

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL
MUMBAI BENCH, MUMBAI**

C.P. NO. 132/14(1)/NCLT/MB/MAH/2017

CORAM:

SHRI M.K. SHRAWAT
MEMBER (JUDICIAL)

In the matter of Section 14 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013 for conversion of Public Company into Private Company.

In the matter of **M/s. Amir Chicken and Eggs Ltd.**, having its Registered Office at K – 507 to K - 510, 4th Floor, Mega Centre, K Wing, Magarpatta, Hadapsar, Pune – 411028, Maharashtra, India.

PRESENT FOR PETITIONER:

1. Mr. Devendra Vasant Deshpande – Practicing Company Secretary, Authorised Representative for the Company.
2. Ms. Smita J Jaju – Practicing Company Secretary, Authorised Representative for the Company.

Date of Hearing: 28th April, 2017.

ORDER

Reserved on: 28.04.2017

Pronounced on: 22.05.2017

1. Petition under consideration was filed on 29th March, 2017 under the provisions of Sec. 14 (1) (b) of Companies Act, 2013

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(herein below referred as "the Act"). At the outset, it is worth to reproduce the relevant portion of the Section as under:-

"Alteration of Articles.

14. (1) Subject to the provisions of this Act and the conditions contained in its memorandum, if any, a company may, by a special resolution, alter its articles including alterations having the effect of conversion of –

- (a) a private company into a public company; or
- (b) a public company into a private company:

Provided that

Provided further that any alteration having the effect of conversion of a public company into a private company shall not take effect except with the approval of the Tribunal which shall make such order as it may deem fit.

(2) Every alteration of the articles registered under sub-section (2) shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, be valid as if it were originally in the articles"

3. It is important to clarify that the transition period of Companies Act, 1956 into Companies Act, 2013 was fairly large; hence, in the interregnum, certain arrangements were made by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, and one of such arrangements was in respect of the provisions of Section 14 of Companies Act, 2013. In this regard, during the hearing of this C.P., a notification dated 11.06.2014 is placed on record; relevant portion extracted below:-

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"Ministry of Corporate Affairs

'A' Wing, 5th Floor, Shastri Bhawan
Dr. Rajendr Prasad, New Delhi-110001

Dated: 11 June, 2014

To
All Regional Directors
All Registrars of Companies
All Stakeholders

Subject:- Clarification for filing of form No. INC-27 for conversion of company from public to private under the provisions of Companies Act, 2013 – reg.

Sir,

Attention of the Ministry has been drawn to difficulties being faced by stakeholders while filing form INC-27 for conversion of a public company into a private company. The relevant provisions of Companies Act, 2013 (second proviso to sub-section (1) and sub-section (2) of section 14) have not been notified. In view of this, the corresponding provisions of Companies Act, 1956 (Proviso to sub-section (1) and sub-section (2A) of Section 31) shall remain in force till corresponding provisions of Company's Act, 2013 are notified. The Central Government has delegated such powers under the Companies Act, 1956 to the Registrar of companies (ROCs) vide item No. (c) of the notification number S.O. 1538(E) dated the 10th July, 2012 and this delegated power remains in force. Applications for such conversions, therefore, have to be filed and disposed as per the earlier provisions.

2. This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.

Sd/-
(Sanjay Kumar Gupta)
Deputy Director
Ph: 23384657"

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3. By issuance of the Notification it was made clear that the corresponding provisions of Companies Act, 1956 shall remain in force till corresponding provisions of Companies Act, 2013 are notified. As a result, the impact of this Notification was that after the MCA Notification dated 01.06.2016 (to be discussed herein below), the applicability of the old provisions along with the attached rules got suspended. To proceed with the matter, it is requisite to hold that Rule 33 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rule, 2014, which had prescribed that for effecting the conversion of a Private Company into a Public Company was to be approved by the competent authority i.e. Central Government; had become redundant.

4. My reason to hold Rule 33 as redundant is twofold:

- a) First is that Section 14(2) of the Act 2013 vide an official Gazette of India, Extraordinary Part II dated 1st June, 2016 [S01934(E)] in exercise of the powers conferred the Central Government has appointed/declared the date 1st June, 2016, as the date on which certain provisions of the Act came into force, and among the long list of several sections, the Second proviso to sub-section (1) of section 14 and sub-section (2) of section 14 were included. As a

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result, the powers conferred vide section 14 (2) of the Act to the Tribunal (NCLT) to pass an appropriate order in connection of proposed conversion had superseded the old provisions. Therefore, the operation of Rule 33 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rule 2014 shall be limited to give effect of the order of NCLT by the Registrar within fifteen days on receipt.

- b) Second reason to proceed with the matter is that once the provision of Section 14(2) (now stood notified supra) has enshrined power to NCLT; hence, the Statute prevails over the Rules. There are no two opinions in respect of this accepted position of interpretation of statute.

5. The outcome of the above discussion is that the issue of conversion of Private company into Public Company and vice-versa is to be dealt with by NCLT (henceforth referred as "Tribunal") within the ambits of Section 14 of the Act. This Section prescribes that a company, either a Public Company or a Private Company, can alter its Article if such condition is contained in its Memorandum, but by a special resolution. Such alteration, for the purpose of this section, has the effect of conversion of a Public Company into a Private Company. The issue in hand is dealt with

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by second proviso to Section 14 (c) which says that any alteration having the effect of conversion of a Public Company into a Private Company shall not come into operation except with the approval of the Tribunal. The Tribunal shall make such order as it may deem fit. Further, a procedure is also laid down to give effect of the order of the Tribunal in sub-section (2) of Section 14 of the Act. This sub-section has prescribed that a copy of such alteration of the Articles along with a copy of the order of the Tribunal, approving the alteration, is required to be filed with the Registrar of Companies, within fifteen days. The Registrar thereupon shall register the change. The Companies Act, 2013 has further made it clear to remove any ambiguity by legislating such Section 3 of Section 14 that any such alteration of the Articles registered shall be valid as if it were originally in the Articles, meaning thereby, the change so incorporated of "Conversion" shall be in supersession of the old such clauses of an Article.

