

Vinod Pal & Anr vs The State (Govt. Of Nct Of Delhi) And Ors on 28 February, 2024

Author: Navin Chawla

Bench: Navin Chawla

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* IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI
+ CRL.M.C. 4656/2022
VINOD PAL & ANR.

..... Petitione

Through: Mr.Haneef Mohammad &
Mr.MM Khan, Advs. for P-1.
Mr.Neeraj Chouhan, Adv. for
P-2.

versus

THE STATE (GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI) AND ORS.

Through: Mr.Aman Usman, APP.
SI Pankaj Kumar, P
Nizamuddin.
Mr.Mubashshir
Siddiqui, Adv. for

CORAM:
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE NAVIN CHAWLA
ORDER

% 28.02.2024

1. This petition has been filed under Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (in short, 'Cr.P.C.') seeking quashing of FIR No. 04/2022 registered at Police Station: Hazrat Nizamuddin, South-East District, Delhi under Sections 307/34/120B of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (in short, 'IPC') and Sections 25/27/54/59 of the Arms Act, 1959, along with all other proceedings arising therefrom, on the basis of a settlement.

2. It is stated that the petitioners and the respondent nos.2 and 3 are cousin brothers/family members and the disputes arose out of some misconceptions and misunderstandings between the parties, This is a digitally signed order.

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3. The learned counsel for the petitioners submits that the parties have amicably settled their inter se disputes and have entered into a Settlement on 02.05.2022.

4. The respondent nos.2 and 3 are personally present in Court and have been duly identified by the Investigating Officer (IO). They state that they have no objection to the present FIR being quashed as it was a result of some misunderstanding between the parties and now the disputes have been settled with the petitioner. They reaffirm the settlement and state that they have settled all their disputes with the petitioners of their own free will and without any coercion.

5. I have perused the contents of the FIR and considered the submissions made.

6. In *Kapil Gupta v. State (NCT of Delhi)*, 2022 SCC OnLine SC 1030, the Supreme Court while considering a case of quashing an FIR registered under Section 376 of the IPC, has held as under:

"13. It can thus be seen that this Court has clearly held that though the Court should be slow in quashing the proceedings wherein heinous and serious offences are involved, the High Court is not foreclosed from examining as to whether there exists material for incorporation of such an offence or as to whether there is sufficient evidence which if proved would lead to proving the charge for the offence charged with. The Court has also to take into consideration as to whether the settlement between the parties is going to result into harmony between them which may improve their mutual relationship.

14. ...However, if such an application is made This is a digitally signed order.

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15. The facts and circumstances as stated hereinabove are peculiar in the present case. Respondent No. 2 is a young lady of 23 years. She feels that going through trial in one case, where she is a complainant and in the other case, wherein she is the accused would rob the prime of her youth. She feels that if she is made to face the trial rather than getting any relief, she would be faced with agony of undergoing the trial.

16. In both the cases, though the charge sheets have been filed, the charges are yet to be framed and as such, the trial has not yet commenced. It is further to be noted that since the respondent No. 2 herself is not supporting the prosecution case, even if the criminal trial is permitted to go ahead, it will end in nothing else than an acquittal. If the request of the parties is denied, it will be amounting to only adding one more criminal case to the already overburdened criminal courts.

17. In that view of the matter, we find that though in a heinous or serious crime like rape, the Court should not normally exercise the powers of quashing the proceedings, in the peculiar facts and circumstances of the present case and in order to give succour to Respondent No. 2 so that she is saved from further agony of facing two criminal trials, one as a victim and one as an accused, we find that this is a fit case wherein the extraordinary powers of this Court be exercised to quash the criminal proceedings."

7. In *Narinder Singh v. State of Punjab*, (2014) 6 SCC 466, the Supreme Court has explained the principles governing the powers of the High Court to quash or not to quash the proceedings on the basis of settlement in the case of a non-compoundable offence, as under:

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The authenticity of the order can be re-verified from Delhi High Court Order Portal by scanning the QR code shown above. The Order is downloaded from the DHC Server on 01/03/2024 at 22:45:00 "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.

