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

Sr. No.237

**CRR(F)-722-2023 (O&M)
Date of decision : 29.01.2025**

Amit Tandon

..... Petitioner

VERSUS

Pooja Tandon and others

..... Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE KIRTI SINGH

Present: Mr. S.K. Singla, Advocate, for the petitioner.

Mr. Gaurav Jain, Advocate, for the respondents.

KIRTI SINGH, J. (Oral)

1. The present petition has been preferred against judgment dated 28.03.2023 passed by learned Principal Judge, Family Court, Patiala, under Section 125 of the Cr.P.C., whereby maintenance of Rs.24,000/- per month i.e. Rs.10,000/- per month to respondent No.1-wife and Rs.7,000/- per month each to respondents No.2 and 3 being minor children was awarded in favour of the respondents.

2. The brief facts of the case are that the marriage between the petitioner and respondent No.1 was solemnised on 29.11.2008 and out of the said wedlock, two children i.e. respondents No.2 and 3 were born. A matrimonial dispute ensued between the couple and the respondents filed a petition under Section 125 Cr.P.C. for seeking maintenance. The petitioner filed a reply and contested the claim made by the respondent. The learned Court below vide judgment dated 28.03.2023 granted maintenance of Rs.24,000/- per month in favour of respondents herein. Aggrieved by the same, the petitioner has approached this Court by filing the present petition.

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3. Learned counsel for the petitioner *inter alia* contends that the learned Principal Judge, Family Court, Patiala has wrongly allowed the maintenance to the respondents which is on a very higher side and it has been passed on the basis of wrong facts. The petitioner tried his best to maintain her but respondent No.1 has left the company of the petitioner without any just cause. He further submits that the respondents are not entitled for any maintenance from the petitioner.
4. *Per contra*, learned counsel for the respondents has opposed the present petition and submits that the learned Family Court has rightly passed the order after duly considering the income affidavits of the parties.
5. Heard the rival submissions made by the learned counsel for the parties and have perused the record of the case.
6. The object and purpose behind granting maintenance is to ensure that the dependent spouse and children are not reduced to destitution or vagrancy on account of failure of marriage. At the same time, a just and careful balance must be struck to ensure that this provision does not degenerate into a weapon to punish the other spouse. The Courts are required to conduct the maintenance proceedings while being alive to the legislative intent behind the provision under Section 125 Cr.P.C in its true spirit, which is to provide speedy assistance and social justice to women, children and infirm parents. The provisions of Section 125 Cr.P.C. were enacted as a measure to further social justice and protect dependent women, children and parents, which also fall within the constitutional sweep of Article 15(3) reinforced by Article 39 of the Constitution of India.

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7. A three-Judge Bench of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Vimala (K.) v. Veeraswamy (K.) (1991) 2 SCC 375***, speaking through Justice Fatima Beevi, opined that as follows:

“3. Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure is meant to achieve a social purpose. The object is to prevent vagrancy and destitution. It provides a speedy remedy for the supply of food, clothing, and shelter to the deserted wife.”

. A two-Judge Bench of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Kirtikant D. Vadodaria v. State of Gujarat (1996) 4 SCC 479***, speaking through Justice Faizan Uddin, opined as follows:

“15. ... While dealing with the ambit and scope of the provision contained in Section 125 of the Code, it has to be borne in mind that the dominant and primary object is to give social justice to the woman, child and infirm parents, etc. and to prevent destitution and vagrancy by compelling those who can support those who are unable to support themselves but have a moral claim for support. The provisions in Section 125 provide a speedy remedy to those women, children and destitute parents who are in distress. The provisions in Section 125 are intended to achieve this special purpose. The dominant purpose behind the benevolent provisions contained in Section 125 clearly is that the wife, child and parents should not be left in a helpless state of distress, destitution and starvation.”

8. The rival claimants must scrupulously bring on record their actual respective earning capacities in order for the Court to arrive at quantum of maintenance which is just and fair in terms of principle of equistatus. The quantum of maintenance must be justifiable and realistic to provide succour to the dependent spouse and also to avoid occurrence of the two extremes of the maintenance being either paltry or extravagant, ensuring

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that neither of the two is reduced to a life of penury. The adequacy of the maintenance allowance has to be determined by the yardstick of the dependent spouse and children being able to lead a life of reasonable comfort.

9. While dealing with the issue of maintenance *in extenso*, a two Judge bench of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Rajnesh v. Neha and another (2021) 2 SCC 324***, laid down the criteria for determining quantum of maintenance and issued the following directions:

VI Final Directions

130. In view of the foregoing discussion as contained in Part B -1 to V of this judgment, we deem it appropriate to pass the following directions in exercise of our powers under Article 142 of the Constitution of India:

(a) Issue of overlapping jurisdiction

131. To overcome the issue of overlapping jurisdiction, and avoid conflicting orders being passed in different proceedings, it has become necessary to issue directions in this regard, so that there is uniformity in the practice followed by the Family Courts/District Courts/Magistrate Courts throughout the country. We direct that:

(i) where successive claims for maintenance are made by a party under different statutes, the Court would consider an adjustment or setoff, of the amount awarded in the previous proceeding/s, while determining whether any further amount is to be awarded in the subsequent proceeding:

(ii) it is made mandatory for the applicant to disclose the previous proceeding and the orders passed therein, in the subsequent proceeding;

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(iii) if the order passed in the previous proceeding/s requires any modification or variation, it would be required to be done in the same proceeding

(b) Payment of Interim Maintenance

132. The Affidavit of Disclosure of Assets and Liabilities annexed as Enclosures I, II and III of this judgment, as may be applicable, shall be filed by both parties in all maintenance proceedings, including pending proceedings before the concerned Family Court / District Court / Magistrates Court, as the case may be, throughout the country.

(c) Criteria for determining the quantum of maintenance

133. For determining the quantum of maintenance payable to an applicant, the Court shall take into account the criteria enumerated in Part B III of the judgment.

134. The aforesaid factors are however not exhaustive, and the concerned Court may exercise its discretion to consider any other factor/s which may be necessary or of relevance in the facts and circumstances of a case.

(d) Date from which maintenance is to be awarded

135. We make it clear that maintenance in all cases will be awarded from the date of filing the application for maintenance, as held in Part B-IV above.

(e) Enforcement/Execution of orders of maintenance

136. For enforcement/execution of orders of maintenance, it is directed that an order or decree of maintenance may be enforced under Section 28A of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1956; Section 20(6) of the D.V. Act; and Section 128 of Cr.P.C may be applicable. The order of maintenance may be enforced as a

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money decree of a civil court as per the provisions of the CPC more particularly Sections 51, 55, 58, 60 r.w. Order XXI."

10. A perusal of the impugned order passed by the learned Family Court makes it evident that the Court below has duly considered the material placed before it at the time of deciding the application for maintenance. The learned Court has rightly observed that the petitioner is earning more than Rs.75,000/- per month. Learned counsel for the petitioner has not been able to indicate any perversity in the impugned order which warrants interference by this Court. Accordingly, the present petition is dismissed being bereft of any merit.

11 Pending miscellaneous application(s), if any, also stand(s) disposed of.

(KIRTI SINGH)
JUDGE

29.01.2025

Ramandeep Singh

Whether speaking / reasoned

Yes/No

Whether Reportable

Yes/No