
Kushal Khurana and Others Vs State and Others

Criminal M.C. 2965 of 2015

Court: Delhi High Court

Date of Decision: July 28, 2015

Acts Referred:

Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 - Section 13B(2)#Penal Code, 1860 (IPC) - Section 307, 320, 34, 406, 482

Citation: (2015) 7 AD 452

Hon'ble Judges: Suresh Kait, J

Bench: Single Bench

Advocate: C.L. Dhawan and Party-in-Person, for the Appellant; Neeraj Kumar Singh, APP and Anita, Investigating Officer SI, Advocates for the Respondent

Final Decision: Allowed

Judgement

Suresh Kait, J

By way of this petition filed under Section 482 of the Code petitioners Seek quashing of FIR No. 496/2014 registered at

Police Station Paschim Vihar, Delhi, for the offences punishable under Sections 406/498A/34 IPC and the consequential proceedings emanating

therefrom against the petitioners. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the petitioners submits that the aforesaid case was registered on the

complaint of respondent No. 2, namely, Ms. Heena Malhotra @ Kavya, consequent upon certain matrimonial and domestic disputes having arisen

between the parties pursuant to her marriage dated 24.04.2012 with the petitioner No. 1, Kushal Khurana. The case is at the Initial stage of

investigation. Meanwhile, the respondent No. 2 and the petitioners have amicably settled their disputes vide compromise dated 12.11.2014 arrived

at before the Mediation Centre, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi. Consequent thereto, marriage between the petitioner No. 1 and the respondent No. 2

has been dissolved vide decree of mutual divorce dated 28.05.2015 under Section 13B(2) of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 and thus, respondent

No. 2 does not wish to pursue her case against the petitioners.

2. Respondent No. 2 is personally present in the Court, who has been duly identified by the Investigating Officer SI Anita of Police Station

Paschim Vihar. The respondent No. 2 submits that she has amicably settled all the disputes with the petitioners as per settlement dated 12.11.2014

and marriage between her and the petitioner No. 1 has been dissolved vide decree of divorce dated 28.05.2015. She further submits that she has

received the agreed amount as per the aforesaid settlement except the last installment, which is handed over to her today in the Court itself.

Accordingly, the respondent No. 2 does not wish to pursue her case further and has prayed to allow the present petition.

3. Learned Additional Public Prosecutor for the State appearing on behalf of the State submits that present matter is a matrimonial one, the case is

at the initial stage of investigation and since the respondent No. 2/complainant does not wish to pursue the case against the petitioners, no purpose

would be served if the petitioners are directed to face trial. Therefore, the State has no objection, if this Court allows the present petition.

4. Under the circumstances and looking to the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Gian Singh Vs. State of Punjab and Another, (2012) 9

JT 457 : (2012) 9 JT 426 : (2012) 9 SCALE 257 : (2012) 10 SCC 303 , wherein the Apex Court has referred to a number of matters for the

proposition that even a non-compoundable offence can also be quashed on the ground of a settlement agreement between the offender and the

victim, if the circumstances so warrant; by observing as under:

58.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.

5. While recognizing the need of amicable resolution of disputes in cases like the instant one, the aforesaid dictum has been affirmed by the Apex

Court in a recent judgment in Narinder Singh and Others Vs. State of Punjab and Another, (2014) AIRSCW 2065 : (2014) CriLJ 2436 : (2014)

4 JT 573 : (2014) 4 SCALE 195 : (2014) 6 SCC 466 . The pertinent observations of the Apex Court are 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.

29.6. Offences under Section 307 IPC would fall in the category of heinous and serious offences and therefore are to be generally treated as crime

against the society and not against the individual alone. However, the High Court would not rest its decision merely because there is a mention of

Section 307 IPC in the FIR or the charge is framed under this provision. It would be open to the High Court to examine as to whether

incorporation of Section 307 IPC is there for the sake of it or the prosecution has collected sufficient evidence, which if proved, would lead to

proving the charge under Section 307 IPC For this purpose, it would be open to the High Court to go by the nature of injury sustained, whether

such injury is inflicted on the vital/delegate parts of the body, nature of weapons used, etc. Medical report in respect of injuries suffered by the

victim can generally be the guiding factor. On the basis of this prima facie analysis, the High Court can examine as to whether there is a strong

possibility of conviction or the chances of conviction are remote and bleak. In the former case it can refuse to accept the settlement and quash the

criminal proceedings whereas in the latter case it would be permissible for the High Court to accept the plea compounding the offence based on

complete settlement between the parties. At this stage, the Court can also be swayed by the fact that the settlement between the parties is going to

result in harmony between them which may improve their future relationship.