6. In addition to the introduction of Section 14 in Companies Act, 2013, the MCA vide a Notification dated 21st July, 2016 (published in Gazette of India on 22nd August, 2016 GSR 716 (E)) also framed National Company Law Tribunal Rules, 2016. The Rule connected to conversion of Public Company to Private Company is Rule 68 which has laid down the guidelines for the implementation of such conversion. A Petition for conversion of Public Company to

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Private Company is required to accomplish the conditions laid down under Rule 68 of NCLT Rules 2016. For the purpose of disposal of this Company Petition the conditions accomplished by this Petitioner as prescribed in the Rule are examined as under:-

- a) The Board of Directors of M/s. Amir Chicken and Eggs Limited (Petitioner) have decided in their meeting held on 09th November, 2016 to convert the Petitioner Company "M/s. Amir Chicken and Eggs Limited" to Private Limited Company by the name and style of "M/s. Amir Chicken and Eggs Private Limited". Thereafter, at the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 12th December, 2016 at the Petitioner Company's registered office at K – 507 to K - 510, 4th Floor, Mega Centre, K Wing, Magarpatta, Hadapsar, Pune – 411028, Maharashtra, India, a Special Resolution has been passed for conversion of the Petitioner Company from Public Limited Company to Private Limited Company. The Members have voted in favour of the resolution.

- b) The reason for conversion into a Private Company [Rule 68 (2) (e)] as set out in the Petition is specified as under:-

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"4.2 Reasons for Conversion:

- a) To simplify various corporate compliances and since no purpose would be served by retaining the public limited character of the Company, it is felt that it would be expedient to convert the Company to a private limited company.
 - b) The Conversion of the Company into a private limited company would help the Company to eliminate and streamline its corporate compliances and increase efficiency in functioning.
 - c) On 09th November, 2016 the Board approved the conversion of the Company into Private Company and for alteration of Articles of the Company.
 - d) The members approved the proposed alteration in the Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on 12th December, 2016.
 - e) As on 15th February, 2017 the Company have 11 creditors as certified by the Directors. And same has been enclosed as Annexure A-12 dated 14th March, 2017.
 - f) To give effect of the proposed conversion, Memorandum of Association (MOA) and Articles of Association (AOA) of the Company shall undergo a change. The copy of altered Memorandum of Association (MOA) and Articles of Association (AOA) is also enclosed as Annexure A-1.
- c) As shown in their Company Petition the capital structure of Petitioner Company is as under:-

"I. PARTICULARS OF COMPANY:

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- c. The Authorized Share Capital of the Company is ₹ 5,00,00,000/- (₹ Five Crores only) divided into 50,00,000 (Fifty Lacs) equity shares of ₹ 10/- (₹ Ten only) each.
- d. The Paid up Capital of the Company is ₹ 16,00,000/- (₹ Sixteen Lacs Only) divided into 1,60,000/- (One Lac Sixty Thousand) Equity Shares of ₹ 10/- (₹ Ten Only) each.

- d) The compilation consists Publication of Notification depicting intention of conversion in compliance of Rule 68 (5) of NCLT Rules, 2016.


7. That in the Petition, it is stated that earlier the Company was incorporated on 7th June, 2005 as a Private Limited Company. Thereafter, the said Private Limited Company was converted into the Public Limited Company vide a Resolution passed by the EOGM held on 17th July, 2012. The ROC Pune had also granted approval on 23rd August, 2012. It has also been intimated that the Petitioner had never issued Shares to the Public. It is stated that the Shares were issued to the Directors and Family Members. Therefore this Company is a closely held Company. Now the Petitioner is again seeking permission for conversion to Private Limited Company. The Petitioner has given the "Undertaking" that no prejudice is going to be caused to any of the member from the Creditors if the conversion is sanctioned. The Petitioner has stated that there are only 11 Sundry Creditors as on 15th February, 2017 who have "No

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Objection" if the conversion is allowed. Public Notice by advertising in Newspapers viz. "Loksatta" and "Financial Express" was published on 13th April, 2017, relevant evidence is placed on record.

8. In the light of the foregoing legal position, it is hereby summarised that the Petitioner has complied with provisions of Section 14 to be read with Rule 68 of NCLT Rules, 2016. Therefore, having regard to all the circumstances, the conversion from public to private is in the interest of the Company which is being made with a view to comply efficiently with the provisions of Companies Act, 2013 causing no prejudice either to the members or to the creditors of the Petitioner. Therefore, the conversion is hereby allowed. The Petitioner is hereby directed to give effect of the conversion by requisite alteration in its Articles which is hereby addressed and communicate the altered Articles within a period of 15 days to the Registrar. C.P. No.132/14(1)/NCLT/ MB/MAH/2017 is, therefore, allowed. No order as to cost.

Dated: 22nd May, 2017

Sd/-
M.K. SHRAWAT 
MEMBER (JUDICIAL)