



FAO-4790-2006 (O&M)

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**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH**

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**FAO-4790-2006(O&M)
Date of Decision :05.09.2024**

Sukhpreet Kaur

....Appellant

Versus

PRTC and others

....Respondents

CORAM : HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE SUDEEPTI SHARMA

Present: Ms. Arzoo Modi, Advocate for
Mr. Mohd. Yousaf, Advocate
for the appellant(s).

Mr. Pardeep Goyal, Advocate
for respondent No.4 – Insurance Co.

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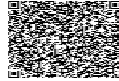
SUDEEPTI SHARMA, J. (Oral)

1. The present appeal has been preferred by the claimant/appellant for enhancement of compensation awarded by the learned Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, Patiala (for short, 'the Tribunal') vide award dated 27.07.2006 under Section 166 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, whereby the claimant/appellant was awarded a compensation of Rs.93000/- along with interest @ 9% per annum.

FACTS NOT IN DISPUTE

2. Brief facts of the case are that on 08.12.2002 the Navdeep Singh alongwith his wife i.e. claimant-Sukhpreet Kaur and their Child, and one Rajesh Dhiman was traveling from Chandigarh to Patiala in a Maruti Car No.PB-31C-0410 driven by Jatinder Goel. The said Jatinder Goel was driving the said car at his correct left-hand side at a normal speed. At about 7.30 pm when they reached within the revenue limits of village Charmarheri then bus Pepsu Road Transport

Corporation No.PB-11-L-7902 (hereinafter referred to as the offending bus), came



from the opposite direction being driven in a rash and negligent manner and without following the traffic rules. The offending bus dashed against the car while coming on the wrong side, as a result of which all the occupants of the car received multiple injuries and the car was badly damaged. The right eye of the claimant-Navdeep Singh was badly damaged. The claimant remained admitted as indoor patient in Amar Hospital, Patiala from 08.12.2002 to 22.12.2002. Later on he (Navdeep Singh) remained under treatment of Dr. Sohan Singh Eye Hospital, Amritsar and remained on complete bed rest upto 31.01.2003 with the direction to take follow up treatment. The right eye of the claimant-Navdeep Singh had been damaged to the extent of 30%, for which, he was operated upon. The claimant-Navdeep Singh remained under agony as well as mental tension. He was working as Junior Engineer and now he is unable to attend his duties properly. The face of the claimant-Navdeep Singh has also been disfigured and his future has been marred. Due to aforesaid injuries, he has become physically disabled permanently.

His wife Sukhpreet Kaur-claimant also suffered multiple injuries on her left leg, left arm, hip joint, left thigh. Rod was inserted in left thigh, and later on bone grafting was done. Sukhpreet Kaur remained admitted as indoor patient in Aggarsain Charitable Hospital, Patiala from 08.12.2002 to 17.12.2002 and further with the advice to take follow up treatment. She also remained under treatment at Kakkar Hospital, Amritsar. Now it is not possible for her to assess with her husband. Her married life has been marred. As injuries are of such a nature, she is not able to bear any child in future. She is Government teacher and remained on leave without pay since the date of the accident.

3. Upon notice of the claim petition, respondents appeared and denied the factum of compensation.



4. From the pleading of the parties, the Tribunal framed the following issues:-

- “ 1. Whether Navdeep Singh and Sukhpreet Kaur received injuries in a motor accident caused by bus No. PB-11-L-7902 due to rash and negligent driving of the bus by respondent No.3? OPA*
- 2. Whether the claimants Navdeep Singh and Sukhpreet Kaur are entitled to the amount of compensation? If so to what extent? OPA*
- 3. Whether the respondent No.3 has breached the terms and condition of insurance policy? OPR*
- 4. Whether the petition is bad for non-joinder of necessary parties? OPR*
- 5. Relief”*

5. After taking into consideration the pleadings and the evidence on record, the learned Tribunal awarded compensation to the tune of Rs.93,000/- alongwith interest @ 9% per annum. Hence the claimant/appellant filed the present appeal for enhancement of compensation awarded by the Tribunal.

SUBMISSIONS OF THE COUNSELS FOR THE PARTIES

6. (i) The learned counsel for the claimant-appellant contends that the amount assessed by the learned Tribunal is on the lower side.
- (ii) She further contends that the appellant was earning Rs.8000 /- per month by working as Government Teacher and the age of the appellant was 28 years at the time of the accident.



(iii) She further contended that the appellant suffered 5% permanent disability.

(iv) She further contends that the learned Tribunal has granted meager compensation on account of pain and suffering, medical expenses, special diet mental agony and no amount was awarded for attendant charges, transport charges, future medical treatment and loss of amenities etc.

7. Per contra, learned for the respondent-Insurance Company vehemently argued that the learned Tribunal vide award dated 27.07.2006 has rightly assessed the amount of compensation.

