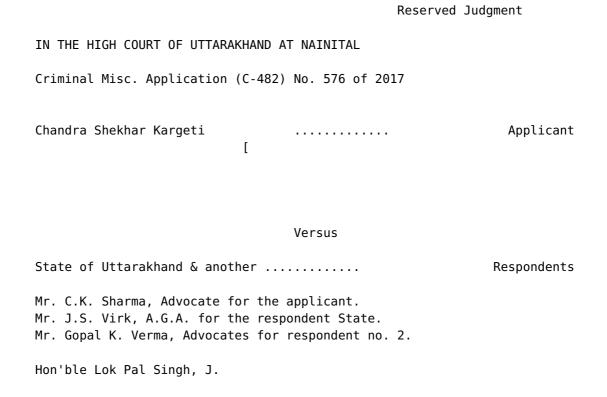
Chandra Shekhar Kargeti vs State Of Uttarakhand And Another on 8 August, 2018

Author: Lok Pal Singh

Bench: Lok Pal Singh



By means of present criminal misc. application, moved under Section 482 of Cr.P.C., the applicant has sought quashing of the charge sheet dated 09.11.2016, cognizance order dated 30.01.2017 and other consequential orders passed in Special Sessions Trial no. 04 of 2017, in State vs Chandra Shekhar, under Sections 3(1)(p) and 3(1)(q) of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

2) Brief facts of the case, in a nutshell, are that the complainant-second respondent lodged an FIR against the applicant, alleging therein that the complainant is a member of Scheduled Tribe community and is at present holding the posts of Secretary, Uttarakhand Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission and Deputy Director, Social Welfare Department. Sri Chandra Shekhar Kargeti, DM Law Associates, Mungali Garden, opposite Nirvahan Hotel, Haldwani, Nainital in connivance with some officers of the department is making false, baseless and incorrect allegations against the complainant, as he is an officer belonging to Scheduled Tribe community and are trying to implicate him in criminal cases, and posting the comments on social site 'Facebook' portraying him as a corrupt officer in order to torture him mentally and thereby creating hindrance in discharge of his official obligations.

- 3) The said FIR was registered as case crime no. 102 of 2016, under Sections 66, 67 and 74 of the Information Technology Act and Section 3(1)(x) and 3(2)
- (ii) of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.
- 4) The Investigating Officer after conducting thorough investigation, collected the documentary evidence and after completion of investigation submitted charge sheet dated 09.11.2016 against the applicant under Sections 3(1)(p) and Section 3(1)(q) of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. On submission of charge sheet, learned Special Judge (SC/ST Act), Dehradun, after perusal of the documents filed by the prosecution as well as the case diary took cognizance in respect of selfsame offences and issued summons against the applicant vide order dated 30.01.2017.
- 5) The applicant has filed the aforesaid criminal misc. application under Section 482 Cr.P.C. on the ground that the complainant-second respondent, who lodged the FIR against the applicant does not belong to Scheduled Tribe community, rather he belongs to caste Brahmin.

Thus, no offence is made out under the provisions of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act against the applicant.

- 6) A counter affidavit has been filed on behalf of complainant-second respondent denying the averments of the criminal misc. application. It is specifically stated in the counter affidavit that complainant-second respondent belongs to Scheduled Tribes community. The Tehsildar, Chakrata, District Dehradun has issued caste certificate to this effect to the complainant-second respondent, which is well within the knowledge of the applicant. A true and correct copy of the caste certificate is enclosed as Annexure CA-2 with the criminal misc. application. It is further contended that the criminal misc. application has been filed on false and frivolous grounds and the same is liable to be dismissed.
- 7) Applicant has filed his rejoinder affidavit to controvert the averments made by the complainant-second respondent in his counter affidavit.
- 8) Heard learned counsel for the parties and perused the entire material available on record.
- 9) Earlier a co-ordinate Bench of this Court vide order dated 28.04.2017, while granting interim protection to the applicant, has passed the following order:
 - "Mr. C.K.Sharma, Advocate, present for the applicant.
 - Mr. S.S. Adhikari, Brief Holder, present for the respondent no.1.
 - Mr. Gopal K. Verma, Advocate, present for the respondent no.2.

