

2025:PHHC:134510



**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH**

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CRM-A-391-MA-2014 (O & M)
Date of decision: 25.09.2025

RAJ KUMARI

....Applicant

Versus

STATE OF HARYANA AND ORS

...Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE AMAN CHAUDHARY

Present : Mr. Nipun Bhardwaj, Advocate,
for the applicant.

Mr. B.S.Saroha, DAG, Haryana.

Mr. Abhishek Singh, Advocate,
for respondents N.2 to 4.

AMAN CHAUDHARY, J. (ORAL)

1. The present application has been preferred under Section 378(4) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (hereinafter 'Cr.P.C.') seeking grant of leave to appeal against the order dated 29.11.2011 passed by Judicial Magistrate Ist Class, Kaithal, vide which respondents No.2 to 4 have been acquitted in a complaint under Sections 323, 325, 324, 452, 379, 504, 506 and 34 IPC.

2. As it emerges from the factual matrix, on 11.03.2006, respondents No.2 to 4 came to the house of the complainant, gave beatings to her with their respective weapons and also threatened to kill him. They had also taken away her domestic articles. A complaint was filed, wherein summoning order was passed, but on 29.11.2011, there was

no representation on behalf of the applicant-complainant and respondents No.2 to 4 were acquitted.

3. Learned counsel submits that respondents No.2 to 4 were summoned to face the trial; the complainant was regularly appearing before the trial Court, but on 29.11.2011, following which they were acquitted. The absence was neither wilful nor deliberate. The applicant did not have anything to gain by not appearing or delaying the proceedings, which as a matter of fact, had already been pending since 2007.

4. It would be apposite to make a reference to Section 256 Cr.P.C., which reads thus:

“256. Non- appearance or death of complainant.

(1) If the summons has been issued on complaint, and on the day appointed for the appearance of the accused, or any day subsequent thereto to which the hearing may be adjourned, the complainant does not appear, the Magistrate shall, notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, acquit the accused, unless for some reason he thinks it proper to adjourn the hearing of the case to some other day: Provided that where the complainant is represented by a pleader or by the officer conducting the prosecution or where the Magistrate is of opinion that the personal attendance of the complainant is not necessary, the Magistrate may dispense with his attendance and proceed with the case.

(2) The provisions of sub- section (1) shall, so far as may be, apply also to cases where the non-appearance of the complainant is due to his death.”

5. As is evident from the foregoing provision, it applies only after summons have been issued to the accused, i.e. at the post-summoning stage. A wide discretion has been conferred on the Magistrate

to either proceed with the case despite the absence of the complainant, if represented by a pleader or by officer conducting the prosecution, or adjourn the matter on valid grounds. However, if the complaint is dismissed for default at such a stage, the inevitable result is the acquittal of the accused.

6. In **V.K. Bhat vs. G. Ravi Kishore**, (2016) 13 SCC 243, Hon'ble the Supreme Court while considering the question as to whether in a case where the complaint was dismissed, the same tantamounts to acquittal and in such a situation whether a revision under Section 397(3) CrPC or appeal under Section 378(4) CrPC would lie, held that, "After hearing the learned counsel for the parties, we find that there is some force in the submissions made by learned counsel appearing for the appellant and we hold, in the facts of the case, that dismissal of the complaint for non-prosecution of the complainant amounts to acquittal as contemplated in section 256 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973."

7. Hon'ble the Supreme Court in **M/s Celestium Financial vs. A. Gnanasekaran Etc.**, 2025 SCC OnLine 1320, held that an appeal is maintainable under the proviso of Section 372 Cr.P.C. (corresponding Section 413 of BNSS, 2023) against an order of acquittal passed in a complaint, by treating the complainant therein, as a 'victim' within the meaning under Section 2 (wa) of Cr.P.C, in view of which, the present appeal is disposed of by directing the concerned Sessions Judge, for treating it to have been filed under Section 372 of Cr.P.C. and assigning the same to the Court concerned for deciding it.

8. Registry is directed to send the complete paper-book and trial

Court record, if received, along with the said order forthwith, while also informing the parties.

25.09.2025

parveen kumar

Whether speaking/reasoned : Yes / No

Whether reportable : Yes / No

(AMAN CHAUDHARY)
JUDGE