

HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH, BILASPUR**WRIT PETITION (S) NO. 1727 OF 2019**

Aagam Singh S/o Suklal Singh Aged About 43 Years R/o Village Kosmarra, Post Rampur, P. S. Salahewara, Tahsil Chhui-Khadan, District Rajnandgaon Chhattisgarh.

...Petitioner(s)

Versus

1. The State Of Chhattisgarh Through The Secretary, Forest Department, New Mantralaya, Mahanandi Bhawan, Hasaud, Naya Raipur District Raipur Chhattisgarh.
2. The Principal Chief Conservator Of Forest Arenya Bhavan, Medical College Road, Raipur District Raipur Chhattisgarh.
3. The Conservator Of Forest Durg Circle, District Durg Chhattisgarh.
4. The Divisional Forest Officer Khairagarh Forest Division Khairagarh, District Rajnandgaon Chhattisgarh.
5. The Forest Circle Officer Forest Circle Gandai, District Rajnandgaon Chhattisgarh.

... Respondent(s)

For Petitioner	:	Shri Bharat Rajput, Advocate.
For Respondents-State	:	Shri Sameer Behar, Panel Lawyer.

Hon'ble Shri Justice P. Sam Koshy

Order on Board

12.03.2019.

1. The challenge in the present writ petition is to the order dated 05/10/2018 (Annexure P/6) passed by the respondents whereby the claim for regularization of the petitioner has been rejected. The rejection by the respondent was on the ground that petitioner do not fulfill the requirements under the circular dated 05/03/2008 and moreover the said benefit was extended as a one time measure for those persons eligible when the circular was published.
2. Learned counsel for the petitioner submits that so far as the service of the petitioner is concerned, there is an order in his favour by the labour Court dated 20.05.2008 wherein, it has been categorically held that the petitioner was working as Chowkidar from 1984 to 2003 when he was abruptly discontinued. The discontinuance was

subjected to challenge in the labour Court. The labour Court held that the discontinuance is bad in law, and have ordered for reinstatement in service on his previous post.

3. Pursuant to the award dated 20.05.2008, the petitioner has been reinstated in service in the year 2008 and since then he is in continuous employment. According to the counsel for the petitioner the said award of the labour Court has not been challenged before any other forum and as such the award has become final. Counsel for the petitioner further submits that in the light of the judgment of Division Bench of this Court in the case of **Tukaram Vs. State of Chhattisgarh, WPS No. 1703/2015 and others**, analogous writ petitions decided on 16.05.2017, the petitioner has to be given the advantage of counting his service from the date of his initial appointment till date and the entire intervening period has to be treated as continuous service and thereby the case of the petitioner should have been considered, in the light of the circular dated 05.03.2008.
4. The State counsel however opposing the petitioner, submits that the petitioner would not be entitled for any relief as sought and the impugned order, Annexure (P-6) seems to be a factually justified order. State counsel further submits that it is a case where the petitioner has raised a claim before the labour Court after about 4 years and therefore that intervening 4 years period cannot be counted. He further refers to the judgment of Tukaram (Supra) wherein he submits that judgment would also state that it is the period during which the petitioner was litigating before the labour Court that would be counted for continuity in service, not for the date during which he had not raised the industrial dispute.
5. Given the aforesaid facts and the circumstances of the case, it would be relevant at this juncture to refer to the paragraph 26 of the judgment of Tukaram (Supra). For ready reference, it has been reproduce herein under :-

“26. Accordingly, these Writ Petitions are allowed. The question of law discussed earlier to be decided in these petitions is answered in the affirmative in favour of the petitioners-workers holding that they would not fall in the category of litigious worker and that they would be entitled for continuity of service for the period they were out of employment while they were litigating before the Labour Court.”

6. From the aforesaid observations, it is apparently clear that this Court's decision was clear on this count that it is the litigating period for which the petitioner would be entitled for the benefit. Facts of the present case when considered from the judgment of the labour Court, it appears that he has worked between 1984 to 2003 thereafter he was removed. The removal has been held illegal by an order passed in 2008. Thereafter, he has been reinstated. The dispute was raised by the petitioner for the first time in the year 2007, when the reference was made to the labour Court. Between 2003 to 2007, the petitioner had infact not worked anywhere neither had he challenged his removal before any forum. Keeping in view the judgment of the Division Bench in the case of Tukaram (Supra), it would clearly reflect that the litigating period for petitioner would be between 2007 to 2008. Thus, it is only from 2007 onwards, the petitioner would be deemed to be in continuous service. In the aforesaid factual back drop, the total length of service so far as the petitioner is concerned, would be between 1984 to 2003 and from the year 2007 till date as he has since been reinstated after the award of the labour Court. If we take the said two periods that is from 1984 to 2003 and 2007 till date, apparently the petitioner has put in more than 30 years of service and the initial appointment of the petitioner was prior to 31.12.1997, therefore, the respondent authorities would have to accordingly reconsider the case of the petitioner and pass a fresh order, so far as his claim for regularization is concerned.

7. Keeping in view the circular dated 05.03.2008, the writ petition accordingly stands disposed off and the impugned order (Annexure P/6) to that extent stands set aside/quashed. Let a fresh order be passed by the respondent authorities within a period of 90 days from the date of receipt of copy of this order.

Sd/-
(P. Sam Koshy)
Judge

inder