



WEB COPY

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 06.10.2016

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THE HON'BLE DR.JUSTICE S.VIMALA

W.P (MD) No.10200 of 2016

K.Muthuramalingam

... Petitioner

vs.

1. The Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation (Kumbakonam) Ltd.,
Represented by its Managing Director,
Karaikudi Region,
27, New Railway Station Road,
Kumbakonam.
 2. The General Manager,
The Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation (Kumbakonam) Ltd.,
Karaikudi Region, Maruthupathi,
Karaikudi, Sivagangai.
 3. The Administrator,
The Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation Pension Fund Trust,
Thiruvalluvar House, Pallavan Salai,
Chennai.
- ... Respondents

Prayer: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying for the issuance of a Writ of Mandamus, directing the respondents to settle the petitioner's retirement benefits including Earned Leave Wages for 80 days and Medical Leave Wages for 82 days for a period from 03.10.2013 to 23.12.2013 and also commutation of pension based on his representation dated 25.04.2016 with reasonable rate of interest.

For Petitioner	: Mr.G.M.Xavier
For R1 & R2	: Mr.D.Sivaraman
For R3	: Mr.A.P.Muthupandian

O R D E R

You can be young without money but you can't be old without it.

..Tennessee Williams

The benefits bestowed by law upon an employee in recognition of his committed continuous loyal and devoted duty by payment of the pension, gratuity, leave salary etc. are in the nature of property.



2.This right to property cannot be taken away without following due process of law, as right to property has been recognised under Article 300-A of the Constitution of India.

3.It is an accepted position that Gratuity and pension are not the bounties. The concern expressed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court impressing that the retirement dues must be paid in time, is reflected, in the case of Dr.Uma Agarwal vs. State of U.P., reported in (1999) 3 SCC 438, and the observation needs as under:-

"....grant of pension is not a bounty but a right of the government servant. The Government is obliged to follow the Rules mentioned in the earlier part of this order in letter and in spirit. Delay in settlement of retiral benefits is frustrating and must be avoided at all costs. Such delays are occurring even in regard to family pensions for which too there is a prescribed procedure. This is indeed unfortunate. In cases where a retired government servant claims interest for delayed payment, the Court can certainly keep in mind the time-schedule prescribed in the Rules/Instructions apart from other relevant factors applicable to each case."

4.The Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation is a State as defined under Article 12 of the Constitution of India. It is expected to be a model employer and as a State, it is expected to ensure the enjoyment of the fundamental rights to its employees.

5.Alleging that after retirement, the only source of survival is the terminal benefits and if it is not paid as per the time schedule prescribed under various enactments, that it would amount to violation of fundamental rights, this petition has been filed.

6.It is appropriate to consider the time limit prescribed under payment of gratuity Act, to understand the need for the timely payment of retirement dues. The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972 reads as under:

"4.Payment of gratuity:

(1) Gratuity shall be payable to an employee on the termination of his employment after he has rendered continuous service for not less than five years,-

(a) on his superannuation, or

(b) on his retirement or resignation, or

(c) on his death or disablement due to accident or disease;

Provided that the completion of continuous service of five years shall not be necessary where the termination of the employment of any employee is due to death or



Provided further that in the case of death of the employee, gratuity payable to him shall be paid to his nominee or, if no nomination has been made, to the heirs.

Explanation.- For the purposes of this section, disablement means such disablement as incapacitates an employee for the work which he was capable of performing before the accident or disease resulting in such disablement.

(2) to (6)"

7.Delay in payment:

Rule 45-A of the Tamil Nadu Pension Rules, 1978 provides that interest shall be payable on the belated payment beyond a period of two months from the date of retirement of a Government Servant.

8.The Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court in the case of Government of Tamil Nadu, Rep. by its Secretary to Government, Revenue Department and the District Collector, Erode vs. M.Deivasigamani, reported in 2009 (3) MLJ 01 held that an employee is entitled to interest on belated payment of pension and other retiral benefits, even in the absence of statutory rules / administrative instructions or guidelines and that he can claim interest under Part III of the Constitution, relying on Articles 14, 19 and 21 of the Constitution.

9.Coming to the facts of the present case, the petitioner was inducted to service as Trainee at Puthukottai Branch with effect from 24.06.1986 in the respondent Corporation and he retired from service on 30.06.2016 on reaching the age of superannuation.

10.He has filed this writ petition seeking for a direction to the respondents to pay the retirement benefits.

11.The First Bench of this Court in similar matter has passed an order dated 12.06.2015 in W.A.(MD) Nos.383 to 457 of 2015, issuing direction to the transport Corporations to settle the terminal benefits of its employees in equal monthly installments and to pay 6% interest on the terminal benefits payable to the workman. The Bench has also held that workman is entitled to 18% interest for the defaulted period of installments.

12.In these circumstances, the writ petition is disposed of with the following directions:-

i)A direction is issued to the transport corporation to settle the terminal benefits of the petitioner that are yet to be settled, in twelve equal monthly installments;



ii) The first installment shall commence by making payment on or before the 10th of January 2017 and the amount in each of the remaining installments shall be paid on or before 10th of every succeeding month;

iii) The said terminal amount shall carry interest @ 6% per annum, as per the Division Bench judgment referred to above. In case of delay in making installments, the interest payable could be 18% for the delayed period;

iv) The aforesaid direction to settle the terminal benefits would not preclude the workman to question the computation of any of the terminal benefits, if the same is paid lesser than the amount to which, he is entitled to receive. Likewise, if the petitioner has any grievance that he is entitled to interest for the amount already settled, he can agitate the same as per law, if he is entitled. No costs.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (CRL Side)

/True Copy/

Sub Assistant Registrar

To

1. The Managing Director,
Tamil Nadu State Transport
Corporation (Kumbakonam) Ltd.,
Karaikudi Region,
27, New Railway Station Road,
Kumbakonam.
2. The General Manager,
The Tamil Nadu State Transport
Corporation (Kumbakonam) Ltd.,
Karaikudi Region, Maruthupathi,
Karaikudi, Sivagangai.
3. The Administrator,
The Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation Pension Fund Trust,
Thiruvalluvar House, Pallavan Salai,
Chennai.

+1cc to Mr.D.Sivaraman, Advocate, SR.No.60476

+1cc to Mr.G.M.Xavier, Advocate, SR.No.59980

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06.10.2016