CASE ANALYSIS

India’s Supreme Court Upholds Life Term After High Court Reversed Murder Acquittal

After reviewing the record itself, India’s Supreme Court upheld Vijay Chaudhary’s convictions for murder and attempted murder and directed remission consideration if he becomes eligible.

By Shahbaz Shah · 24 November 2026

Vijay Chaudhary v. State of Chhattisgarh · 2026 INSC 1262

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The trial court had acquitted Vijay Chaudhary on every charge. The Chhattisgarh High Court reversed the acquittal and imposed a life term for murder with common intention. India’s Supreme Court left that conviction in place after independently reviewing the record. The decision, delivered on 17 November 2026, appeared on the Court’s judgment list on 23 November. Judgment, paragraphs 2 and 5–8.

From acquittal to a life sentence

The Sessions Court acquitted Chaudhary on 16 May 2016 in Sessions Trial No. 63 of 2014. In two appeals against the acquittal, the Chhattisgarh High Court at Bilaspur took a different view. Its common judgment of 8 October 2025 convicted him of murder and attempted murder under Sections 302 and 307, each read with Section 34 of the Indian Penal Code. The High Court imposed rigorous imprisonment for life on the murder count and ten years’ rigorous imprisonment on the attempted murder count, with fines of ₹1,000 and ₹200 respectively. Judgment, paragraph 2.

What the defence said created reasonable doubt

The appeal put several parts of the prosecution case in issue. The defence questioned how Chaudhary became a suspect before his arrest about four months later. It also challenged how articles were recovered from his room and argued that the forensic report did not identify the blood on the seized material as human. These were submissions to the Court. The judges assessed them alongside the record from the courts below. Judgment, paragraph 3.

The central dispute over testimony concerned PW-3, the deceased's wife. The defence compared her statement recorded under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure with her testimony at trial and argued that her account had changed on identification and the sequence of events. The first informant's counsel answered that the High Court had addressed those points and that the apparent discrepancies could be explained from the testimony itself. Judgment, paragraphs 3–4.

Why the Supreme Court left the conviction in place

Justices Ahsanuddin Amanullah and Manmohan examined the evidence and records from the courts below. They found that the High Court's conviction was supported by material relevant to the appeal and was free of perversity. Their own review led them to the same conclusion. The judgment records the challenges to identification, recovery and forensic evidence and gives a single conclusion on the overall record. Judgment, paragraphs 5–6.

What the remission direction means

The Supreme Court dismissed both appeals. If Chaudhary becomes eligible under the State Government's remission policy, the authorities must consider his case in light of the Court's directions of 18 February 2025 in Suo Motu Writ Petition (Criminal) No. 4 of 2021. The Court also left him free to pursue any other remedy available before the competent authority. The life sentence stands, and the direction concerns consideration at the point of eligibility. Judgment, paragraphs 6–8.

Official court PDF · Supreme Court judgment list.

Frequently asked questions

Who convicted Vijay Chaudhary after the trial acquittal?

The Chhattisgarh High Court reversed the trial court's acquittal. The Supreme Court upheld the High Court's decision on appeal. Judgment, paragraphs 2 and 5–6.

Which IPC offences were involved?

The convictions were for murder under Section 302 and attempted murder under Section 307, both read with Section 34 on common intention. Judgment, paragraph 2.

Where did Section 164 CrPC come into the appeal?

The defence compared PW-3's statement under Section 164 with her trial testimony and challenged her identification of the appellant and her account of events. Judgment, paragraph 3.

Did the Supreme Court order release on remission?

The Court directed the authorities to consider remission once Chaudhary becomes eligible under the State policy. His conviction and sentence stand. Judgment, paragraphs 6–7.