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

+ **CRL.M.C. 7431/2025**

PANCHAM KARWAL AND OTHERS

.....Petitioner

Through: Ms. Meghna Singh, Mr. Argha
Roy, Mr. Anurag Singh, Advs.

versus

GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI AND ANR

.....Respondent

Through: Mr. Hitesh Vali, APP for State
with IO
Mr. Ashish Passi for R-2 with R-2
through VC.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE PRATEEK JALAN

ORDER

% **29.04.2026**

CRL.M.A. 13378/2026 (for early hearing)

1. The petitioners have filed the present application seeking early hearing of the captioned petition, which is scheduled to be listed on 02.07.2026.
2. For the reasons stated therein and with the consent of learned counsel for the respondents, the application is allowed and the petition is taken on Board.
3. The application is accordingly disposed of.

CRL.M.C. 7431/2025

4. 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. 1051/2022, dated 28.10.2022, registered at Police



Station Subhash Place, District North West, Delhi, under Sections 498A/406/34 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 [“IPC”], and all consequential proceedings emanating therefrom, on the ground of settlement.

5. Issue notice. Mr. Hitesh Vali, learned Additional Public Prosecutor, accepts notice on behalf of the State. Mr. Ashish Passi, learned counsel, appears through video conferencing and accepts notice on behalf of respondent No. 2.

6. The petitioners are present in Court, and are identified by their learned counsel, as well as by the Investigating Officer [“IO”]. Respondent No. 2 is present through video conferencing and is identified by her learned counsel and the IO.

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

8. The impugned FIR is registered at the instance of respondent No. 2, who was the wife of the petitioner No. 1. Petitioner Nos. 2 to 5 are family members of the petitioner No. 1.

9. The petitioner No. 1 and respondent No. 2 were married on 27.06.2020, as per Hindu rites and ceremonies. Due to matrimonial discord and temperamental differences between the parties, they have been living separately since 06.04.2022. One child was born from the wedlock in 2021, whose custody remains with respondent No. 2.

10. Respondent No. 2 lodged a formal complaint before the Crime Against Women Cell, against the petitioners, alleging physical and mental cruelty inflicted upon her over demands of dowry, which culminated in registration of the present FIR.



11. Upon completion of the investigation, a chargesheet was filed in 2025, and the matter is presently pending before the Court of Judicial Magistrate First Class, District North West, Rohini Courts, at the stage of “*Misc.cases/purpose*”.

12. The parties have settled all their disputes before the Family Court, District North West, Rohini Courts, Delhi, by way of a settlement dated 26.09.2024 without any monetary consideration. The parties agreed to withdraw/quash all pending litigation between them.

13. Pursuant to the settlement, the marriage has been dissolved by a decree of divorce by mutual consent, *vide* order dated 21.07.2025, passed by the Family Court.

14. Learned counsel for the parties confirm that the settlement has been entered into voluntarily and without any coercion or undue pressure.

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

16. Although the offence under Section 498A of IPC is non-compoundable, the Supreme Court has clearly held that, in certain circumstances, the High Courts, in exercise of their powers under Section 528 of BNSS (corresponding to Section 482 of CrPC), 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.

17. The Supreme Court, in *Gian Singh v. State of Punjab & Anr.*¹ has 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.”²

Further, in *Narinder Singh & Ors. v. State of Punjab & Anr.*³, 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:

¹ (2012) 10 SCC 303.

² Emphasis supplied.

³ (2014) 6 SCC 466.



“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.”⁴

18. In the present case, the proceedings between the parties arise out of a matrimonial relationship, which has already culminated in a decree of divorce. Applying the tests laid down by the Supreme Court, it may be observed that the 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 their continuation would be an empty formality, adding to the burden of the justice system and consuming public resources unnecessarily.

19. Having regard to the above discussion, the petition is allowed, and FIR No. 1051/2022, dated 28.10.2022, registered at Police Station Subhash Place, under Sections 498A/406/34 of the IPC, alongwith all consequential proceedings arising therefrom, is hereby quashed.

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

21. The petition accordingly stands disposed of.

22. It is, however, made clear that the settlement and the present order will not, in any way, affect the rights of the minor child, whose custody remains with respondent No. 2.

PRATEEK JALAN, J

APRIL 29, 2026

‘sv/JM’/

⁴ Emphasis supplied.