By means of present application under Section 482 Cr.P.C., the applicant seeks to quash Charge-sheet dated 09.11.2016, cognizance order dated 30.01.2017 and the other consequential orders passed in Special Sessions Trial No. 04 of 2017, in State vs. Chandra Shekhar, under Sections 3(1) (p) & 3 (1) (q) of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Act.

As prayed, four weeks' time is granted to the learned counsel for the respondent no.2 to file the counter affidavit.

It is provided as an interim measure that no coercive measures shall be taken against the applicant to enforce the attendance before the court below till the next date of listing.

Let a copy of this Order be supplied to the learned counsel for the applicant today itself on payment of usual charges."

10) Being aggrieved with the same, the complainant-second respondent approached the Hon'ble Supreme Court by way of filing Special Leave to Appeal (Crl.) no. 004610/2017, Geeta Ram Nautiyal vs State of Uttarakhand and another. Hon'ble Supreme Court upon hearing the counsel, dismissed the leave petition, vide order dated 10.07.2017. The order dated 10.07.2017 is reproduced hereunder:

"Heard learned senior counsel for the petitioner.

We are not inclined to interfere with the impugned order passed by the High Court.

The special leave petitioner is dismissed. However, we request the High Court to dispose of the matter expeditiously.

Pending applications, if any, stand disposed of."

- 11) A perusal of the criminal misc. application moved under Section 482 Cr.P.C. would reveal that the applicant has annexed some papers of case diary (Annexure 2 to the application) without disclosing the fact that from where he had obtained the papers of case diary which are confidential papers prepared by the Investigating Officer during investigation. It is surprising to note here that the applicant never appeared before the court below after submission of charge sheet and the trial court has also not passed orders under Section 207 and 208 of Cr.P.C. to supply the documents to the applicant. Since the court below has never supplied the papers of the case diary to the applicant as provided under Section 207 and 208 Cr.P.C. it is quite surprising how the applicant has annexed the papers of the case diary before this Court.
- 12) The extract of the case diary, which was himself enclosed by the applicant along with the present criminal misc. application, shows that in reply to a question posed by the Investigating Officer from the complainant- second respondent -whether Mr. Kargeti had the knowledge of the fact that you belongs to Scheduled Tribe community, the complainant replied that Mr. Kargeti had sought

information regarding seniority list, which also had a mention of the cast, under the Right to Information Act. Mr. Kargeti is well aware that I belong to Scheduled Tribe Community and that is why he used to level false, baseless allegations against me and posts the same on social media. I feel disappointed and dejected due to this and the said deed is causing hindrance in discharge of my official obligations.

13) A perusal of the criminal misc. application moved under Section 482 Cr.P.C. would further reveal that in paragraph no. 5 following averments were made by the applicant. Para 5 of the criminal misc. application is reproduced hereunder for convenience:

"That it is most important to point out here that Nautiyal's happened to be high class Brahmins of Garhwal Region and filing of a First Information Report by a Brahmin alleging himself a Schedule Tribe and seeking recourse of Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act is a classic example of abuse of process of the court for settling his personal grudges."

- 14) Mr. C.K. Sharma, learned counsel for the applicant would submit that the complainant-second respondent is a member of Brahmin caste and is not a member of Scheduled Tribe community, therefore, provisions of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act are not applicable to the present case. He would further submit that although there have been various allegations of commission of offences complained of against the applicant but no basic fact which constitutes such offence has been disclosed in the FIR.
- 15) Per contra, Mr. Gopal K. Verma, learned counsel appearing on behalf of complainant-second respondent would submit that police has made a perfunctory investigation and on the materials disclosed during the investigation a definite case has been made out against the applicant. He would further submit that the learned Special Judge has rightly took cognizance on the charge sheet, the content whereof has clearly made out the commission of the offences against the applicant. It is the contention of learned counsel for the complainant-second respondent that the averments made in paragraph no. 5 of the criminal misc. application are false and baseless. He further contended that the said averments of paragraph no. 5 though have been verified on the basis of record, but no record has been filed in support of the same and the purpose of making such a false allegation in paragraph no. 5 of the criminal misc. application is just to obtain a favourable order in favour of the applicant by playing fraud upon the Court.
- 16) It is also the argument of Mr. Sharma, learned counsel for the applicant that the learned Special Judge (SC/ST Act), Dehradun failed to appreciate the fact that no prima facie case is made out against the applicant in respect of the offences punishable under Sections 3(1)(p) and 3(1)(q) of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act and the cognizance has been taken without going through the material placed before him by the Investigation Officer along with the charge sheet.
- 17) Hon'ble Apex Court in the case of Sonu Gupta vs Deepak Gupta and others, (2015) 3 SCC 424 has held that at the stage of cognizance and summoning the Magistrate is required to apply his

judicial mind only with a view to take cognizance of offence. At this Stage Magistrate is not required to consider the defence version or materials or arguments nor is he required to evaluate the merits of the materials or evidence of the complainant. Paras 8 and 9 of said judgment are reproduced hereunder:

