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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

+ **CRL.M.C. 1069/2026 & CRL.M.A. 4226/2026**

GAURAV GAUTAM & ORS.

.....Petitioners

Through: Mr. Rishi Kumar, Advocate with
petitioners in person.

versus

STATE NCT OF DELHI & ANR.

.....Respondents

Through: Mr. Hitesh Vali, APP with Ms.
Pragati Gupta and Mr. Samar
Pratap Singh, Advocates.
SI Om Yadav, PS: Palam Village.
Mr. Sachin Sharma, Advocate for
R2.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE PRATEEK JALAN

ORDER

% **09.02.2026**

1. Issue notice. Mr. Hitesh Vali, learned Additional Public Prosecutor, accepts notice on behalf of the State. Mr. Sachin Sharma, learned counsel, accepts notice on behalf of respondent No. 2 – complainant.

2. The petitioners have filed this petition under Section 528 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 [“BNSS”] (corresponding to Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 [“CrPC”]) seeking quashing of FIR No. 791/2023 dated 05.12.2023, registered at Police Station Palam Village, District South West, New Delhi, under Sections 498A/506/34 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 [“IPC”], and all proceedings



emanating therefrom, on the ground of settlement.

3. The petition is taken up for disposal with the consent of learned counsel for the parties.

4. Petitioner No. 1 and respondent No. 2 were married on 04.03.2022, but started living separately in October 2022. Respondent No. 2 lodged a complaint with the Crime Against Women Cell alleging demands for dowry on multiple occasions, as well as physical and verbal abuse and cruelty. Pursuant thereto, the impugned FIR was registered at her instance against three accused persons, namely her husband and parents-in-law [petitioners herein].

5. Upon completion of investigation, a chargesheet was filed under Sections 498A/406/354A/506/34 of the IPC. Petitioner No. 3 was chargesheeted under Section 354A of the IPC.

6. Petitioner No. 1 and respondent No. 2 have since entered into a settlement dated 08.10.2025, under the aegis of the Delhi Mediation Centre, Dwarka Courts, New Delhi. As per the settlement, the parties agreed to resume cohabitation, and to fulfill their matrimonial obligations.

7. In light of the aforesaid, the parties seek quashing of the impugned FIR.

8. The parties are present before the Court and have been duly identified by their respective learned counsel as well as by the Investigating Officer.

9. Respondent No. 2 has filed her no-objection affidavit before this Court, and learned counsel confirm that the settlement has been entered into voluntarily, without any force or coercion. Respondent No. 2 further



submits that the allegations, including the allegation against her father-in-law [petitioner No. 3 herein] for the offence punishable under Section 354A of the IPC, arose out of a misunderstanding, and that she does not wish to pursue the same.

10. The settlement records that the parties have been living together since 25.08.2025, and that respondent No. 2 shall withdraw the pending cases.

11. Although offences under Sections 354A and 498A of the IPC are non-compoundable, the Supreme Court has clearly held that, in certain circumstances, the High Courts, in exercise of their powers under Section 482 of the CrPC [corresponding to Section 528 of the BNSS], can quash criminal proceedings, even with respect to non-compoundable offences, on the ground that there is a compromise between the accused and the complainant, especially when no overarching public interest is adversely affected.

12. The Supreme Court, in *Gian Singh v. State of Punjab and Anr.* [(2012) 10 SCC 303], held as follows:

“58. Where the High Court quashes a criminal proceeding having regard to the fact that the dispute between the offender and the victim has been settled although the offences are not compoundable, it does so as in its opinion, continuation of criminal proceedings will be an exercise in futility and justice in the case demands that the dispute between the parties is put to an end and peace is restored; securing the ends of justice being the ultimate guiding factor. No doubt, crimes are acts which have harmful effect on the public and consist in wrongdoing that seriously endangers and threatens the well-being of the society and it is not safe to leave the crime-doer only because he and the victim have settled the dispute amicably or that the victim has been paid compensation, yet certain crimes have been made compoundable in law, with or without the permission of the court. In respect of serious offences like murder, rape, dacoity, etc., or other offences of mental depravity under IPC or offences of moral turpitude



