

**BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT**

Orders Reserved on 16.09.2016
Orders Pronounced on 26.10.2016

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CORAM:**THE HON'BLE DR.JUSTICE S.VIMALA****W.P(MD) No.7952 of 2016**

M.Selvaraj

... Petitioner

-vs-

1.The State Express Transport
Corporation (Tamil Nadu) Ltd.,
Represented by its Managing Director,
Pallavan Salai, Chennai -2.

2.The Administrator,
Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation
Pension Fund Trust, Thiruvalluvar House,
Pallavan Salai, Chennai -2.

... Respondents

Common Prayer: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India for the issuance of Writ of Declaration declaring the action of the respondents in resolving to pay the commuted value of pension payable to the petitioner in 24 equal monthly installments from March, 2016, without interest for the belated payment of the same as illegal, arbitrary and violative of Articles 14 and 21 of Constitution of India and consequently directing the respondents to settle commuted value of pension of the petitioner in one lump sum with interest at the rate 18% per annum payable from the date of his retirement to till the date of payment of the said amount within a stipulated time.

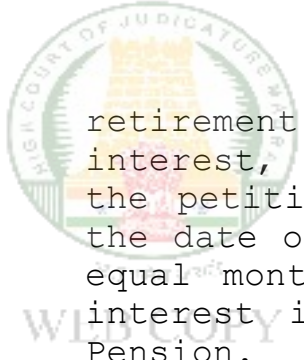
For Petitioner	:	Mr.A.Ragul
For R1	:	Mr.K.Sathiyasingh
For R2	:	Mr.A.P.Muthupandian

ORDER

'A retired Government official is sensitive to delay in drawing monetary benefits. And to avoid posthumous satisfaction of the pecuniary expectation of the superannuated public servant not unusual in Government', it has become necessary to issue directions, in several cases for early payment of those dues.--- Krishna Iyer, J. in the case of *State of Mysore v. C.R. Sheshadri and Ors. reported in 1974-I-LLJ-301 (SC)*.

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2.The petitioner claiming himself to have suffered financially as well as psychologically on account of belated payment of



retirement benefits, has filed this writ petition claiming interest, in respect of those belated payments. The grievance of the petitioner is that commuted value of pension is not paid on the date of retirement and the same is paid by way of twenty four equal monthly installments, commencing from March, 2016. But no interest is paid for the belated payment of Commuted Value of Pension.

3.This writ petition has been filed seeking direction to the respondents to pay interest at the rate of 18% p.a. for the belated payment of commuted value of pension, within the time limit that may be fixed by this Court.

4. **Facts:**

The petitioner served as Technical Assistant under the respondents corporation with effect from 14.09.1978. After periodical promotion, he was promoted as Junior Engineer and he retired from service with effect from 31.07.2014 and the petitioner claims 18% interest p.a. for the belated payment of the petitioner's retirement dues.

5.The contention of the petitioner is that the retirement benefits ought to have been paid on the date of retirement or atleast, reasonably within a short period immediately after retirement. It is pointed out that as the payment was not made so, but made belatedly, the respondent is liable to pay interest.

6.The learned counsel for the petitioner relied upon the following provisions of law and the reported decisions and contended that if the payment is not duly made in accordance with the time prescribed, under the Law, then the petitioner is entitled to claim interest.

7.It is appropriate to consider those provisions and decisions. Pointing out that it is imperative for the respondents

(a) to keep in mind the time schedule prescribed in the rules/instructions;

(b) to initiate various steps towards grant of retirement benefits well in advance prior to the date of retirement;

(c) to realise that there is liability even to pay compound interest and

(d) to pay interest even in the absence express provisions, the following decisions are relied upon:-

(i) In the case of **Government of Tamil Nadu vs. M. Deivasigamani**, reported in **2009 (3) MLJ 1**, this Court has held as follows:-

"The contention of the appellant that as per the Government norms, interest can be paid only on Death-cum-Retirement Gratuity, in case of delay and the same cannot be awarded to any other retiral benefits, **is not tenable**, in view of the decision of the Supreme Court in S.K.Dua v. State of Haryana reported in 2008 (3) SCC 44. "



