
Devilal Gond v State of Chhattisgarh
Brief Facts
Initial Conviction: Arrested Dec 7, 2012, sentenced to life under Section 302 IPC on Aug 14, 2013
Acquittal: High Court set aside conviction and acquitted on Jan 20, 2018
Failure to Release: Mistaken belief that sentence was suspended kept him in Central Jail, Durg
Prolonged Incarceration: Unlawfully detained for over 7 years and 3 months until release on May 19, 2025
Legal Recourse: High Court awarded Rs. 2,00,000/-, appealed to Supreme Court for enhancement
Key Legal Issues
Violation of Article 21: Egregious breach of right to life and personal liberty
Inadequacy of Compensation: Challenging the nominal Rs. 2,00,000/- High Court award
State Defences: Inapplicability of sovereign immunity, bureaucracy, or administrative apathy
Public Law Standards: Determining criteria for restorative justice and rehabilitation
Systemic Safeguards: Automated tracking to prevent prisoners from languishing in custody
Court Holdings and Rulings
Constitutional Breach: Apathy and administrative inefficiencies are no defence for the State
Strict Liability: Sovereign immunity inapplicable in public law fundamental rights violations
Enhanced Compensation: Substantially increased to Rs. 30,00,000/- for lost youth and livelihood
Disbursement and Protection
Savings Account Transfer: Rs. 5,00,000/- paid directly within four weeks
Fixed Deposit: Remaining balance in auto-renewing FD with monthly ECS interest
Withdrawal Restriction: Requires permission from District Legal Services Authority
Nationwide Prison Reforms
Digital Communication: Same-day transmission of release orders
Jail Inspections: Periodic physical checks by DLSAs
Criminal Justice Ecosystem: Exploration of an integrated online platform