under special statutes, like the Prevention of Corruption Act or the offences committed by public servants while working in that capacity, the settlement between the offender and the victim can have no legal sanction at all. However, certain offences which overwhelmingly and predominantly bear civil flavour having arisen out of civil, mercantile, commercial, financial, partnership or such like transactions or the offences arising out of matrimony, particularly relating to dowry, etc. or the family dispute, **where the wrong is basically to the victim and the offender and the victim have settled all disputes between them amicably, irrespective of the fact that such offences have not been made compoundable, the High Court may within the framework of its inherent power, quash the criminal proceeding or criminal complaint or FIR if it is satisfied that on the face of such settlement, there is hardly any likelihood of the offender being convicted and by not quashing the criminal proceedings, justice shall be casualty and ends of justice shall be defeated.** The above list is illustrative and not exhaustive. Each case will depend on its own facts and no hard-and-fast category can be prescribed.”

[Emphasis supplied.]

Further, in *Narinder Singh and Ors. v. State of Punjab and Anr.* [(2014) 6 SCC 466], the Supreme Court has also laid down guidelines for High Courts while accepting settlement deeds between parties and quashing the proceedings. The relevant observations in the said decision read as under:

“29. In view of the aforesaid discussion, we sum up and lay down the following principles by which the High Court would be guided in giving adequate treatment to the settlement between the parties and exercising its power under Section 482 of the Code while accepting the settlement and quashing the proceedings or refusing to accept the settlement with direction to continue with the criminal proceedings:

29.1. Power conferred under Section 482 of the Code is to be distinguished from the power which lies in the Court to compound the offences under Section 320 of the Code. No doubt, under Section 482 of the Code, the High Court has inherent power to quash the criminal proceedings even in those cases which are not compoundable, where the parties have settled the matter between themselves. However, this power is to be exercised sparingly and with caution.

29.2. When the parties have reached the settlement and on that basis petition for quashing the criminal proceedings is filed, the guiding factor in such cases would be to secure:

(i) ends of justice, or

(ii) to prevent abuse of the process of any court.



While exercising the power the High Court is to form an opinion on either of the aforesaid two objectives.

29.3. Such a power is not to be exercised in those prosecutions which involve heinous and serious offences of mental depravity or offences like murder, rape, dacoity, etc. Such offences are not private in nature and have a serious impact on society. Similarly, for the offences alleged to have been committed under special statute like the Prevention of Corruption Act or the offences committed by public servants while working in that capacity are not to be quashed merely on the basis of compromise between the victim and the offender.

29.4. On the other hand, those criminal cases having overwhelmingly and predominantly civil character, particularly those arising out of commercial transactions or arising out of matrimonial relationship or family disputes should be quashed when the parties have resolved their entire disputes among themselves.

29.5. While exercising its powers, the High Court is to examine as to whether the possibility of conviction is remote and bleak and continuation of criminal cases would put the accused to great oppression and prejudice and extreme injustice would be caused to him by not quashing the criminal cases.”

[Emphasis supplied.]

13. In the present case, the proceedings between the parties arise out of a matrimonial relationship, which has already culminated in a settlement. As the parties have since reconciled, the continuance of the criminal proceedings would only impede their married life. Respondent No. 2 has stated that the allegations under Section 354A of the IPC emanated out of a misunderstanding, in the wake of the matrimonial disputes. Applying the tests laid down by the Supreme Court, it may be observed that respondent No. 2 has also categorically affirmed the voluntary nature of the settlement before the Court. In these circumstances, the criminal proceedings are unlikely to result in conviction, and its continuation would be an empty formality, adding to the burden of the justice system and consuming public resources unnecessarily.

14. Having regard to the above discussion, the petition is allowed, and



FIR No. 791/2023 dated 05.12.2023, registered at Police Station Palam Village, District South West, New Delhi, under Sections 498A/506/34 of the IPC, alongwith all consequential proceedings arising therefrom, is hereby quashed.

15. The parties will remain bound by the terms of the settlement.

16. The petition, alongwith pending application, accordingly stands disposed of.

PRATEEK JALAN, J

FEBRUARY 9, 2026

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