 of 2026

Mahendiran

... Petitioner

Vs.

1. The State of Tamil Nadu
Represented by,
The Inspector of Police,
Mathikonpalayam Police Station,
Dharmapuri District.
(Crime No.128 of 2022)

2. Latha

... Respondents

PRAYER: Criminal Original Petition filed under Section 528 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita/Section 482 Cr.P.C., to call for the records pertaining to the proceeding in Spl.S.C.No.20 of 2023, pending on the file of the Sessions Judge, Fast Track, Mahila Court, Dharmapuri against the petitioner and quash the same as illegal.

For Petitioner : Mr.T.Ganesan

For R1 : Mr.S.Santhosh
Government Advocate (Criminal Side)

For R2 : Ms.K.Padmapriya



ORDER

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The present Criminal Original Petition has been filed seeking to quash the proceedings in Spl.S.C.No.20 of 2023, on the file of the Sessions Court, Fast Track, Mahila Court, Dharmapuri, on the basis of the compromise arrived at between the parties.

2. Heard both sides and perused the materials available on record.

3. Based on the complaint given by the *de facto* complainant/R2, a case in Crime No.128 of 2022 was registered on the file of the first respondent Police for “Girl Missing” and later, it was altered to one under Sections 363 & 366 of IPC and Section 9 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, Section 5(1) r/w 6(1) of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. After completion of investigation, the impugned charge sheet was filed before the Sessions Court, Fast Track, Mahila Court, Dharmapuri, and the Court took cognizance of the case and numbered it as Spl.S.C.No.20 of 2023.

4. The submissions of the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner are as follows:-



4.1. The petitioner and the 2nd respondent's daughter/victim are known to each other and there was a consensual relationship between them. Since their relationship was opposed by their parents, the victim, on her own volition, went along with the petitioner. Consequently, based on the complaint given by the second respondent, the mother of the victim, the present case came to be registered.

4.2. While so, the victim became pregnant and gave birth to a female child on 17.02.2024. After the victim attained majority, the petitioner and the victim got their marriage solemnized on 19.02.2026. As on date, the petitioner and the victim are living together as husband and wife. Their marriage has also been registered before the District Registrar's Office, Coimbatore, on 20.02.2026.

4.3. The parties have entered into a compromise. In view of the settlement between the petitioner and the victim, no useful purpose would be served by permitting the impugned proceedings to continue. Hence, the impugned proceedings may be quashed on the ground of compromise. Affidavits and Joint Memo of Compromise to that effect have also been filed by the petitioner as well as the second respondent and the victim.



5. The petitioner and the victim, along with their child, appeared before this Court and they were identified by their respective counsel as well as by Mr.C.Selvam, SSI, Mathikon Palayam Police Station, Dharmapuri.

6. This Court also enquired both the parties and was satisfied that the petitioner and the victim have been living together as husband and wife with their child.

7. Learned Government Advocate (Criminal Side) appearing on behalf of the first respondent submitted that since the victim is a school going girl, the de facto complainant/R2, the mother of the victim, did not accept their marriage. He further submitted that though the parties have entered into a compromise while this case is pending, this Court, taking into account the seriousness of the offences, has to consider the issue as to whether offences of this nature can be quashed on the ground of compromise between parties.

8. The main issue that requires the consideration of this Court is as to whether this Court can quash the criminal proceedings involving non-compoundable offences pending against the petitioner.



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9. The Supreme Court, in a very recent judgment in **K. Kirubakaran vs. State of Tamil Nadu [2025 INSC 1272]**, in which the appellant was convicted for the offences under Sections 366 IPC and Section 6 of the POCSO Act, pursuant to the compromise entered into between the parties, by commencing the judgment with the quote “*The final cause of law is the welfare of society*” of Benjamin N. Cardozo, Former Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and finding that the crime was not the result of lust but love, quashed the proceedings against the appellant invoking Section 142 of the Constitution of India. The relevant paragraphs of the said judgment read as under:

“5. The only question which remains to be decided is whether the proceedings should be quashed in the present case, considering that the appellant is convicted of a heinous offence.

6. We are conscious of the fact that a crime is not merely a wrong against an individual but against society as a whole. When an offence is committed, it wounds the collective conscience of the society and therefore the society, acting through its elected lawmakers, determines what would be the punishment for such an offence and how an offender should be dealt with, to deter its recurrence. The criminal law is, thus, a manifestation of the sovereign will of the society. However, the administration of such law is not divorced from the practical realities. Rendering justice demands a nuanced approach. This Court tailors its decisions to the specifics of each case: with firmness and severity wherever necessary and it is merciful when warranted. It is also in the best interest of society to bring a dispute to an end, wherever possible. We draw inspiration from Cardozo, J. to hold that the law aims to ensure not just



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punishment of the guilty, but also harmony and restoration of the social order.

7. With such perspective in mind, we need to proceed to balance the competing interests of justice, deterrence, and rehabilitation.

8. The founding fathers of the Constitution conferred this Court with the extraordinary power to do “complete justice” in proper cases. This constitutional power stands apart from all other powers and is intended to avoid situations of injustice being caused by the rigid application of law.