- "8. Having considered the details of allegations made in the complaint petition, the statement of the complainant on solemn affirmation as well as materials on which the appellant placed reliance which were called for by the learned Magistrate, the learned Magistrate, in our considered opinion, committed no error in summoning the accused persons. At the stage of cognizance and summoning the Magistrate is required to apply his judicial mind only with a view to take cognizance of the offence, or, in other words, to find out whether prima facie case has been made out for summoning the accused persons. At this stage, the learned Magistrate is not required to consider the defence version or materials or arguments nor he is required to evaluate the merits of the materials or evidence of the complainant, because the Magistrate must not undertake the exercise to find out at this stage whether the materials will lead to conviction or not.
- 9. It is also well settled that cognizance is taken of the offence and not the offender. Hence at the stage of framing of charge an individual accused may seek discharge if he or she can show that the materials are absolutely insufficient for framing of charge against that particular accused. But such exercise is required only at a later stage, as indicated above and not at the stage of taking cognizance and summoning the accused on the basis of prima facie case. Even at the stage of framing of charge, the sufficiency of materials for the purpose of conviction is not the requirement and a prayer for discharge can be allowed only if the court finds that the materials are wholly insufficient for the purpose of trial. It is also a settled proposition of law that even when there are materials raising strong suspicion against an accused, the court will be justified in rejecting a prayer for discharge and in granting an opportunity to the prosecution to bring on record the entire evidence in accordance with law so that case of both the sides may be considered appropriately on conclusion of trial.
- 18) From a close scrutiny of the averment made by the applicant in paragraph no. 5 of criminal misc.

application, it is abundantly clear that said averment has been made just to mislead and to commit fraud upon the Court and to obtain a favourable order in his favour, which amounts to perjury and fraud upon the Court. Besides this, the averments are apparently false purported to be based on record, but no record has been filed in this regard. Rather the record, i.e., the caste certificate of complainant-second respondent shows otherwise that he is a member of Jaunsari Scheduled Tribe Community of the State.

19) The contents of paragraph no. 5 of the criminal misc. application have been verified on record, but no record has been annexed in support of said contention. Contrary to it, the

complainant-second respondent, who is a member of Scheduled Tribe community, has filed certificate dated 10.06.1988, issued in his favour by the Tehsildar, Chakrata, District Dehradun, which shows that he is a member of Scheduled Tribe community. During the course of argument Mr. C.K. Sharma, learned counsel for the applicant has made a statement that by mistake a false statement has been made in paragraph no. 5 of the criminal misc. application and the mistake is not deliberate.

20) Applicant before this Court is a practicing Advocate. He has himself stated so in para 8 of the present application - that the applicant is an Advocate and a public spirited person, a resident of Haldwani. Applicant has verified the contents of paragraph no. 5 of the criminal misc. application on the basis of record. However, no document has been placed on record to show that on the basis of which record or document, the averments were made in paragraph no. 5 of the criminal misc. application.

However, the averment itself is false as the complainant is a member of Scheduled Tribe community and certificate to this effect has been issued to him by the competent authority. Thus it is a proven fact on record that contents of paragraph no. 5 of the application are false and misleading and were made to commit fraud upon the Court.

