
(2016) 05 GUJ CK 0026

In the Gujarat High Court

Case No : Criminal Misc. Application (For Quashing & Set Aside Fir/order) No. 7324 of 2016

Kartikbhai Dineshbhai Bhatt

APPELLANT

Vs

State of Gujarat and another

RESPONDENT

Date of Decision : 05-05-2016

Acts Referred:

Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 (CrPC) — Section 482
Penal Code, 1860 (IPC) — Section 406, 420

Citation : (2016) 162 AIC 715

Hon'ble Judges : Sonia Gokani, J.

Bench : Single Bench

Advocate : K. S. Chandrani, Advocate, for the Appellant; Ms. Monali Bhatt, APP, for the Respondent

Final Decision : Allowed

Judgement

Sonia Gokani, J. (Oral) - Rule returnable forthwith. Learned APP Ms. Monali Bhatt waives service of notice of rule for and on behalf of the respondent No.1-State.

2. This Criminal Misc. Application is preferred under Section 482 of Cr.P.C for quashment of complaint being FIR No. I-CR No.81 of 2016 registered with Gandhigram Police Station for the offences punishable under Sections 406 and 420 of IPC.

3. Affidavit of the respondent No.2-original complainant is brought on record stating that the parties have settled their disputes amicably.

4. Mr. K.S. Chandrani learned advocate appearing for the applicant submits that the parties have amicably settled their disputes with the intervention of the friends and other senior members of the society. It is further urged that the request of quashment of the complaint if it is accepted, the complainant has no grievance. He has also submitted that the dispute is essentially between private parties.

5. Both the sides have been heard. This Court has taken a note of contents of the affidavit and the same have been verified by learned APP Ms. Monali Bhatt from the complainant. The nature of dispute being private as the parties have chosen to end their disputes, the settlement is permitted. No useful purpose is likely to be served in continuing with the proceedings in light of the compromise. The court may not continue the luxury of litigation, bearing in mind the decision of *Gian Singh v. State of Punjab and Another* reported in 2012 (10)SCC 303. Request of the applicant to quash the FIR needs to be acceded to. It is essential to reproduce the relevant paragraph for this purpose:-

"48. The question is with regard to the inherent power of the High Court in quashing the criminal proceedings against an offender who has settled his dispute with the victim of the crime but the crime in which he is allegedly involved is not compoundable under Section 320 of the Code.

49. Section 482 of the Code, as its very language suggests, saves the inherent power of the High Court which it has by virtue of it being a superior court to prevent abuse of the process of any court or otherwise to secure the ends of justice. It begins with the words, "nothing in this Code" which means that the provision is an overriding provision. These words leave no manner of doubt that none of the provisions of the Code limits or restricts the inherent power. The guideline for exercise of such power is provided in Section 482 itself i.e., to prevent abuse of the process of any court or otherwise to secure the ends of justice. As has been repeatedly stated that Section 482 confers no new powers on High Court; it merely safeguards existing inherent powers possessed by High Court necessary to prevent abuse of the process of any Court or to secure the ends of justice. It is equally well settled that the power is not to be resorted to if there is specific provision in the Code for the redress of the grievance of an aggrieved party. It should be exercised very sparingly and it should not be exercised as against the express bar of law engrafted in any other provision of the Code.

50. In different situations, the inherent power may be exercised in different ways to achieve its ultimate objective. Formation of opinion by the High Court before it exercises inherent power under Section 482 on either of the twin objectives, (i) to prevent abuse of the process of any court or (ii) to secure the ends of justice, is a *sine qua non*.

51. In the very nature of its constitution, it is the judicial obligation of the High Court to undo a wrong in course of administration of justice or to prevent continuation of unnecessary judicial process. This is founded on the legal maxim *quando lex aliquid alicui concedit, conceditur id sine qua res ipsa esse non potest*. The full import of which is whenever anything is authorised, and especially if, as a matter of duty, required to be done by law, it is found impossible to do that thing unless something else not authorised in express terms be also done, then that something else will be supplied by necessary intendment. *Ex debito justitiae* is inbuilt in such exercise; the whole

idea is to do real, complete and substantial justice for which it exists. The power possessed by the High Court under Section 482 of the Code is of wide amplitude but requires exercise with great caution and circumspection.

