



2026:CGHC:20597-DB



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HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH AT BILASPUR**CRMP No. 1227 of 2026**

Ajay Singh S/o Late Jageshwar Singh Aged About 52 Years R/o
Rajkishore Nagar In Front Of Smritivan, Bilaspur, Police Station-
Sarkanda, Bilaspur (C.G.)

... Petitioner(s)**versus**

State Of Chhattisgarh Through PS- Kota, District - Bilaspur, (C.G.)

... Respondent(s)

For Petitioner(s) : Mr. Udit Khatri, Advocate

For Respondent(s) : Mr. Ashish Shukla, Add. A.G.

Hon'ble Shri Ramesh Sinha, Chief Justice**Hon'ble Shri Ravindra Kumar Agrawal, Judge****Judgment on Board****Per Ramesh Sinha, Chief Justice****04.05.2026**

1. Heard Mr. Udit Khatri, learned counsel for the petitioner. Also heard Mr. Ashish Shukla, learned Additional Advocate General for the respondent / State.
2. The petitioner has filed this petition with following prayer:



“In light of the aforesaid facts and circumstances of the case the Petitioner humbly prays that this Hon'ble Court may be kind enough to set aside and quash the chargesheet dated 14.08.2024 bearing No. 472 of 2024, order taking cognizance dated 25.09.2024 and the order framing charge dated 07.10.2024 passed by the Ld. Special Judge (Atrocity), Bilaspur (CG) in Criminal Case no. Special Case (Atrocity)/33/2024 in relation to commission of alleged offence under Section 306, 34 of Indian Penal Code, 1860 along with section 3 (2) (V), 3 (1) (द), 3(1) (ग) 3 (1) (ड) of The Scheduled Castes and The Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act., 1989 against the present Petitioner.”

3. The prosecution case, in brief, is that FIR No. 128/2019 dated 17.03.2019 was registered at Police Station- Kota, District- Bilaspur (C.G.) on the basis of a suicide note allegedly left by the deceased Santkumar Paikra, who was serving as Sarpanch of Village Panchayat Chattouna, and who committed suicide by hanging on the intervening night of 13/14.03.2019, purportedly due to harassment and humiliation arising out of monetary disputes and issues relating to the operation of a sand ghat at Sodhakhurd. During investigation, a charge-sheet bearing No. 472/2024 dated 14.08.2024 was filed against eight accused persons including the present petitioner for offences under Sections 306 and 34 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 along with Sections 3(2)(v), 3(1)(r), 3(1)(s) and 3(1)(m) of the Scheduled



Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, whereupon the learned Special Court (Atrocities), Bilaspur took cognizance on 25.09.2024 in Special Case (Atrocity) No. 33/2024 and framed charges on 07.10.2024, primarily relying upon the contents of the suicide note and statements of witnesses alleging that the accused persons, in furtherance of their common intention, subjected the deceased to harassment and humiliation which abetted the commission of suicide.

4. Learned counsel for the petitioner submits that the continuation of the impugned criminal proceedings is wholly unsustainable in law and on facts, as a bare perusal of the charge-sheet and statements of prosecution witnesses does not disclose any act whatsoever on the part of the petitioner constituting instigation, intentional aid, or conspiracy so as to attract the ingredients of abetment under Section 306 read with Section 107 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, and at best reflects only a vague and remote historical association of the petitioner with an earlier sand ghat arrangement, which falls far short of the strict legal threshold required to prosecute an individual for abetment to suicide. It is further contended that the Hon'ble Supreme Court, vide order dated 10.02.2026 passed in Special Leave to Appeal (Crl.) No. 9820/2020, has already discharged a co-accused in identical facts and circumstances who challenged the order dated 02.12.2024 passed in CRR No. 1334 of 2024 by this Court whereby the appellant's revision for discharge was dismissed, thereby entitling



the present petitioner to similar relief on the ground of parity.

