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

+ CRL.M.C. 740/2026, CRL.M.A. 2941-2942/2026

GURCHARAN SINGH & ORS.

.....Petitioners

Through: Mr. R.S. Juneja, Mr. J.S. Juneja,
Advocates with petitioners.

versus

THE STATE OF DELHI & ANR.

.....Respondents

Through: Mr. Hitesh Vali, APP for State
with SI Sumeet Ponia, P.S. Vivek
Vihar.

Mr. Ashish K. Singh with Mr.
A.K. Sharma, Ms. Shalu and Mr.
M.K. Goswami, Advocates for R2
with R2 in person.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE PRATEEK JALAN

ORDER

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29.01.2026

1. Issue notice. Mr. Hitesh Vali, learned Additional Public Prosecutor, accepts notice on behalf of the State. Mr. Ashish K. Singh, 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. 71/2023 dated 16.02.2023, lodged at Police Station Vivek Vihar, District Shahdara, New Delhi, under Sections 376/509/506/323/354/34 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 [“IPC”], on the



ground of settlement.

3. Petitioner No. 1 and respondent No. 2 were married on 12.09.2021, but have been living separately since 22.02.2022. The impugned FIR was registered at the instance of respondent No. 2, against four accused persons, being her husband, parents-in-law, and brother-in-law [petitioners herein]. Upon completion of the investigation, a chargesheet was filed. Although petitioner No. 3 [father-in-law] was chargesheeted under Section 376 of the IPC, he was subsequently discharged from the offence punishable under Section 376 *vide* order on charge dated 09.01.2024, passed by the Sessions Court. That order was challenged by respondent No.2 in CRL.REV.P. 630/2024. However, the same was withdrawn by order dated 23.09.2025, on the ground of settlement. Charges were framed against the petitioners on 03.12.2024.

4. As things stand, therefore, the proceedings do not involve charges under Section 376 of the IPC.

5. During the pendency of the proceedings, the parties entered into a settlement, as recorded in a Memorandum of Understanding dated 18.09.2025. In light of the aforesaid, the parties seek quashing of the impugned FIR.

6. The petitioners are present in Court, and are identified by learned counsel and the Investigating Officer ["IO"]. Respondent No. 2 is also present in person, and is identified by her learned counsel as well as by the IO.

7. Respondent No. 2 is present in Court and is represented by counsel. She submits that the allegations under Section 354 of the IPC arose out of misunderstandings in the course of the matrimonial disputes between her



and her husband.

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

9. Pursuant to the settlement, the marriage between Petitioner No. 1 and respondent No. 2 was dissolved by a decree of divorce by mutual consent, passed by the Family Court on 24.11.2025.

10. The settlement also provides that the petitioners shall return the articles/belongings of respondent No. 2, including her jewellery, clothes, furniture, and appliances. I am informed that all the articles were returned to respondent No. 2, except a gold set, which has been handed over to her in Court.

11. Although the offence under Section 354 of the IPC is 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. In *Gian Singh v. State of Punjab and Anr.* [(2012) 10 SCC 303], the Supreme Court 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 decree of divorce. Respondent No. 2 has stated that the allegations under Section 354 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 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 its continuation would be an empty formality, adding to



the burden of the justice system and consuming public resources unnecessarily.

14. As noted above, the articles mentioned in the Memorandum of Understanding have been returned/given to respondent No. 2. There is, therefore, no impediment to the grant of the relief sought.

15. Having regard to the above discussion, the petition is allowed, and FIR No. 71/2023 dated 16.02.2023, lodged at Police Station Vivek Vihar, District Shahdara, New Delhi, under Sections 376/509/506/323/354/34 of the IPC, alongwith all consequential proceedings arising therefrom, is hereby quashed.

16. The petition, alongwith pending applications, stands disposed of.

PRATEEK JALAN, J

JANUARY 29, 2026

'Bhupi/KA'/'