

2026:PHHC:027250



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**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH**

CRM-M-48090-2022
Date of Decision: 19.02.2026

Balwinder Singh ...Petitioner
Versus
State of Punjab ...Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE AARADHNA SAWHNEY

Present: Mr. Amit Arora, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Jatinder Pal Singh, Sr. DAG, Punjab.

AARADHNA SAWHNEY, J. (ORAL)

1. By virtue of present petition, petitioner has prayed for quashing of FIR No.187 dated 02.08.2019, under Section 174-A IPC (now Section 209 BNS) at Police Station Sadar Tarn Taran, District Tarn Taran, (Annexure P-2) along with all consequential proceedings emanating therefrom.
2. Learned counsel for the petitioner submits that present FIR is the outcome of a complaint case bearing NACT No.1067 dated 05.06.2017 titled "Amar Singh Vs. Balwinder Singh" filed against petitioner u/s 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act. On 21.12.2018, the petitioner was declared a '*Proclaimed Offender*' in the said complaint by the learned trial Court, in pursuance of which, the instant FIR No.187 dated 02.08.2019 under Section 174-A IPC was registered against him. On 18.05.2022, in view of the compromise between the parties, matter was compounded and petitioner was acquitted by the learned trial Court.

In the light of the aforesaid facts, learned counsel prays that
continuation of proceedings u/s 174-A of IPC (now Section 209 of BNS, 2023)

would be a sheer abuse of law and thus, the aforesaid FIR No.187 dated 02.08.2019 be quashed.

Reliance has been placed upon the following judgments of the coordinate Bench of this Court passed in ***Soni Kumar versus State of Punjab***, bearing CRM-M-55315-2024, decided on 10.01.2025, ***Deepak versus State of Haryana and another***, bearing CRM-M-14623-2021, decided on 17.02.2022 and ***Pardeep Kumar Vs. State of Punjab and another***, bearing CRM-M-41656 of 2023, decided on 23.08.2023 wherein the FIR registered under Section 174-A IPC arising out of the same complaint between the parties had been quashed. In support of his submissions, learned counsel has also relied upon the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of ***Daljit Singh versus State of Haryana and another***, bearing Criminal Appeal No.4359 of 2024, decided on 02.01.2025.

3. I have heard learned counsel for the parties and have carefully gone through the material available on record.

4. By way of the instant petition, the petitioner is seeking quashing of the present FIR registered under Section 174-A IPC on the ground that in the light of complaint bearing NACT No.1067 dated 05.06.2017 having been withdrawn as the financial dispute had been amicably settled between the parties, continuation of proceedings lodged against petitioner, vide FIR No.187 dated 02.08.2019, u/s 174-A IPC (now Section 209 of BNS) would be an abuse of process of law.

At this stage, it would be appropriate to refer to the judgment of Hon'ble the Supreme Court in ***Daljit Singh's case (supra)***, wherein it was held as follows:-

“7.3 Now, what happens if the status under Section 82 Cr.P.C. is nullified i.e., the person subjected to such proclamation,

by virtue of subsequent developments is no longer required to be presented before a Court of law. Then, can the prosecution still proceed against such a person for having not appeared before a Court during the time that the process was in effect. The answer is in the affirmative. We say so for the following reasons:-

(i) The language of Section 174A, IPC says “whoever fails to appear at the specified place and the specified time as required by proclamation...”. This implies that the very instance at which a person is directed to appear, and he does not do so, this Section comes into play;

(ii) What further flows from the language employed is that the instance of non-appearance becomes an infraction of the Section, and therefore, prosecution therefor would be independent of Section 82, Cr.P.C. being in effect;

(iii) So, while proceedings under Section 174A IPC cannot be initiated independent of Section 82, Cr.P.C., i.e., can only be started post the issuance of proclamation, they can continue if the said proclamation is no longer in effect.

(iv) We find that the Delhi High Court has taken this view, i.e., that Section 174A, IPC is a stand-alone offence in Mukesh Bhatia v. State (NCT of Delhi)¹⁹; Divya Verma v. State²⁰; Sameena & Anr. v. State GNCT of Delhi & Anr.²¹ For the reasons afore-stated, we agree with the findings made in these judgments/orders. At the same time, it stands clarified that we have not commented on the merits of the cases.

(v) Granted that the offence prescribed in Section 74A IPC is indeed stand-alone, given that it arises out of an original offence in connection with which proceedings under Section 82 Cr.P.C. is initiated and in the said offence the accused stands, subsequently, acquitted, it would be permissible in law for the Court seized of the trial under such offence, to take note of such a

development and treat the same as a ground to draw the proceedings to a close, should such a prayer be made and the circumstances of the case so warrant.