8. I have heard learned counsel for the parties and perused the whole record of this case.

9. (i) A perusal of the award indicates that the Tribunal has assessed permanent disability of the claimant to the extent of 5% (Ex.A-47).

(ii) Further, perusal of record reveals that the amount awarded for pain and suffering, medical expenses, special diet mental agony is on the lower side and no amount was awarded for attendant charges, transport charges, future medical treatment and loss of amenities etc., therefore, the same requires indulgence of this Court.

SETTLED LAW ON COMPENSATION

11. Hon'ble Supreme Court has settled the law regarding grant of compensation with respect to the disability. The Apex Court in the case of **RajKumar Vs. Ajay Kumar and Another (2011) 1 Supreme Court Cases 343**, has held as under:-

General principles relating to compensation in injury cases



5. *The provision of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 ('Act' for short) makes it clear that the award must be just, which means that compensation should, to the extent possible, fully and adequately restore the claimant to the position prior to the accident. The object of awarding damages is to make good the loss suffered as a result of wrong done as far as money can do so, in a fair, reasonable and equitable manner. The court or tribunal shall have to assess the damages objectively and exclude from consideration any speculation or fancy, though some conjecture with reference to the nature of disability and its consequences, is inevitable. A person is not only to be compensated for the physical injury, but also for the loss which he suffered as a result of such injury. This means that he is to be compensated for his inability to lead a full life, his inability to enjoy those normal amenities which he would have enjoyed but for the injuries, and his inability to earn as much as he used to earn or could have earned. (See C.K. Subramonia Iyer v. T. Kunhikuttan Nair, AIR 1970 Supreme Court 376, R.D. Hattangadi v. Pest Control (India) Ltd., 1995 (1) SCC 551 and Baker v. Willoughby, 1970 AC 467).*

6. *The heads under which compensation is awarded in personal injury cases are the following :*

Pecuniary damages (Special Damages)

(i) *Expenses relating to treatment, hospitalization, medicines, transportation, nourishing food, and miscellaneous expenditure.*

(ii) *Loss of earnings (and other gains) which the injured would have made had he not been injured, comprising :*



- (a) Loss of earning during the period of treatment;*
- (b) Loss of future earnings on account of permanent disability.*
- (iii) Future medical expenses. Non-pecuniary damages (General Damages)*
- (iv) Damages for pain, suffering and trauma as a consequence of the injuries.*
- (v) Loss of amenities (and/or loss of prospects of marriage).*
- (vi) Loss of expectation of life (shortening of normal longevity).*

In routine personal injury cases, compensation will be awarded only under heads (i), (ii)(a) and (iv). It is only in serious cases of injury, where there is specific medical evidence corroborating the evidence of the claimant, that compensation will be granted under any of the heads (ii)(b), (iii), (v) and (vi) relating to loss of future earnings on account of permanent disability, future medical expenses, loss of amenities (and/or loss of prospects of marriage) and loss of expectation of life.

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19. We may now summarise the principles discussed above :

- (i) All injuries (or permanent disabilities arising from injuries), do not result in loss of earning capacity.*
- (ii) The percentage of permanent disability with reference to the whole body of a person, cannot be assumed to be the percentage of loss of earning capacity. To put it differently, the percentage of loss of earning capacity is not the same as the percentage of permanent disability (except in a few cases, where the Tribunal on the basis of*



evidence, concludes that percentage of loss of earning capacity is the same as percentage of permanent disability).

(iii) The doctor who treated an injured-claimant or who examined him subsequently to assess the extent of his permanent disability can give evidence only in regard the extent of permanent disability. The loss of earning capacity is something that will have to be assessed by the Tribunal with reference to the evidence in entirety.

(iv) The same permanent disability may result in different percentages of loss of earning capacity in different persons, depending upon the nature of profession, occupation or job, age, education and other factors.

20. The assessment of loss of future earnings is explained below with reference to the following

Illustration 'A' : *The injured, a workman, was aged 30 years and earning Rs. 3000/- per month at the time of accident. As per Doctor's evidence, the permanent disability of the limb as a consequence of the injury was 60% and the consequential permanent disability to the person was quantified at 30%. The loss of earning capacity is however assessed by the Tribunal as 15% on the basis of evidence, because the claimant is continued in employment, but in a lower grade. Calculation of compensation will be as follows:*

a) Annual income before the accident : Rs. 36,000/-.

