

Magistrate can award sentence as well as compensation : SC

In a major ruling, aiming at financially compensating the victims of crimes, a Supreme Court Bench comprising Justice K.T.Thomas and Justice R.P.Sethi, held: "whenever a magistrate of first class feels that the complainant should be compensated, he can, after imposing a term of imprisonment, award compensation to the complainant which has to be paid by the convict for which no limit is prescribed under the Criminal Procedure Code".

Under Section 29 of the Cr.P.C, the limit for imposition of a sentence in a case is fixed but under section 325 (1) of the Cr.P.C. the magistrate can refer the case to the Chief Judicial Magistrate for passing an appropriate order, in any situation in a case which warrants the imposition of a severe sentence. If a magistrate deems fit that the complainant must be compensated for loss, he could resort to the course indicated in Section 357 of the Cr.P.C.