- 21) It is the settled law that fraud vitiates the solemn act. The applicant is not entitled for any relief from this Court on the ground of fraud played by him upon this Court. Hon'ble Apex Court in catena of judgments has held that the fraud vitiates all solemn acts.
- 22) Now-a-days many a litigants are not afraid in making false statements on oath to mislead the Court and even to commit perjury with the Court. If such acts of litigants committing fraud upon the Court and making false statements on oath to mislead the Court just to obtain a favourable order is permitted to continue unabated it will certainly ruin the sanctity of the courts. Thus, such a litigant should be tackled with strong hands.
- 23) The Hon'ble Apex Court in the case In Re:

Suo Motu Proceedings against R. Karuppan, Advocate, reported in (2001) 5 SCC 289, has held as under:

13. Courts are entrusted with the powers of dispensation and adjudication of justice of the rival claims of the parties besides determining the criminal liability of the offenders for offences committed against the society. The courts are further expected to do justice quickly and impartially not being biased by any extraneous considerations. Justice dispensation system would be-wrecked if statutory restrictions are not imposed upon the litigants, who attempt to mislead the court by filing and relying upon the false evidence particularly in cases, the adjudication of which is dependent upon the statement of facts. If the result of the proceedings are to be respected, these issues before the courts must be resolved to the extent possible in accordance with the truth: The purity of proceedings of the court cannot be permitted

to be sullied by a party on frivolous, vexatious or insufficient grounds or relying upon false evidence inspired by extraneous considerations or revengeful desire to harass or spite his opponent. Sanctity of the affidavits has to be preserved and protected discouraging the filing of irresponsible statements, without any regard to accuracy.

14. At common law courts took action against a person who was shown to have made a statement, material in the proceedings, which he knew to be False or did not believe to be true. The offence committed by him is known is perjury; Dealing with the history of the offence, Standford H. Kadish in 'Encyclopedia of Grime and Justice" (Vol. 3) observed:

"History of the offence Before witnesses had any formal role in trials, there was no need for a perjury law. In the Middle Age, when the English common law was developing, trial by battle was used to test a sworn accusation. Similarly, for the sworn denial of a serious charge based on mere suspicion, an ordeal administered by a priest was the predominant mode of trial until it was abolished in 1215 as superstitious. Finally, at least until the Assize of Clarendon (1166), less serious accusations could be successfully answered by "compurgation", that is, by obtaining a sufficient number of "oath helpers" to support the defendant's credibility, Trials in the modern sense began to develop only in the thirteenth century. Little is reliably known about the conduct of jury trials prior to the sixteenth century, but in civil cases, it seems that genuine witnesses were permitted to give their accounts, although they could not be compelled to appear. In early criminal cases, the jury seems always to have included some who, aware of the commission of a crime in their community brought the suspect before a judge. Those witnesses who did attend these early trials were perceived as part of the jury arid retired with them to deliberate, often to make their disclosures in secret. It was the verdict, not the testimony, that was perceived as either true or false; the only remedy for falsehood remotely akin to a perjury prosecution was a seldom-invoked procedure called "the writ of attaint," created in 1202 and not abolished formally until 1825. Though attaint, the jury would be punished for a 'false' verdict and the verdict itself overturned.

Witness first testified under oath in criminal cases on behalf of the Crown in the sixteenth century. No witnesses for the defense were permitted until the mid-seventeenth century, since .they would have been witnesses against the Crown, and not until 1702 were defense witnesses permitted to be sworn (I Anne, St. 2, c. 9, s. 3 (1701) (England) (repealed)). By the late seventeenth century the jury had lost all its testimonial functions, and witnesses thus became the sole means of bringing facts to the judge's and jury's attention:

Since the early common law had no established mechanism for dealing with false swearing by witnesses, the Court of Start Chamber assumed for itself the power to punish perjury. This authority was confirmed by statute in 1487 (Star Chamber Act, 3 Hen. 5, c. I (1487) (England) (repealed). The first detailed statute against false

swearing was enacted in 1562 (5 Eliz. I, c. 9 (1562) (England) (repealed)). When the Star Chamber was abolished in 1 640, its judicially defined offense of perjury passed into English common law, reaching any cases of false testimony not covered by the terms of the statute.

Edward Coke, whose views strongly influenced early American law, wrote in his Third Institute, published in 1641, that perjury was committed when, after a 'lawful oath' was administered in a 'judicial proceeding', a person swore 'absolutely and falsely' concerned a point 'material' to the issue in question (*164). In this form, the law remained unchanged into the twentieth century."