*b) Loss of future earning per annum
(15% of the prior annual income) : Rs. 5400/-.*

c) Multiplier applicable with reference to age : 17

d) Loss of future earnings : (5400 x 17) : Rs. 91,800/-



Illustration 'B' : The injured was a driver aged 30 years, earning Rs. 3000/- per month. His hand is amputated and his permanent disability is assessed at 60%. He was terminated from his job as he could no longer drive. His chances of getting any other employment was bleak and even if he got any job, the salary was likely to be a pittance. The Tribunal therefore assessed his loss of future earning capacity as 75%. Calculation of compensation will be as follows :

- a) Annual income prior to the accident : Rs. 36,000/- .
- b) Loss of future earning per annum
(75% of the prior annual income) : Rs. 27000/-.
- c) Multiplier applicable with reference to age : 17
- d) Loss of future earnings : (27000×17) : Rs. 4,59,000/-

Illustration 'C' : The injured was 25 years and a final year Engineering student. As a result of the accident, he was in coma for two months, his right hand was amputated and vision was affected. The permanent disablement was assessed as 70%. As the injured was incapacitated to pursue his chosen career and as he required the assistance of a servant throughout his life, the loss of future earning capacity was also assessed as 70%. The calculation of compensation will be as follows :

- a) Minimum annual income he would
have got if had been employed as an
Engineer : Rs. 60,000/-
- b) Loss of future earning per annum
(70% of the expected annual income) : Rs. 42000/-
- c) Multiplier applicable (25 years) : 18
- d) Loss of future earnings : (42000×18) : Rs. 7,56,000/-



[Note : The figures adopted in illustrations (A) and (B) are hypothetical. The figures in Illustration (C) however are based on actuals taken from the decision in Arvind Kumar Mishra (supra)].

12. Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of **National Insurance Company Ltd. Vs. Pranay Sethi &Ors.** [(2017) 16 SCC 680] has clarified the law under Sections 166, 163-A and 168 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, on the following aspects:-

- (A) Deduction of personal and living expenses to determine multiplicand;
- (B) Selection of multiplier depending on age of deceased;
- (C) Age of deceased on basis for applying multiplier;
- (D) Reasonable figures on conventional heads, namely, loss of estate, loss of consortium and funeral expenses, with escalation;
- (E) Future prospects for all categories of persons and for different ages: with permanent job; self-employed or fixed salary.

The relevant portion of the judgment is reproduced as under:-

“ Therefore, we think it seemly to fix reasonable sums. It seems to us that reasonable figures on conventional heads, namely, loss of estate, loss of consortium and funeral expenses should be Rs.15,000, Rs.40,000 and Rs.15,000 respectively. The principle of revisiting the said heads is an acceptable principle. But the revisit should not be fact-centric or quantum-centric. We think that it would be condign that the amount that we have quantified should be enhanced on percentage basis in every three years and the enhancement should be at the rate of



10% in a span of three years. We are disposed to hold so because that will bring in consistency in respect of those heads.”

13. Hon’ble Supreme Court in the case of **Erudhaya Priya Vs. State Express Tran. Corpn. Ltd. 2020 ACJ 2159**, has held as under:-

“ 7. There are three aspects which are required to be examined by us:

(a) the application of multiplier of '17' instead of '18';

The aforesaid increase of multiplier is sought on the basis of age of the appellant as 23 years relying on the judgment in National Insurance Company Limited v. Pranay Sethi and Others, 2017 ACJ 2700 (SC). In para 46 of the said judgment, the Constitution Bench effectively affirmed the multiplier method to be used as mentioned in the table in the case of Sarla Verma (Smt) and Others v. Delhi Transport Corporation and Another, 2009 ACJ 1298 (SC) . In the age group of 15-25 years, the multiplier has to be '18' along with factoring in the extent of disability.

The aforesaid position is not really disputed by learned counsel for the respondent State Corporation and, thus, we come to the conclusion that the multiplier to be applied in the case of the appellant has to be '18' and not '17'.

(b) Loss of earning capacity of the appellant with permanent disability of 31.1%

In respect of the aforesaid, the appellant has claimed compensation on what is stated to be the settled principle set out in Jagdish v. Mohan & Others, 2018 ACJ 1011 (SC) and Sandeep



Khanuja v. Atul Dande & Another, 2017 ACJ 979 (SC). We extract below the principle set out in the Jagdish (supra) in para 8:

"8. In assessing the compensation payable the settled principles need to be borne in mind. A victim who suffers a permanent or temporary disability occasioned by an accident is entitled to the award of compensation. The award of compensation must cover among others, the following aspects:

- (i) Pain, suffering and trauma resulting from the accident;*
- (ii) Loss of income including future income;*
- (iii) The inability of the victim to lead a normal life together with its amenities;*
- (iv) Medical expenses including those that the victim may be required to undertake in future; and*
- (v) Loss of expectation of life."*

[emphasis supplied]

The aforesaid principle has also been emphasized in an earlier judgment, i.e. the Sandeep Khanuja case (supra) opining that the multiplier method was logically sound and legally well established to quantify the loss of income as a result of death or permanent disability suffered in an accident.