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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/delicate 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 This is a digitally signed order.

The authenticity of the order can be re-verified from Delhi High Court Order Portal by scanning the QR code shown above. The Order is downloaded from the DHC Server on 01/03/2024 at 22:45:00 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."

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8. In *The State of Madhya Pradesh v. Laxmi Narayan*, (2019) 5 SCC 688, the Supreme Court has laid down the parameters under which the High Courts shall exercise the power conferred under Section 482 Cr.P.C. The Court held that, though the Courts must be slow in exercising their jurisdiction under Section 482 for quashing the proceedings arising out of offences punishable under Section 307/308 IPC, the High Courts are not deprived of exercising the powers under Section 482 of Cr.P.C. in certain special circumstances. It was held as under:

"15.4. Offences under Section 307 IPC and the Arms Act, etc. would fall in the category of heinous and serious offences and therefore are to be treated as crime against the society and not against the individual alone, and therefore, the criminal proceedings for the offence under Section 307 IPC and/or the Arms Act, etc. which have a serious impact on the society cannot be quashed in exercise of powers under Section 482 of the Code, on the ground that the parties have resolved their entire dispute amongst themselves. 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 framing 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/delicate parts of the body, nature of weapons used, etc. However, such an exercise by the High Court would be permissible only after the evidence is collected after investigation and the charge-sheet is This is a digitally signed order.

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Therefore, the ultimate conclusion in paras 29.6 and 29.7 of the decision of this Court in Narinder Singh v. State of Punjab, (2014) 6 SCC 466 should be read harmoniously and to be read as a whole and in the circumstances stated hereinabove;"

9. In Manoj Kumar & Ors. v. State & Anr., Neutral Citation No.2016:DHC:2419, a learned Single Judge of this Court has held as under:

"9. As discussed above, offence punishable under Section 308 IPC is not compoundable being of serious nature, however, if the Court feels that continuation of criminal proceedings will be an exercise in futility and justice in this case demands that the dispute between the parties is put to an end and peace is restored, it can order for quashing of the FIR or criminal proceedings as it is the duty of the Court to prevent continuation of unnecessary judicial process."

10. The above view was reiterated by this Court in Mahender Singh @ Sunny & Anr. v. The State & Ors., Neutral Citation No.2021:DHC:978, while quashing an FIR filed under Section 308 of the IPC.

11. Keeping in view the fact that the parties are family members and that the respondent nos.2 and 3 do not wish to pursue their complaint any further, as also the Settlement arrived at between the parties, I find that no useful purpose shall be served in continuing with the proceedings of the present FIR as the chances of its success will be This is a digitally signed order.

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12. Guided by the principles enunciated by the above-referred judgments and the judgments of the Supreme Court in Gian Singh v. State of Punjab, (2012) 10 SCC 303; Parbatbhai Aahir @ Parbatbhai Bhimsinbhai Karmur & Ors. v. State of Gujarat & Ors. (2017) 9 SCC 641; and, State of Haryana & Ors. v. Bhajan Lal & Ors. 1992 Supp (1) SCC 335, this Court deems it appropriate, in the interest of justice, to exercise its inherent powers under Section 482 of the Cr.P.C. to quash the FIR and all the proceedings emanating therefrom.

13. Accordingly, the petition is allowed. FIR No. 04/2022 registered at Police Station: Hazrat Nizamuddin, South-East District, Delhi under Sections 307/34/120B of the IPC and Sections 25/27/54/59 of the Arms Act and all consequential proceedings emanating therefrom against the petitioners are quashed, subject to the condition that the petitioners shall deposit costs of Rs.1,00,000/- with New Delhi Bar Association Members Welfare Fund (Regd.), Patiala House Courts, New Delhi, Account No.18580110013847 within a period of four weeks from today, and file proof of such deposit with the Registry of this Court and also supply a copy thereof to the IO, within the said period.

NAVIN CHAWLA, J FEBRUARY 28, 2024/rv/AS Click here to check corrigendum, if any This is a digitally signed order.

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