8. *In conclusion, we hold that Section 174A IPC is an independent, substantive offence, that can continue even if the proclamation under Section 82, Cr.P.C. is extinguished. It is a stand-alone offence. That being the position of 2022 SCC OnLine Del 1023 2023 SCC OnLine Del 2619 CrI. M.C No,1470 of 2021, Dated 17th May, 2022 law, let us now turn to the present facts. As we have already noted supra, the Appellant stands acquitted of the main offence.”*

A Coordinate Bench of this Court, in similar circumstances, in the case of ***Soni Kumar’s case (supra)*** has quashed the FIR under Section 174-A IPC stating that where the main complaint has been withdrawn, the continuation of proceedings would be an abuse of process of law. The relevant extract thereof is as under:-

“The inherent jurisdiction under Section 528 BNSS, 2023/Section 482 Cr.P.C., 1973 is primarily aimed at preventing abuse of judicial process and securing the ends of justice. Thus, when the dispute is essentially personal in nature and a genuine compromise has been reached, the High Court may intervene to quash the criminal proceedings recognizing the continuation thereof would be non-productive and unjust in the given circumstances. The inherent powers of a High Court are powers which are incidental replete powers, which if did not so exist, the Court would be obliged to sit still and helplessly see the process of law and Courts being abused for the purposes of injustice. In other words; such power(s) is intrinsic to a High Court, it is its very life immanent attribute.

Without such power(s), a High Court would have form but lack the substance. These powers of a High Court hence deserve to be construed with the widest possible amplitude. These inherent powers are in consonance with the nature of a High Court which ought to be, and has infact been, invested with power(s) to

maintain its authority to prevent the process of law/Courts being obstructed or abused. It is a trite posit of jurisprudence that though laws attempt to deal with all cases that may arise, the infinite variety of circumstances which shape events and the imperfections of language make it impossible to lay down provisions capable of governing every case, which in fact arises. A High Court which exists for the furtherance of justice in an indefatigable manner, should therefore, have unfettered power(s) to deal with situations which, though not expressly provided for by the law, need to be dealt with, to prevent injustice or the abuse of the process of law and Courts. The juridical basis of these plenary power(s) is the authority; in fact the seminal duty and responsibility of a High Court; to uphold, to protect and to fulfil the judicial function of administering justice, in accordance with law, in a regular, orderly and effective manner. In other words; Section 528 of BNSS, 2023 reflects peerless powers, which a High Court may draw upon as necessary whenever it is just an due process of law, to prevent vexation or oppression, to do justice substantial justice between the parties and to secure the ends of justice.

10. *Keeping in view the entirety of the attending facts and circumstances of the case in hand; especially the original offence being an offence under Section 138 of Negotiable Instruments Act of 1881, the original offence alleged to have been committed in the year 2021, the subject matter of the original offence having been settled amicably between the parties and the criminal complaint under Section 138 of Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 having been withdrawn on the basis of such settlement/compromise; this Court deems it appropriate that the FIR as also all proceedings emanating therefrom deserve to be quashed.”*

Another Coordinate Bench of this Court in the case of **Deepak's case (supra)**, has also held as under:-

“An affidavit was also filed by respondent No.2, which has been annexed as Annexure R-1, wherein in para 4 of the same, it has

been stated that respondent No.2-Bank has no objection, in case, the present FIR is quashed against the petitioner because the Bank has received the cheque amount and consequently, the complaint has been withdrawn. Since, the proceedings under Section 138 of the Act of 1881 has been withdrawn and the present FIR has been registered on account of non-appearance of the petitioner, this Court feels that continuance of the proceedings in the present FIR would be an abuse of process of the Court. Keeping in view the abovesaid facts and circumstances, as well as the authorities of law referred to above, the present petition is allowed and FIR No.969 dated 04.11.2018 registered under Section 174-A of IPC at Police Station Ballabgarh City, District Faridabad (Annexure P-3) and all the consequential proceedings arising therefrom, are ordered to be quashed qua the petitioner.”

5. In the present case, since the original complaint bearing NACT No.1067 dated 05.06.2017 under Section 138 of NI Act has been withdrawn on the ground that the parties have compromised the financial dispute, in accordance with law referred to above, no useful purpose would be served by continuing the proceedings under Section 174-A IPC (now Section 209 of BNS) against the petitioner.

6. Resultantly, the petition is allowed and the impugned FIR No.187 dated 02.08.2019 under Section 174-A IPC (now Section 209 of BNS) registered at Police Station Sadar Tarn Taran, District Tarn Taran, (Annexure P-2) and all consequential proceedings arising therefrom against the petitioner are hereby quashed.

19.02.2026
Parveen kumar

(AARADHNA SAWHNEY)
JUDGE

Whether speaking/reasoned :Yes/No
Whether reportable :Yes/No