15. In India, law relating to the Offence of perjury is given a statutory definition under Section 191 and Chapter XI of the Indian Penal Code, incorporated to deal with the offences relating to giving false evidence against public justice. The offences incorporated under this Chapter are based upon recognition of the decline of moral values and erosion of sanctity of oath. Unscrupulous litigants are found daily resorting to utter blatant falsehood in the courts which has, to some extent, resulted in polluting the judicial system. It is a fact, though unfortunate, that a general impression is created that most of the witnesses coming in the courts despite taking oath make false statements to suit the interests of the parties calling them. Effective and stern action is required to betaken for preventing the evil of perjury, conceitedly let loose by vested interest and professional litigants. The mere existence of the penal provisions to deal with perjury would be a cruel joke with the society unless the courts stop to take an evasive recourse despite proof of the commission of the offence under Chapter XI of the Indian Penal Code. If the system is to survive, effective action is the need of the time. The present case is no exception to the general practice being followed by many of the litigants in the country.

16. Keeping in view the facts and circumstances of this case, the record of proceedings in Suo Motu Contempt Petition (Criminal) No. 5 of 2000 and Writ Petition No, 77 of 2001, we are prima facie satisfied that the respondent herein, in his affidavit filed in support of the writ petition (for the purposes of being used in the judicial proceedings, i.e. writ petition), has wrongly made a statement that the age of Dr. Justice A.S. Anand has not been determined by the President of India in terms of Article 217 of the constitution. We are satisfied that such a statement supported by an affidavit of the respondent was known to whom to be false which he believed to be false and/or atleast did not believe to be true, It is not disputed that an affidavit is evidence within the meaning of Section 191 of the Indian Penal Code and a person swearing to a false affidavit is guilty of perjury punishable under Section 193 IPC. The respondent herein, being legally bound by an oath to state the truth in his affidavit accompanying the petition is prima facie held to have made a false statement which constitutes an offence of giving false evidence as defined under Section 191 IPC, punishable under Section 193 IPC.

17. With the object of eradicating the evil of perjury, we empower the Registrar General of this Court to depute an officer of the rank of Deputy Registrar or above of the Court to file a complaint under Section 193 of the Indian Penal Code against the respondent herein, before a Magistrate of competent jurisdiction at Delhi. Such officer is directed to file such complaint and take all steps

necessary for prosecuting the complaint."

24) In Muthu Karuppan vs Parithi Ilamvazhuthi, (2011) 5 SCC 496, Hon'ble Supreme Court expressed the view that the filing of a false affidavit should be effectively curbed with a strong hand. It is true that the observation was made in the context of contempt of court proceedings, but the view expressed must be generally endorsed to preserve the purity of judicial proceedings. Para 15 of said judgment is excerpted here-in-below:

"15. Giving false evidence by filing false affidavit is an evil which must be effectively curbed with a strong hand. Prosecution should be ordered when it is considered expedient in the interest of justice to punish the delinquent, but there must be a prima facie case of 'deliberate falsehood' on a matter of substance and the court should be satisfied that there is a reasonable foundation for the charge."

25) The Hon'ble Apex Court in the case of Sciemed Overseas Inc. vs BOC India Limited and others, (2016) 3 SCC 70 has held that filing false or misleading statement itself is enough to invite adverse reaction. Para 27 of said judgment is extracted hereunder for convenience:

"In the first instance, the work order was issued to Sciemed on 25th July, 2007 but this was not disclosed to the High Court when it disposed of W.P. (C) No.4203 of 2007 on 31st July, 2007. Had the factual position been disclosed to the High Court, perhaps the outcome of the writ petition filed by BOC would have been different and the issue might not have even travelled up to this Court. Furthermore, apparently to ensure that work order goes through, a false or misleading statement was made before this Court on affidavit when the matter was taken up on 14th March, 2008 to the effect that the work was nearing completion. It is not possible to accept the view canvassed by learned counsel that the false or misleading statement had no impact on the decision rendered by this Court on 14th March, 2008. We cannot hypothesize on what transpired in the proceedings before this Court nor can we imagine what could or could not have weighed with this Court when it rendered its decision on 14th March, 2008. The fact of the matter is that a false or misleading statement was made before this Court and that by itself is enough to invite an adverse reaction."

26) Justice dispensation system would be adversely affected if restrictions are not imposed upon the litigants, who attempt to mislead the court by filing and relying upon the false evidence particularly in cases, the adjudication of which is dependent upon the statement of facts. The purity of proceedings of the court cannot be permitted to be engulfed by a party on frivolous, vexatious or insufficient grounds or relying upon false evidence inspired by extraneous considerations or revengeful desire to harass his opponent. Sanctity of the affidavits has to be preserved and protected discouraging the filing of irresponsible statements on oath.