29.7. While deciding whether to exercise its power under Section 482 of the Code or not, timings of settlement play a crucial role. Those cases

where the settlement is arrived at immediately after the alleged commission of offence and the matter is still under investigation, the High Court may

be liberal in accepting the settlement to quash the criminal proceedings/investigation. It is because of the reason that at this stage the investigation is

still on and even the charge-sheet has not been filed. Likewise, those cases where the charge is framed but the evidence is yet to start or the

evidence is still at infancy stage, the High Court can show benevolence in exercising its powers favorably, but after prima facie assessment of the

circumstances/material mentioned above. On the other hand, where the prosecution evidence is almost complete or after the conclusion of the

evidence the matter is at the stage of argument, normally the High Court should refrain from exercising its power under Section 482 of the Code,

as in such cases the trial court would be in a position to decide the case finally on merits and to come to a conclusion as to whether the offence

under Section 307 IPC is committed or not Similarly, in those cases where the conviction is already recorded by the trial court and the matter is at

the appellate stage before the High Court, mere compromise between the parties would not be a ground to accept the same resulting in acquittal of

the offender who has already been convicted by the trial court. Here charge is proved under Section 307 IPC and conviction is already recorded

of a heinous crime and, therefore, there is no question of sparing a convict found guilty of such a crime.

6. In the case of Jitendra Raghuvanshi and Others Vs. Babita Raghuvanshi and Another, (2013) 4 AD 59 : (2013) 116 CLT 572 : (2013) 2

Crimes 90 : (2013) 2 JCC 1365 : (2013) 4 JT 98 : (2013) 2 RCR(Criminal) 427 : (2013) 3 SCALE 537 : (2013) 4 SCC 58 : (2013) AIRSCW

2349 : (2013) 2 Supreme 417 , wherein the Supreme Court in respect of the matrimonial disputes has specifically held as follows:-

15. In our view, it is the duty of the courts to encourage genuine settlements of matrimonial disputes, particularly, when the same are on

considerable increase. Even if the offences are non-compoundable. If they relate to matrimonial disputes and the Court is satisfied that the parties

have settled the same amicably and without - any pressure, we hold that for the purpose of securing ends of justice, Section 320 of the Code

would not be a bar to the exercise of power of quashing of FIR, complaint or the subsequent criminal proceedings.

16. There has been an outburst of matrimonial disputes in recent times. The institution of marriage occupies an important place and it has an

important role to play in the society. Therefore, every effort should be made in the interest of the individuals in order to enable them to settle down

in life and live peacefully. If the parties ponder over their defaults and terminate their disputes amicably by mutual agreement instead of fighting it

out in a court of law, in order to do complete justice in the matrimonial matters, the courts should be less hesitant in exercising their extraordinary

jurisdiction. It is trite to state that the power under Section 482 should be exercised sparingly and with circumspection only when the Court is

convinced; on the basis of material on record, that allowing the proceedings to continue would be an abuse of process of court or that the ends of

justice require that the proceedings ought to be quashed....

7. Both the parties who are present in the Court today, approbate the aforesaid settlement dated 12.11.2014, recorded before the Mediation

Centre, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi, and undertake to remain bound by the same.

8. Keeping in view the legal position as discussed above, the settlement arrived at between the parties, statements of the respondents No. 1 and 2

and moreover the fact that marriage has already been dissolved between the petitioner No. 1 and the respondent No. 2, no purpose would be

served by directing the petitioners to face the trial. Accordingly, I am of the considered opinion that this matter deserves to be given a quietus as

continuance of proceedings arising out of the FIR in question would be an exercise in futility.

9. Consequently, FIR No. 496/2014 registered at Police Station Paschim Vihar, Delhi, for the offences punishable under Sections 406/498A/34

IPC and all proceedings emanating therefrom are hereby quashed qua the petitioners.

10. In view of the above, the present petition is allowed with no order as to costs. A copy of this order be given dasti to the learned counsel for the

parties.