(ii) In the decision in **Uma Agrawal vs State Of U.P. And Anr.** reported in 1999 (3) SCC 438, the Hon'ble Supreme Court held as under:-

"We have referred in sufficient detail to the Rules and instructions which prescribe the time-schedule for the various steps to be taken in regard to the payment of pension and other retiral benefits. **This we have done to remind the various Governmental Departments of their duties in initiating various steps at least two years in advance of the date of retirement.** If the Rules/instructions are followed strictly much of the litigation can be avoided and retired Government servants will not feel harassed because, after all, grant of pension is not a bounty but a right of the Government servant. 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 ever 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.**"

(iii) In the case of **Vijay L. Mehrotra v. State of U.P. & Ors** reported in **JT 2000 (5) SC 171**, the Hon'ble Supreme Court had granted interest on, inter alia, the delayed payment of the **leave encashment amount** at the rate of 18% per annum. The relevant portion of the said Supreme Court decision is as under:-

"2. The appellant retired from service on 31st August, 1997. From the response, filed by the respondent, it is clear that most of the payments of the retiral benefits to her were made long after she retired on 31st August, 1997. The details of the payments so made are as under:

S.No.	Particulars	Amount Paid	Date
(i)	GPF 90%	Rs. 1,80,899.00	27.11.1997
(ii)	GPF 10%	Rs. 20,751.00	25.04.1998
(iii)	GIS	Rs. 13,379.00	27.02.1998
(iv)	Enchashment of leave	Rs. 41,358.00	27.09.1998
(v)	Arrears of pay	Rs. 15,495.00	27.09.1998
(vi)	Gratuity	Rs. 1,09,753.00	05.12.1998
(vii)	Commuted pension	Rs. 20,484.00	05.12.1998
(viii)	Detained amount	Rs. 45,000.00	05.11.1999



8. The further contention of the learned counsel for the petitioner is that even in the absence of rules/administrative instructions or Government orders, the petitioner is entitled to interest based upon the provisions of the constitution and in order to support the proposition, the following decision is relied upon:-

(i) In *S.K. Dua vs State Of Haryana & Anr* reported in 2008 (3) SCC 44, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has held as follows:-

".....the grievance voiced by the appellant appears to be well- founded that he would be entitled to interest on such benefits. If there are Statutory Rules occupying the field, the appellant could claim payment of interest relying on such Rules. If there are Administrative Instructions, Guidelines or Norms prescribed for the purpose, the appellant may claim benefit of interest on that basis. But **even in absence Statutory Rules, Administrative Instructions or Guidelines, an employee can claim interest under Part III of the Constitution relying on Articles 14, 19 and 21 of the Constitution.** The submission of the learned counsel for the appellant, that retiral benefits are not in the nature of bounty is, in our opinion, well-founded and needs no authority in support thereof"

9. The learned counsel for the petitioner would also submit that the interest can be awarded either at 18% or at 9% and as per the orders in the Writ Appeal (MD)Nos.383 to 457 of 2015, dated 12.06.2015 and that this Court while ordering the retirement dues, has ordered payment by installment along with interest at 6% p.a. and this Court also has to maintain the consistency.

10. Following the Division Bench Judgment of this Court, the Courts are consistently passing orders for payment of retirement dues with interest at 6% p.a. with default interest of 18% p.a.

11. Accordingly, the respondents are directed to pay the interest due (at rate of 6% p.a.) on the retirement dues already paid, within a period of six weeks from the date of receipt of a copy of this order, failing which, the default interest would be 18% p.a.

12. This writ Petition is ordered accordingly. No costs.

sd/-

Assistant Registrar (CS-I)

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Sub Assistant Registrar



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+1CC to Mr.K.Sathiyasingh, Advocate Sr.No.64926

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**Pre-delivery Order made in
W.P(MD) No.7952 of 2016
26.10.2016**