



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT
DATED: 12.07.2019
CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE S.M.SUBRAMANIAM

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W.P.(MD) No.903 of 2015

S.Selvakumar

... Petitioner

vs.

The Superintending Engineer
TANGEDCO
Tirunelveli Electricity Distribution Circle
Tirunelveli

... Respondent

PRAYER: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India for issuance of writ of certiorarified mandamus calling for the records of the impugned order of respondent in Ka.No.020300/282/Ni.Pi.3/U.3/Ko.Va.Ve/14 dated 08.09.2014 and quash the same.

For Petitioner : Mr.H.Arumugam
For Respondent : Mr.G.Kasinathadurai

O R D E R

The order of rejection, dated 08.09.2014, passed by the respondent, rejecting the claim of the writ petitioner for appointment on compassionate grounds, on the ground that the writ petitioner was a minor during the relevant point of time, is under challenge in the present writ petition.

2. The learned counsel appearing for the writ petitioner states that the father of the writ petitioner was employed as Foreman Grade-I in Tamil Nadu Electricity Board and died on 25.04.2008, while he was in service. The mother of the writ petitioner submitted an application seeking appointment on compassionate grounds to the writ petitioner on 20.04.2011. The said application was rejected by the authorities competent, on the ground that the writ petitioner was minor during the relevant point of time. Thereafter, once again, an application was filed on 25.07.2014, after the writ petitioner attaining the age of majority. The said application was also rejected, on the ground that applications submitted after a lapse of three years from the date of the death of the employee cannot be entertained. Relying on the proceedings, the impugned order states that if the legal heirs of the deceased employee are minors while applying for



appointment on compassionate grounds, then they are not entitled to submit application, after a lapse of three years from the date of the death of the employee. On this ground, the claim of the writ petitioner for appointment on compassionate grounds was rejected.

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3. The counter affidavit filed by the respondents states that the first application submitted during the year 2011 was rejected on the ground that the writ petitioner was a minor. The second application, dated 25.07.2014, was also rejected on the ground that the application was not submitted within the prescribed period of three years from the date of the death of the employee and therefore, the same cannot be entertained as per the Board proceedings in B.P.Ms(FB) No.46 (Adm.Br), dated 13.10.1995. The respondent, in support of his contentions, relied upon the decision of the Honourable Division Bench of this Court in the case of the **Inspector General of Prisons, Tiruchirapalli District and another vs. P.Marimuthu**, reported 2016 (5) CTC 125.

4. The Honourable Supreme Court of India, in the in the case of **Government of India and another vs. P.Venkatesh**, in Civil Appeal No.2425 of 2019, dated 01.03.2019, has held as follows:

"The primary difficulty in accepting the line of submissions, which weighed with the High Court, and were reiterated on behalf of the respondent in these proceedings, is simply this: Compassionate appointment, it is well-settled, is intended to enable the family of a deceased employee to tide over the crisis which is caused as a result of the death of an employee, while in harness. The essence of the claim lies in the immediacy of the need. If the facts of the present case are seen, it is evident that even the first recourse to the Central Administrative Tribunal was in 2007, nearly eleven years after the death of the employee. In the meantime, the first set of representations had been rejected on 3 January 1997. The Tribunal, unfortunately, passed a succession of orders calling upon the appellants to consider and then re-consider the representations for compassionate appointment. After the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting rejected the representation on 13 November 2007, it was only in 2010 that the Tribunal was moved again, with the same result. These successive orders of Tribunal for re-consideration of the representation cannot obliterate the effect of the initial delay in moving the Tribunal for compassionate appointment over a decade after the death of the deceased employee. This 'dispose of the representation' mantra is increasingly permeating



the judicial process in the High Courts and the Tribunals. Such orders may make for a quick or easy disposal of cases in overburdened adjudicatory institutions. But, they do no service to the cause of justice. The litigant is back again before the Court, as this case shows, having incurred attendant costs and suffered delays of the legal process. This would have been obviated by calling for a counter in the first instance, thereby resulting in finality to the dispute. By the time, the High Court issued its direction on 9 August 2016, nearly twenty one years had elapsed since the date of the death of the employee."