52. It needs no emphasis that exercise of inherent power by the High Court would entirely depend on the facts and circumstances of each case. It is neither permissible nor proper for the court to provide a straitjacket formula regulating the exercise of inherent powers under Section 482. No precise and inflexible guidelines can also be provided.

53. Quashing of offence or criminal proceedings on the ground of settlement between an offender and victim is not the same thing as compounding of offence. They are different and not interchangeable. Strictly speaking, the power of compounding of offences given to a court under Section 320 is materially different from the quashing of criminal proceedings by the High Court in exercise of its inherent jurisdiction. In compounding of offences, power of a criminal court is circumscribed by the provisions contained in Section 320 and the court is guided solely and squarely thereby while, on the other hand, the formation of opinion by the High Court for quashing a criminal offence or criminal proceeding or criminal complaint is guided by the material on record as to whether the ends of justice would justify such exercise of power although the ultimate consequence may be acquittal or dismissal of indictment.

54. Where High Court quashes a criminal proceeding having regard to the fact that dispute between the offender and victim has been settled although 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 wrong doing that seriously endangers and threatens well-being of 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 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 Prevention of Corruption Act or the offences committed by public servants while working in that capacity, the settlement between offender and 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 victim and the offender and 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 F.I.R if it is satisfied that on the face of such settlement, there is hardly any likelihood of 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.

57. The position that emerges from the above discussion can be summarised thus: the power of the High Court in quashing a criminal proceeding or FIR or complaint in exercise of its inherent jurisdiction is distinct and different from the power given to a criminal court for compounding the offences under Section 320 of the Code. Inherent power is of wide plenitude with no statutory limitation but it has to be exercised in accord with the guideline engrafted in such power viz; (i) to secure the ends of justice or (ii) to prevent abuse of the process of any Court. In what cases power to quash the criminal proceeding or complaint or F.I.R may be exercised where the offender and victim have settled their dispute would depend on the facts and circumstances of each case and no category can be prescribed. However, before exercise of such power, the High Court must have due regard to the nature and gravity of the crime. Heinous and serious offences of mental depravity or offences like murder, rape, dacoity, etc. cannot be fittingly quashed even though the victim or victims family and the offender have settled the dispute. Such offences are not private in nature and have serious impact on society. Similarly, any compromise between the victim and offender in relation to the offences under special statutes like Prevention of Corruption Act or the offences committed by public servants while working in that capacity etc; cannot provide for any basis for quashing criminal proceedings involving such offences. But the criminal cases having overwhelmingly and predominatingly civil flavour stand on different footing for the purposes of quashing, particularly the offences arising from commercial, financial, mercantile, civil, partnership or such like transactions or the offences arising out of matrimony relating to dowry, etc. or the family disputes where the wrong is basically private or personal in nature and the parties have resolved their entire dispute. In this category of cases, High Court may quash criminal proceedings if in its view, because of the compromise between the offender and victim, the possibility of conviction is remote and bleak and continuation of criminal case would put accused to great oppression and prejudice and extreme injustice would be caused to him by not quashing the criminal case despite full and complete settlement and compromise with the victim. In other words, the High Court must consider whether it would be unfair or contrary to the interest of justice to continue with the criminal proceeding or continuation of the criminal proceeding would tantamount to abuse of process of law despite settlement and compromise between the victim and wrongdoer and whether to secure the ends of justice, it is appropriate that criminal case is put to an end and if the answer to the above question(s) is in affirmative, the High Court shall be well within its jurisdiction to quash the criminal proceeding."

6. Resultantly, this petition is allowed. The FIR being CR No. I- 81 of 2016 registered with Gandhigram Police Station stands quashed.

7. All the consequential proceedings pursuant thereto shall stand terminated.
8. Registry shall accept the vakalatpatra of Mr.Mahesh Poojara, learned advocate appears for the original complainant-respondent No.2.
9. Rule is made absolute. Direct service is permitted.