Further, the material witnesses, including the wife of the deceased Smt. Geeta Paikra and his brothers Prahalad Singh and Ram Singh, have unequivocally deposed that the petitioner maintained cordial relations with the deceased and had never subjected him to any harassment, and have consistently attributed the alleged harassment and humiliation to other accused persons, namely Anwar and Wadir, who were exerting pressure upon the deceased in connection with the sand ghat dispute immediately preceding the incident. The prosecution narrative itself indicates that the proximate cause of mental stress, if any, arose from the acts of the said persons in seeking control over the sand ghat and compelling administrative actions on 12.03.2019 and 13.03.2019, thereby completely disassociating the petitioner from any direct or indirect role. Even the suicide note, which forms the very foundation of the prosecution case, clearly records that the deceased acted of his own volition and does not attribute any role to the petitioner. There is a complete absence of any allegation or material indicating caste-based insult, intentional humiliation in public view, or any act committed on the ground of the deceased belonging to a Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe, rendering invocation of the provisions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 against the petitioner ex facie untenable and that the learned trial court has failed to appreciate that even on a prima facie evaluation, the



essential ingredients of the alleged offences are not made out against the petitioner, thereby vitiating the continuation of the proceedings and warranting interference by this Court.

5. Learned State counsel, opposing the petition, submits that the present petition is devoid of merit and liable to be dismissed at the threshold, inasmuch as the learned trial Court has already taken cognizance and framed charges against the petitioner after due consideration of the material available on record, and the trial has progressed to an advanced stage wherein as many as six prosecution witnesses, including the complainant, have already been examined. It is contended that at this stage, the veracity, reliability, and evidentiary value of the prosecution material cannot be adjudicated in proceedings seeking quashing, and the same is a matter for trial. It is further submitted that the charge-sheet discloses sufficient prima facie material indicating the involvement of the petitioner in the alleged offence, and therefore, no interference is warranted, particularly when the trial is underway and substantial evidence has already been recorded, and any premature interference by this Court would impede the due course of justice. So far as the case of the co-accused is concerned, it is submitted that the same stands on a distinct footing, as the Hon'ble Apex Court granted relief primarily on account of ambiguity in identity and absence of specific reference in the suicide note, whereas the present petitioner is specifically named in the FIR as well as in the prosecution case, thereby



clearly distinguishing his role and disentitling him from claiming parity with the discharged co-accused.

6. We have heard learned counsel for the parties and perused the documents appended with petition.
7. Considering the submissions advanced by learned counsel for the parties, upon due consideration of the material available on record and after having perused the order dated 10.02.2026 passed by the Hon'ble Apex Court in Special Leave to Appeal (Crl.) No. 9820/2020, it transpires that the proceedings against the co-accused Ajay Singh Thakur were quashed primarily on the ground of misidentification, inasmuch as the suicide note referred to one "Ajay Thakur" and not to the said co-accused, and the FIR itself was registered against the said named individual, thereby creating a material discrepancy as to identity. It is further evident from the said order that the Hon'ble Apex Court found absence of any specific attribution to the said co-accused in the suicide note, coupled with ambiguity in identity, to be sufficient to discharge him. However, the case of the present petitioner stands on a different footing, as he is specifically named both in the FIR as well as in the suicide note, wherein the deceased has referred to monetary dealings with various individuals in connection with the sand ghat, thereby prima facie linking the petitioner to the factual matrix under consideration. Moreover, upon a pointed query regarding the status of the trial, it has been fairly submitted by learned counsel for the petitioner that the trial has already



progressed substantially and six prosecution witnesses, including the complainant, have been examined, which further weighs against interference at this advanced stage of the proceedings. In such circumstances, this Court is of the considered opinion that the continuation of the criminal proceedings cannot be said to be an abuse of the process of law, rather, it is necessary and in the interest of justice that the trial be permitted to proceed and be brought to its logical conclusion in accordance with law. Accordingly, the petition is **dismissed** on this ground alone.

Sd/-
(**Ravindra Kumar Agrawal**)
Judge

Sd/-
(**Ramesh Sinha**)
Chief Justice

Manpreet