5. The Apex Court in the case of **State of Himachal Pradesh and another vs. Shashi Kumar**, reported in (2019) 3 SCC 653, has ruled as follows:

"18. While considering the rival submissions, it is necessary to bear in mind that compassionate appointment is an exception to the general rule that appointment to any public post in the service of the State has to be made on the basis of principles which accord with Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution. Dependants of a deceased employee of the State are made eligible by virtue of the policy on compassionate appointment. The basis of the policy is that it recognises that a family of a deceased employee may be placed in a position of financial hardship upon the untimely death of the employee while in service. It is the immediacy of the need which furnishes the basis for the State to allow the benefit of compassionate appointment. Where the authority finds that the financial and other circumstances of the family are such that in the absence of immediate assistance, it would be reduced to being indigent, an application from a dependent member of the family could be considered. The terms on which such applications would be considered are subject to the policy which is framed by the State and must fulfil the terms of the policy. In that sense, it is a well-settled principle of law that there is no right to compassionate appointment. But, where there is a policy, a dependent member of the family of a deceased employee is entitled to apply for compassionate appointment and to seek consideration of the application in accordance with the terms and conditions which are prescribed by the State.

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35. Insofar as the individual facts pertaining to the respondent are concerned, it has emerged from the record that the writ petition before the High Court was instituted on 11-5-2015. The application for compassionate appointment was submitted on 8-5-2007. On 15-1-2008 the Additional Secretary had required that the amount realised by way of pension be included in the income statement of the family. The respondent waited thereafter for a period in excess of seven years to move a petition under Article 226 of the Constitution. In Umesh Kumar Nagpal, this Court has emphasised that the basis of a scheme of compassionate appointment lies in the need of providing immediate assistance to the family of the deceased employee. This sense of immediacy is evidently lost by the delay on the part of the dependant in seeking compassionate appointment.

36. We are not impressed with the submission that delay should not be taken into account since Para(8) of the policy/scheme contemplates that in a situation where all the dependent children of the deceased employee have yet to attain the age of majority, the time-limit for submission of an application is extended until the first of the children attains the age of twenty-one years. A case where each of the children is a minor falls in a different class altogether. This cannot be equated with a situation where a dependant of a deceased employee who was a major on the date of death fails to submit an application within a reasonable period of time from the death of the employee. This aspect of delay has been dealt with in other decisions of this Court, including *State of J & K v. Sajad Ahmed Mir and Local Admn. Deptt. v. M. Selvanayagam*.

37. We see no reason or purpose in now directing the State to reconsider its decision in the case of the respondent which would only result in another round of fruitless litigation. In our view, the respondent is debarred from seeking compassionate appointment by the delay as well as by the lapse of time which has taken place."

6. This Court is of the considered opinion that the father of the writ petitioner died on 25.04.2008 and the application was filed by the writ petitioner, after he attaining the age of superannuation, on 25.07.2014, after a lapse of six years from the date of the death of his father / employee. The very issue with respect to the benefit of the scheme of compassionate appointment to the minors were already decided by this Court in the case of *Inspector General of Prisons* (cited supra).



Therefore, this Court cannot show any leniency now, after a lapse of 11 years from the date of the death of the deceased employee, in view of the legal principles settled by the Honourable Division Bench of this Court as well as by the Honourable Supreme Court cited supra.

7. Accordingly, the writ petition stands dismissed. No costs.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (AD-I)

// True Copy //

Sub Assistant Registrar (CS)

To
The Superintending Engineer,
TANGEDCO
Tirunelveli Electricity Distribution Circle
Tirunelveli.

+1cc to Mr.H.Arumugam, Advocate, SR.No. 75393

+1cc to Mr.G.Kasinathadurai, Advocate, SR.No.75163

krk

W.P. (MD) No.903 of 2015
12.07.2019

NA (23.07.2019) 5P : 4C