

HON'BLE SRI JUSTICE S.V. BHATT

M.A.C.M.A. No.2636 OF 2005

JUDGMENT:

The 2nd respondent- insurance company in O.P. No.467 of 2001 in the Court of the Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal -cum- III Additional District Judge (F.T.C.), Anantapur, is the appellant.

The appellant challenged the order impugned in the appeal on the grounds *inter alia* that the deceased was travelling in a goods vehicle as gratuitous passenger and the owner/driver of lorry bearing No. AP-02-T-9189 has violated the terms and conditions of the policy, as such, the Tribunal committed error in fastening the liability on the appellant.

The facts relevant for disposal of the appeal are as follows:

The claimants are husband and son of the deceased. The deceased was working as a coolie and was earning Rs.50/- per day. On 25.02.2001, the deceased and 36 others went to garden land to pluck oranges. After harvesting and loading the oranges in the lorry, the deceased along with others sat in the cabin of the lorry and when the lorry proceeding towards Narpala, due to the rash and negligent driving of lorry, the lorry turned turtle. As a result, the deceased died. The claimants claimed compensation of Rs.1,75,000/-.

Appellant insurance company filed counter denying the allegation that the deceased and others went to coolly work in the garden. Further, the owner/driver of the lorry has violated the terms and conditions of the policy. Therefore, the appellant is not liable to pay the compensation.

Having regard to the facts and circumstances of the case and the material available on record, the Tribunal has determined the compensation of Rs.1,75,000/-. The Tribunal has fixed the income of the deceased at Rs.50/- per day which comes to Rs.1500/- per month and deducted 1/3rd towards her personal expenses and

applied multiplier 15.830 by taking the age of the deceased as 32 years and awarded Rs.1,89,960/-(1000/-x12x 15.830)- towards loss of dependency. As the claimants claimed Rs.1,75,000/-, the compensation is restricted to Rs.1,75,000/-.

The learned counsel for the appellant/insurance company vehemently contends that the Tribunal failed to consider the categorical objections taken by the insurance company, firstly that the deceased was a gratuitous passenger and secondly, the owner/driver of lorry has violated the terms and conditions of insurance policy. As such, no compensation ought to have been awarded against the appellant.

Learned counsel for the respondents/claimants by drawing the attention of the Court to Ex.B.1, contends that both the objections now raised are untenable and that the Tribunal has passed a well reasoned order.

On the objections of insurance company that the deceased was a gratuitous passenger and that the owner/driver of the lorry has violated the terms and conditions of the policy, the Tribunal recorded the following finding in related O.P. No.475 of 2001:

“.. it is well settled that if there are violations of conditions and terms of policy, it is for R2 insurance company to realize the compensation paid by it from R1 owner. That is what is laid down in the several decisions of various High Courts and Supreme Court.

I have taken note of the submissions of learned counsel appearing for the parties and perused the material available on record. I see no reason to interfere with the award impugned in the appeal and the appeal fails and is dismissed. However, in the fact situation of the case, the insurance company is at liberty to recover the amount from the owner, if it is so advised. No costs.

Miscellaneous petitions, if any, pending in the MACMA shall stand closed.

S.V.BHATT, J

Date: 03.12.2015

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