

Manish Gupta Vs. State and Anr

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Court : Delhi

Decided On : Nov-24-2014

Judge : Sudershan Kumar Misra

Appellant : Manish Gupta

Respondent : State and Anr

Judgement :

\$~53 * IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI + CRL.M.C. 5339/2014
MANISH GUPTA Through Petitioner Mr. Kamal Katyan, Advocate with
petitioner. versus STATE & ANR Through Respondents Mr. Amit Ahlawat,
Additional Public Prosecutor. ASI Saroj Bala. Mr. S. D. Dixit, Advocate with
respondent No.2. CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUDERSHAN KUMAR
MISRA % SUDERSHAN KUMAR MISRA, J.(Oral) Crl.M.A. No.18188/2014
Exemption, as prayed for, is allowed, subject to all just exceptions. This application
is disposed off. Crl.M.C. No.5339/2014 1. This petition under Section 482 Cr.P.C.
seeks quashing of FIR No.335/2013 registered under Sections 498-A, 406 IPC on
26.07.2013 at police station Maurya Enclave, on the ground that the matter has
been settled between the parties.

2. Issue notice. Mr. Amit Ahlawat, Additional Public Prosecutor for the State, and
Mr. S.D. Dixit, Advocate for Respondent No.2/complainant, enter appearance and
accept notice. The second respondent, Ms. Ruchika Gupta, who is present in
person, is also identified by the Investigating Officer ASI Saroj Bala.

3. It is stated that the aforesaid FIR came to be lodged as a result of certain domestic and matrimonial differences that had arisen between the parties pursuant to the marriage of the complainant with the petitioner Manish Gupta on 26.01.2004. At the same time, a petition under Section 9 of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 was also filed by the petitioner.

4. Ultimately, in a bail application bearing No.1986/2013, that had been moved by the petitioner, the matter was referred to mediation at Delhi High Court Mediation and Conciliation Centre, New Delhi, where the parties arrived at settlement on 17.01.2014. A copy of the Settlement Agreement is annexed to this petition.

5. In terms of the aforesaid settlement dated 17.01.2014, the petitioner had agreed to pay the complainant a total amount of Rs.26 lakhs towards all her claims and dues, including maintenance etc. for their minor child Kush Gupta, whose custody is to remain with the second respondent. Out of the said amount, a sum of Rs.18 lakhs already stands paid and the balance amount of Rs.8 lakhs has been handed over to the complainant by way of a Demand Draft bearing No.032979, dated 24.09.2014, drawn on YES Bank Ltd. in Court today.

6. The marriage between the complainant and the petitioner is stated to have been duly dissolved by the Matrimonial Court by a decree of divorce by mutual consent under Section 13-B (2) of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 on 15.09.2014 in HMA No.1191/2014. A copy of the decree-sheet has been annexed to this petition.

7. The complainant also approbates the aforesaid settlement and states that, with the receipt of the aforesaid amount of Rs.8 lakhs in Court today, nothing further is due to her from the petitioner, and further, she is no longer interested in pursuing the matter and has no objection to the FIR in question, and all proceedings emanating therefrom, being quashed.

8. Counsel for the State submits that looking to the overall circumstances, and since the matter has arisen primarily out of a matrimonial and domestic dispute between the parties, which has now been settled on terms; and the parties have also obtained divorce by mutual consent; no useful purpose will be served in continuing with these proceedings where the complainant is no longer interested in

supporting the prosecution.

9. Consequently, and looking to the decision of the Supreme Court in *Gian Singh v. State of Punjab*, (2012) 10 SCC303 which has referred to a number of matters for the proposition that even a non-compoundable offence can also be quashed on the basis of a settlement 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.

And also in *Narinder Singh and Ors. v. State of Punjab and Anr.* 2014(2) Crimes 67 (SC) where the Supreme Court held as follows:

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 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 pre-dominantly 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 Indian Penal Code would fall in the category of heinous and serious offences and therefore is 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 Indian Penal Code 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 Indian Penal Code 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 Indian Penal Code. 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 later 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 favourably, 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 a conclusion as to whether the offence under Section 307 Indian Penal Code 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 Indian Penal Code 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.

And specifically in respect of matrimonial disputes in *Jitendra Raghuvanshi & Ors. v. Babita Raghuvanshi & Anr.* (2013) 4 SCC58 where the Supreme Court 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.

I am of the considered opinion that this matter deserves to be given a quietus since the parties have amicably settled their disputes between themselves on terms, and have also obtained divorce by mutual consent; and where the complainant is no longer interested in supporting the prosecution, thereby diminishing the chances of its success. Under the circumstances, the petition is allowed, and FIR No.335/2013 registered under Sections 498-A, 406 IPC on 26.07.2013 at police station Maurya Enclave, and all proceedings emanating therefrom, are hereby quashed. The petition is disposed off. SUDERSHAN KUMAR MISRA\ Judge NOVEMBER24 2014 dr