9. Per the law made by the legislature, the appellant having been found guilty of a heinous offence, the proceedings in the present case on the basis of a compromise between the appellant and his wife cannot be quashed. But ignoring the cry of the appellant’s wife for compassion and empathy will not, in our opinion, serve the ends of justice. Even the most serious offenders of law do receive justice moderated by compassion from the courts, albeit in appropriate cases. Given the peculiar facts and circumstances here, a balanced approach combining practicality and empathy is necessary. The appellant and the victim are not only legally married, they are also in their family way. While considering the offence committed by the appellant punishable under the POCSO Act, we have discerned that the crime was not the result of lust but love. The victim of crime herself has expressed her desire to live a peaceful and stable family life with the appellant, upon whom she is dependent, without the appellant carrying the indelible mark on his forehead of being an offender. Continuation of the criminal proceedings and the appellant’s incarceration would only disrupt this familial unit and cause irreparable harm to the victim, the infant child, and the fabric of society itself.

10. We are, thus, persuaded to hold that this is a case where the law must yield to the cause of justice.

11. Accordingly, resting on the foregoing considerations, the developments subsequent to the trial, and in the interest of rendering complete justice, we deem it appropriate to invoke our powers under Article 142 of the Constitution of India to quash the criminal proceedings against the appellant including the conviction and sentence. Ordered accordingly.



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12. Also, bearing in mind the interests of the appellant's wife and child, we deem it appropriate to subject the appellant to the specific condition of not deserting his wife and child and also to maintain them for the rest of their life with dignity. If, in future, there be any default on the appellant's part and the same is brought to the notice of this Court by his wife or their child or the complainant, the consequences may not be too palatable for the appellant.

13. We make the interim order granting benefit to the appellant of exemption from surrendering absolute and discharge him from the bail bonds.

14. The appeal is, accordingly, allowed.

15. Needless to observe, this order is rendered in the unique circumstances that have unfolded before us and shall not be treated as a precedent for any other case."

(emphasis supplied by this Court)

10. It is also apropos to point out that the Supreme Court, in **K.Dhandapani vs. The State [2022 LiveLaw (SC) 477]**, in which the appellant was convicted of the offences under Sections 5 and 6 of the POCSO Act, by a terse order, set aside the conviction and sentence slapped on the appellant, on the basis of the settlement arrived at between the parties. The following relevant paragraphs of the said order make an interesting reading:

"The appellant submitted that this Court should exercise its power under [Article 142](#) of the Constitution and ought to do complete justice and it could not be in the interest of justice to disturb the family life of the appellant and the prosecutrix.



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After hearing the matter for some time on 08th March, 2022, we directed the District Court to record the statement of the prosecutrix about her present status. The statement of the prosecutrix has been placed on record in which she has categorically stated that she has two children and they are being taken care of by the appellant and she is leading a happy married life.

Dr. Joseph Aristotle S., learned counsel appearing for the State, opposed the grant of any relief to the appellant on the ground that the prosecutrix was aged 14 years on the date of the offence and gave birth to the first child when she was 15 years and second child was born when she was 17 years. He argued that the marriage between the appellant and the prosecutrix is not legal. He expressed his apprehension that the said marriage might be only for the purpose of escaping punishment and there is no guarantee that the appellant will take care of the prosecutrix and the children after this Court grants relief to him.

In the peculiar facts and circumstances of this case, we are of the considered view that the conviction and sentence of the appellant who is maternal uncle of the prosecutrix deserves to be set aside in view of the subsequent events that have been brought to the notice of this Court. This Court cannot shut its eyes to the ground reality and disturb the happy family life of the appellant and the prosecutrix. We have been informed about the custom in Tamil Nadu of the marriage of a girl with the maternal uncle.

For the aforesaid mentioned reasons, the conviction and sentence of the appellant is set aside in the peculiar facts of the case and shall not be treated as a precedent. The appeal is accordingly, disposed of. Pending application(s), if any, shall stand disposed of.

In case, the appellant does not take proper care of the prosecutrix, she or the State on behalf of the prosecutrix can move this Court for modification of this Order.”

(emphasis supplied by this Court)

11. Since the aforesaid decisions apply on all fours to the facts and circumstances obtaining in this case, this Court is inclined to quash the



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proceedings against the petitioner pending before the Sessions Court, Fast Track, Mahila Court, Dharmapuri, in Spl.S.C.No.20 of 2023, by invoking Section 482 of Cr.P.C./528 BNSS.

12. Accordingly, this Criminal Original Petition is allowed and the proceedings pending against the petitioner in Spl.S.C.No.20 of 2023, on the file of the Sessions Court, Fast Track, Mahila Court, Dharmapuri, is quashed. Consequently, the connected miscellaneous petition is closed.

13. The affidavits and the Joint Memo of Compromise filed by the petitioner as well as the second respondent and victim for compromising the offences shall form part of the records.

14. This Court hopes and trusts that the petitioner will take due care of the victim and the child for the rest of their life and in the event of any default on his part in this regard being brought to the notice of this Court, the consequences that would befall the petitioner would be very serious.

15. Before parting, this Court hastens to add that this Court is not oblivious of the fact that the Supreme Court, in **K. Kirubakaran**, *supra*, 9/11



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had invoked Article 142 of the Constitution of India and quashed the criminal proceedings against the appellant. However, since the facts obtaining in this case being akin to the facts in **K. Kirubakaran**, *supra*, this order is passed.

25.02.2026

vm

Neutral Citation: Yes/No

To

1. The Sessions Judge,
Fast Track Mahila Court,
Dharmapuri.
2. The Inspector of Police,
Mathikonpalayam Police Station,
Dharmapuri District.
3. The Public Prosecutor,
High Court of Madras.



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A.D.JAGADISH CHANDIRA, J.

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