In the factual contours of the present case, if we examine the disability certificate, it shows the admission/hospitalization on 8 occasions for various number of days over 1½ years from August 2011 to January 2013. The nature of injuries had been set out as under:



"Nature of injury:

- (i) compound fracture shaft left humerus*
- (ii) fracture both bones left forearm*
- (iii) compound fracture both bones right forearm*
- (iv) fracture 3rd, 4th & 5th metacarpals right hand*
- (v) subtrochanteric fracture right femur*
- (vi) fracture shaft femur*
- (vii) fracture both bones left leg*

We have also perused the photographs annexed to the petition showing the current physical state of the appellant, though it is stated by learned counsel for the respondent State Corporation that the same was not on record in the trial court. Be that as it may, this is the position even after treatment and the nature of injuries itself show their extent. Further, it has been opined in para 13 of Sandeep Khanuja case (supra) that while applying the multiplier method, future prospects on advancement in life and career are also to be taken into consideration.

We are, thus, unequivocally of the view that there is merit in the contention of the appellant and the aforesaid principles with regard to future prospects must also be applied in the case of the appellant taking the permanent disability as 31.1%. The quantification of the same on the basis of the judgment in National Insurance Co. Ltd. case (supra), more specifically



para 61(iii), considering the age of the appellant, would be 50% of the actual salary in the present case.

(c) The third and the last aspect is the interest rate claimed as 12%

In respect of the aforesaid, the appellant has watered down the interest rate during the course of hearing to 9% in view of the judicial pronouncements including in the Jagdish’s case (supra). On this aspect, once again, there was no serious dispute raised by the learned counsel for the respondent once the claim was confined to 9% in line with the interest rates applied by this Court.

CONCLUSION

8. The result of the aforesaid is that relying on the settled principles, the calculation of compensation by the appellant, as set out in para 5 of the synopsis, would have to be adopted as follows:

<i>Heads</i>	<i>Awarded</i>
<i>Loss of earning power (Rs.14,648 x 12 x 31.1/100</i>	<i>Rs. 9,81,978/-</i>
<i>Future prospects (50 per cent addition)</i>	<i>Rs.4,90,989/-</i>
<i>Medical expenses including transport charges, nourishment, etc.</i>	<i>Rs.18,46,864/-</i>
<i>Loss of matrimonial prospects</i>	<i>Rs.5,00,000/-</i>
<i>Loss of comfort, loss of amenities and mental agony</i>	<i>Rs.1,50,000/-</i>
<i>Pain and suffering</i>	<i>Rs.2,00,000/-</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>Rs.41,69,831/-</i>

The appellant would, thus, be entitled to the compensation of Rs. 41,69,831/- as claimed along with simple interest at the rate of 9% per annum from the date of application till the date of payment.

CONCLUSION

13. In view of the law laid down by the Hon’ble Supreme Court in the above referred to judgments, the present appeal is allowed. The award dated 27.07.2006 is modified accordingly. The appellant-claimant is entitled to enhanced compensation as per the calculations made here-under:-

Sr. No.	Heads	Compensation Awarded
1	Income	Rs.8000/-
2	Future Prospects 50%	Rs.4000/- (50% of 8000/-)
3	Annual Income	Rs.1,44,000/- (8000+4000 x 12)
4.	Loss of Future earning per annum	Rs.7200/- (1,44,000/- x 5%)
5.	Multiplier (17)	Rs.1,22,400/- (7200/- x 17)
6.	Medical	Rs.50,000/-
7.	Attendant Charges	Rs.10000/-
8.	Transportation	Rs.10000/-
9.	Pain and Sufferings	Rs.50,000/-
10.	Special diet	Rs.20,000/-
	Total Compensation	Rs.2,62,400/-
	Amount Awarded by Tribunal	Rs.93000/-
	Enhanced Amount	Rs.1,69,400/-

14. So far as the interest part is concerned, as held by Hon’ble Supreme Court in **Dara Singh @ Dhara Banjara Vs. Shyam Singh Varma** 2019 ACJ 3176and **R.Valli and Others VS. Tamil Nandu State Transport Corporation**



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(2022) 5 Supreme Court Cases 107, the appellant-claimant is granted the interest @ 9% per annum on the enhanced amount from the date of filing of claim petition till the date of its realization.

15. The Insurance Company is directed to deposit the enhanced amount of compensation along with interest with the Tribunal within a period of two months from today. The Tribunal is further directed to disburse the enhanced amount of compensation along with interest in the account of the claimant/appellant. The claimant/appellant is directed to furnish the bank account details to the Tribunal.

16. Disposed of accordingly.

17. Pending applications, if any, also stand disposed of.

September 05, 2024
A.Kaundal

(SUDEEPTI SHARMA)
JUDGE

Whether speaking/non-speaking : Speaking
Whether reportable : Yes/No