

(2015) 12 DEL CK 0228
In the Delhi High Court
Case No : Criminal M.C. 4987/2015

Neeraj Sood and Others

APPELLANT

Vs

State of Delhi and Others

RESPONDENT

Date of Decision : 08-12-2015

Acts Referred:

Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 (CrPC) — Section 125, 320, 482
Penal Code, 1860 (IPC) — Section 307, 308, 323, 34, 342

Citation : (2015) 12 DEL CK 0228

Hon'ble Judges : Suresh Kait, J.

Bench : Single Bench

Advocate : Raj Kumar Chandiwal, Advocate, for the Appellant; Mukesh Kumar, APP and Pratap Singh, SI, for the Respondent

Final Decision : Allowed

Judgement

Suresh Kait, J.

CrI. M.A. 17923/2015 (for exemption)

Exemptions allowed, subject to all just exceptions.

Accordingly, the application is allowed.

CRL.M.C. 4987/2015

1. By way of the present petition filed under Section 482 Cr.P.C.; petitioners seek directions thereby quashing of FIR No. 204/2012 registered at PS-Uttam Nagar for the offences punishable under Sections 308 /342 /34 IPC against them.

2. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the petitioners submits that the aforesaid case was registered on the complaint of respondent No. 3 namely Om Prakash Kukreja due to quarrel took place between the parties in which respondent No. 3 along with respondent Nos. 2 and 4 received injuries. Thereafter both the parties approached Mediation Centre, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi whereby all the matters registered inter se between the parties have been

settled vide settlement dated 06.04.2015 and as per the settlement, respondent No. 2 received an amount of Rs. 2,00,000/- by way of demand draft being No. 500588 dated 28.10.2015 drawn on ICICI Bank, Defence Colony, which she has accepted without any protest. Thus, the respondents do not want to pursue the case further against the petitioners.

3. Respondent Nos. 2 to 4 are personally present in the Court. They have been duly identified by SI Pratap Singh, Investigating Officer of the case. The aforesaid respondents do not dispute whatever stated by the counsel for the petitioners and submit that they have resolved their disputes with the petitioners vide settlement 06.04.2015 and respondent No. 2 received an amount of Rs. 2,00,000/- as per the settlement. Thus, they do not want to pursue the case further against the petitioners and if the present petition is allowed, they have no objection.

4. Learned Additional Public Prosecutor appearing on behalf of the State submits that after investigation, police has filed the chargesheet, however, the charges are yet to be framed. He further submits that since the parties have settled their disputes in HMA petition being No. 860/2014, Maintenance Petition filed under Section 125 Cr.P.C., FIR No. 258/2010, registered at PS-Hari Nagar for the offences punishable under Sections 498A /406 /34 IPC and FIR No. 337/2012, registered at PS-Uttam Nagar for the offences punishable under Sections 452 /323 /380 /34 IPC, the State has no objection, if the quietus is given to the present petition.

5. Under the circumstances and looking to the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Gian Singh Vs. State of Punjab and Another, , 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."

6. 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, . 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 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 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."

7. Keeping in view the settlement arrived at between the parties, statement of respondent Nos. 2 to 4 and Id. APP for the State and the settled legal position, FIR No. 204/2012 registered at PS-Uttam Nagar for the offences punishable under Sections 308 /342 /34 IPC and all proceedings emanating therefrom are hereby quashed against the petitioners.

8. I hereby make it clear that both the parties shall remain bound by the settlement dated 06.04.2015.

9. Accordingly, the petition is allowed with no order as to costs.