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Crl.O.P.No.34109 of 2025

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 04.02.2026

CORAM:

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

Crl.O.P.No.34109 of 2025

- 1.Manikandan
2. Govindasamy
3. Chithra
4. Narasimman
5. Chinnapappa

... Petitioners

Vs.

1. The State rep. by The Inspector Police,
All Women Police Station,
Pennagaram, Dharmapuri District.
Crime No.22 of 2023
2. XXXXX
XXXXX, Dharmapuri District.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Criminal Original Petition is filed under Section 528 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita/Section 482 Cr.P.C., to call for the records in connection with Spl.S.C. No.79 of 2024 on the file of Learned Special Court for Exclusive Trial of Cases under POCSO Act, Dharmapuri, Dharmapuri District and quash the same.

For Petitioners : Mr.M.R.Jothimanian



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For R1 : Mr.K.M.D.Muhilan
Additional Public Prosecutor

For R2 : Mr.V.Sivaraman

ORDER

The present Criminal Original Petition has been filed seeking to quash the proceedings in Spl.S.C. No.79 of 2024 on the file of Special Court for Exclusive Trial of Cases under POCSO Act, Dharmapuri, Dharmapuri District, on the basis of the compromise arrived at between the petitioners and the *de facto* complainant/second respondent.

2. Heard the learned counsel on either side and perused the materials available on record.

3. Based on the complaint given by the *de facto* complainant/R2, a case in Crime No.22 of 2023 was registered on the file of the first respondent Police against the petitioner, for the offences under Sections 10 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 and Sections 5(l), 5(j)(ii) and 6(1), 16 and 17 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. After completion of investigation, a charge sheet was filed and taken cognizance of, as aforesaid.



4. Learned counsel for the petitioner would submit that the 1st petitioner and the victim are close relatives; the case arises from consensual relationship between them; later, the victim became pregnant. He would submit that without understanding the consequences, in order to save the honour of the family, parents of the 1st petitioner arranged their marriage in a temple. He would submit that when the victim was admitted for delivery in the hospital, information was given to the police, based on which, case has been registered against the petitioners. He would further submit that the victim has now attained majority and the marriage has now been performed at Arulmigu Poomalai Chendraya Perumal Swamy Thirukovil, Pallipatti, Perumbalai, Pennagaram, Dharmapuri, and the marriage has also been registered before the Sub-Registrar's Office, at Pennagaram on 07.01.2026. He would also submit that due to wedlock, they have got a female child and they are all living together happily. He would further submit that the parties have entered into a compromise and have filed consent affidavits to that effect. Therefore, when the petitioners and the victim girl have compromised the matter, no useful purpose will be served by continuing the impugned proceedings; hence, the impugned proceedings may be quashed on the ground of compromise.



5. The petitioners and the *de facto* complainant/R2 appeared before this Court and they were identified by their respective counsel as well as by the Ms.A.Savitha WHC 1611, All Women Police Station, Pennagaram, Dharmapuri District.

6. On being enquired by this Court, the *de facto* complainant/R2 stated that she has amicably settled the dispute with the petitioners and she is not willing to pursue the criminal proceedings and therefore, seeks to quash the same.

7. Learned Additional Public Prosecutor appearing on behalf of the first respondent 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.



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 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.



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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.

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.

After hearing the matter for some time on 08th March, 2022, we directed the District Judge 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.



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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 proceedings against the petitioners in Spl.S.C. No.79 of 2024 on the file of the Special Court for Exclusive Trial of Cases under POCSO Act, Dharmapuri, Dharmapuri District, by invoking Section 482 of Cr.P.C./528 BNSS.

12. Accordingly, this Criminal Original Petition is allowed and the proceedings against the petitioners in Spl.S.C. No.79 of 2024 on the file of the Special Court for Exclusive Trial of Cases under POCSO Act, Dharmapuri, Dharmapuri District, is quashed.



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13. The Joint Compromise Memo filed by the petitioners and the *de facto* complainant/victim girl, for compromising the offences shall form part of the records.

14. This Court hopes and trusts that the first petitioner will take due care of the victim girl 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 first 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*, 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.

04.02.2026

dsm

Neutral Citation: Yes/No



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A.D.JAGADISH CHANDIRA, J.

dsn

To

1. The Special Judge for Exclusive Trial of Cases under POCSO Act, Dharmapuri, Dharmapuri District.
2. The Inspector Police,
All Women Police Station,
Pennagaram, Dharmapuri District.
3. The Additional Public Prosecutor,
High Court of Madras.

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