27) The applicant has made a false statement and has obtained an interim order from this Court in reply / rejoinder affidavit to the counter affidavit has again tried to support the false averment made

by him in his affidavit to justify his false statement on oath. Thus, this Court is of the opinion that a heavy cost should be imposed upon the applicant. The applicant is not a layman, rather he is an Advocate, he should be more vigilant and cautious while making a statement on oath in the form of affidavit before the Court, but he made a bald and false statement on oath before this Court.

- 28) Considering the entire conspectus of things, I am prima facie satisfied that the applicant has deliberately made a false and misleading statement on oath before this Court. This Court is of the opinion that such an averment supported by an affidavit of applicant was made by him knowingly that the same is false or which he believed to be false. Swearing to a false affidavit amounts to perjury, inasmuch as the affidavit is evidence within the meaning of Section 191 of the IPC. With great difficulty, this Court is restraining itself not to proceed against the applicant to face the proceedings for the offence punishable under Section 191 IPC (an offence of giving false evidence) punishable under Section 193 IPC.
- 29) The jurisdiction under Section 482 Cr.P.C. can only be exercised sparingly, carefully and with caution. Court should apply the test as to whether the uncontroverted allegations as made from the record of the case and the documents submitted therewith prima facie establish the offence or not. If the allegations are so patently absurd and inherently improbable that no prudent person can ever reach such a conclusion and where the basic ingredients of a criminal offence are not satisfied then the court may interfere. But, where the factual foundation for an offence has been laid down, the courts should be reluctant and should not hasten to quash the proceedings even on the premise that one or two ingredients have not been stated or do not appear to be satisfied if there is substantial compliance with the requirements of the offence. When from a perusal of FIR or charge sheet no prima facie case is made out against the applicant and Court feels that the continuance of proceedings of criminal case against the applicant would be a futile exercise; there is least chance of his conviction; the proceedings have been initiated for ulterior motive and the story set up by the prosecution / complainant cannot be believed by a prudent person, the court should intervene in exercise of its inherent power under Section 482 Cr.P.C. Furthermore, the criminal proceedings can be quashed when the applicant make out a case that the investigation has not been conducted properly, in accordance with law, and was done in a routine manner.
- 30) On merit also, this Court does not find any illegality or perversity in the charge sheet and summoning order passed by the Special Judge (SC/ST) Act, Dehradun, whereby the said court has issued the order of summoning against the applicant.
- 31) In the result, the criminal misc. application moved under Section 482 Cr.P.C. is hereby dismissed. Interim order granted earlier by this Court is hereby vacated. However, it is made clear that the trial court shall make an endeavour to decide the special Sessions trial no. 04 of 2017 and ensure not to grant unnecessary adjournment to either of the parties.
- 32) In Suraz India Trust vs Union of India, (2017) 14 SCC 416, Hon'ble Supreme Court while disposing of the case termed it as frivolous and repetitive litigation in the name of public interest litigation and imposed exemplary cost of Rs. 25 lakh on the petitioner in order to discourage the practice of filing such misconceived petitions in future. Also, while resolving a similar controversy

the Hon'ble Apex Court in the case of Sciemed Overseas Inc. vs BOC India Limited and others, (2016) 3 SCC 70, has not interfered with the impugned judgment and order passed by the Jharkhand High Court, whereby a cost of rupees ten lakh has been imposed on the petitioner therein for filing a false or misleading affidavit, but this court is of the opinion that just to teach a lesson to the applicant a cost of Rs. 2,00,000/- (rupees two lac only) would be just and reasonable in the facts and circumstances of the present case.

33) Therefore, a cost of Rs. 2,00,000/- is imposed upon the applicant for committing fraud upon the Court. The applicant shall deposit the cost before the Registry of this court within a period of one month from today. In case, the cost is not deposited by the applicant within the stipulated period, the same shall be recovered from him as arrears of land revenue. The Registrar General of this Court, in that case, is directed to send a letter to the District Magistrate, Nainital to recover the amount of cost, so imposed by this Court, from the applicant as arrears of land revenue.

(Lok Pal Singh, J.) Dt. August 08, 2018.

Negi