

CASE NO.:
Appeal (civil) 4903-05 of 2004

PETITIONER:
Chadat Singh

RESPONDENT:
Bahadur Ram and Ors.

DATE OF JUDGMENT: 03/08/2004

BENCH:
ARIJIT PASAYAT & C.K. THAKKER

JUDGMENT:
J U D G M E N T

(Arising out of SLP) Nos. 22808-22810/2002)

ARIJIT PASAYAT, J.

Leave granted.

As the only point on which notice was issued related to the desirability of disposing of the Second Appeal in terms of Section 100 of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 (in short the 'Code') without formulating the substantial question of law by the High Court, it is not necessary to deal with the factual aspects in detail. The second appeal and two miscellaneous petitions were disposed of by a common judgment which form matrix of the present appeals.

Respondent-Bahadur Ram filed a suit for specific performance against 9 defendants. The suit was decreed by the trial Court. However, the same was upset by learned Additional District Judge, Kurukshetra. Bahadur Ram filed Second Appeal No.594/1995 against the judgment of learned Additional District Judge. By the impugned judgment the trial Court's judgment and decree have been restored and that of the first Appellate Court was reversed.

Though various points were urged by learned counsel for the appellant it is not necessary to go into those aspects in view of the limited scope of the present appeals in view of the notice issued. There is no appearance on behalf of the respondents.

Mr. Mahabir Singh, learned counsel for the appellant submitted that the High Court was not justified in disposing of the Second Appeal without formulating the substantial question or questions of law as mandated by Section 100 of the Code.

In view of Section 100 of the Code the memorandum of appeal shall precisely state substantial question or questions of law involved in the appeal as required under sub-section (3) of Section 100. Where the High Court is satisfied that in any case any substantial question of law is involved it shall formulate that question under sub-section (4) and the second appeal has to be heard on the question so formulated as stated in sub-section (5) of Section 100.

Section 100 of the Code deals with "Second Appeal". The provision reads as follows:

"Section 100- (1) Save as otherwise expressly

provided in the body of this Code or by any other law for the time being in force, an appeal shall lie to the High Court from every decree passed in appeal by any Court subordinate to the High Court, if the High Court is satisfied that the case involves a substantial question of law.

(2) An appeal may lie under this section from an appellate decree passed ex parte.

(3) In an appeal under this Section, the memorandum of appeal shall precisely state the substantial question of law involved in the appeal.

(4) Where the High Court is satisfied that a substantial question of law is involved in any case, it shall formulate that question.

(5) The appeal shall be heard on the question so formulated and the respondent shall, at the hearing of the appeal, be allowed to argue that the case does not involve such question:

Provided that nothing in this sub-section shall be deemed to take away or abridge the power of the Court to hear, for reasons to be recorded, the appeal on any other substantial question of law, not formulated by it, if it is satisfied that the case involves such question."

A perusal of the impugned judgment passed by the High Court does not show that any substantial question of law has been formulated or that the second appeal was heard on the question, if any, so formulated. That being so, the judgment cannot be maintained.

In *Ishwar Dass Jain v. Sohan Lal* (2000 (1) SCC 434) this Court in para 10, has stated thus:

"10. Now under Section 100 CPC, after the 1976 Amendment, it is essential for the High Court to formulate a substantial question of law and it is not permissible to reverse the judgment of the first appellate Court without doing so."

Yet again in *Roop Singh v. Ram Singh* (2000 (3) SCC 708) this Court has expressed that the jurisdiction of a High Court is confined to appeals involving substantial question of law. Para 7 of the said judgment reads:

"7. It is to be reiterated that under section 100 CPC jurisdiction of the High Court to entertain a second appeal is confined only to such appeals which involve a substantial question of law and it does not confer any jurisdiction on the High Court to interfere with pure questions of fact while exercising its jurisdiction under section 100 CPC. That apart, at the time of disposing of the matter the High Court did not even notice the question of law formulated by it at the time of admission of the second appeal as there is no reference of it in the impugned judgment. Further, the fact findings courts after appreciating the evidence held that the defendant entered into the possession of the premises as a batai, that is to say, as a tenant and his possession was permissive and there was no pleading or proof as to when it became

adverse and hostile. These findings recorded by the two courts below were based on proper appreciation of evidence and the material on record and there was no perversity, illegality or irregularity in those findings. If the defendant got the possession of suit land as a lessee or under a batai agreement then from the permissive possession it is for him to establish by cogent and convincing evidence to show hostile animus and possession adverse to the knowledge of the real owner. Mere possession for a long time does not result in converting permissive possession into adverse possession (Thakur Kishan Singh v. Arvind Kumar (1994 (6) SCC 591). Hence the High Court ought not to have interfered with the findings of fact recorded by both the courts below."

The position has been reiterated in Kanahaiyalal and Ors. V. Anupkumar and Ors. (JT 2002 (10) SC 98)

In the circumstances, the impugned judgment is set aside. We remit these matters to the High Court for disposal in accordance with law. The appeals are disposed of in the aforesaid terms with no order as to costs.