

HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH AT BILASPUR

Writ Petition (S) No. 2928 of 2021

1. Smt. Pushpa Devi Sahu W/o Late Shri Hraday Ram Sahu Aged About 58 Years R/o Ward No. 2, Shivaji Chowk, Gariyaband, Police Station - City Kotwali, Tahsil And Distt. Gariyaband (Chhattisgarh).
2. Alok Kumar Sahu S/o Late Shri Hraday Ram Sahu Aged About 28 Years R/o Ward No. 2, Shivaji Chowk, Gariyaband, Police Station- City Kotwali, Tahsil And Distt. Gariyaband (Chhattisgarh).

---Petitioner(s)

Versus

1. State of Chhattisgarh Through Its Secretary, Department of Panchayat And Rural Development, Mahanadi Bhawan, Mantralaya, Police Station And Post - Rakhi, Atal Nagar, New Raipur, District- Raipur (Chhattisgarh)
2. Director Office of Director, Department of Panchayat and Rural Development, Indravati Bhawan, Police Station and Post - Rakhi, Atal Nagar, New Raipur, District- Raipur (Chhattisgarh)
3. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Zila Panchayat, Gariyaband, District- Gariyaband (Chhattisgarh)
4. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Janpad Panchayat, Gariyaband, District- Gariyaband (Chhattisgarh)

---Respondents

For Petitioners	:	Shri Abhishek Pandey and Ms. Deepika Sannat, Advocates.
For State	:	Ms. Binu Sharma, Panel Lawyer.

Hon'ble Shri Justice P. Sam Koshy

Order on Board

28.06.2021

1. Aggrieved by the rejection of the application for grant of compassionate appointment, the present writ petition has been filed. The rejection has been on the ground that the applicant has an elder brother who is in government employment and therefore under the policy his claim stands rejected.
2. The facts of the case is that the Husband of petitioner No.1 and the father of petitioner No.2 was working under the respondents as an Accountant and who died in harness on 01.07.2020. On the date of death the deceased employee i.e. the father of the petitioner No.2 was survived by the widow of the deceased, the petitioner No.2 and his wife and two

children. In addition, the petitioner has an elder brother and a sister. The elder brother is already in government employment, married long ago and has his own family and children living separately even before the deceased had expired. Similarly the sister of the petitioner also is already married. Thus, on the date of death of the deceased it was only the petitioners who were dependent.

3. On the death of the deceased namely Hraday Ram Sahu, the petitioner No.2 had moved an application for compassionate appointment, however, vide the impugned order the application has been rejected on the sole ground that the brother of the petitioner is in a government employment and under the policy on account of member in the family of the deceased being a government employee, the claim has been rejected.
4. It is the contention of the petitioners that since the elder brother got his employment long back and he has already married on 21.04.2015 and he has his own wife and children and also live separately and not supporting financially, they do not fall within the definition of dependent of the deceased. Moreover, the elder brother who is already married and has his own family dependent upon him, cannot be considered to be a permanent source of income for the petitioner-applicant and his widowed mother for sustaining themselves. To that extent the authorities ought to have conducted an enquiry and thereafter should have taken a decision.
5. The counsel for the petitioners also submitted that even in the Rashan Card that was issued, the name of eldest son who was already married was not reflected along with the family of the deceased whereas the name of the petitioners were reflected which strengthens his case of being dependent upon the income of the deceased.

6. The State counsel on the other hand opposing the petition submits that since the elder brother of the petitioner is already in government employment, in terms of the policy for compassionate appointment the candidature of the applicant has been rejected and in the absence of any challenge to the policy, the decision of the respondent cannot be said to be bad.
7. At this juncture, it would be relevant to take note of a recent judgement passed by this Court in WPS No. 1025/2020 (Nandini Pradhan Vs. State of Chhattisgarh & Others). The said Writ Petition was allowed on 18.2.2020 wherein the Court has relied upon the judgment passed on an earlier occasion in the case of Smt. Sulochana Netam Vs. State of Chhattisgarh & Others in WPS No. 2728/2017 decided on 23.11.2017 wherein this Court had allowed the said Writ Petition and set aside the earlier order passed by the authorities and had remitted the matter back for a fresh consideration of the claim of Petitioner after due verification of dependency aspect, firstly upon the deceased employee and secondly whether the brothers of Petitioner who are in government employment are providing any assistance to Petitioner or not and also whether those brothers have married and have their own family or not and whether they are staying along with Petitioner or not. These are the facts which ought to have been verified while rejecting the claim of Petitioner in the present Writ Petition and which does not seem to have been considered by the authorities and they simply passed an order on hypertechnical ground specifically disentitling the Petitioner for claiming compassionate appointment in the event of family members of deceased employee being in government employment.

- 8.** This Court is of the firm view that the intention by which the said clause inserted by the State Government in the policy of compassionate appointment was to ensure that the compassionate appointment can be given to a person whose is more needy. It never meant that in the event of there being somebody in the government employment in the family of deceased employee, the claim for compassionate appointment would stand rejected only on that ground. Moreover, in the opinion of this Court the possibility cannot be ruled out of the so called earning members and the so called persons who are in government employment from among the family members of deceased employee having their own family liabilities and in some cases are far away from the place of deceased employee and staying along with their own family. The rejection of the claim for compassionate appointment to a person who was directly dependant upon the earnings of deceased employee would be arbitrary and would also be in contravention of the intentions of framing the scheme for compassionate appointment.
- 9.** In the case of Sulochana (supra), in paragraph 9, this Court dealing with the said issue has held as under:-

“9. In the considered opinion of this Court, in a case, where claim of compassionate appointment is made on the ground that the other member of the family had started living separately and not providing any financial help to the remaining dependent members of the family, who are at lurch, factual enquiry ought to be made by the competent authority to arrive at its own conclusion of facts as to whether this assertion of other earning member living separately is factually correct or not. If it is found, as a matter of fact, that the other earning member of the family at the time of death had already started living separately and not providing financial assistance to the remaining dependents of the family, compassionate appointment must follow to eligible dependent of

the family. However, in the enquiry, if it is found that the claim is only to get employment without there being any need because other earning member of the family is not living separately and providing financial support, compassionate appointment may not follow. The aforesaid enquiry is required to be done even though the policy does not categorically state so. The State should consider by incorporating amendments in the policy to deal with this such contingency where it is found that on the date of death of government servant, the other earning member was living separately and not providing any financial help.”

- 10.** The aforesaid principles of law laid down in the case of Sulochana (supra) have been followed by this Court in a large number of cases and that is the consistent stand of the various branches of this Court in the past many years now. This Court is also in the given circumstances inclined to hold that the rejection of the application of Petitioner for compassionate appointment by a single line order only on the basis of the clause mentioned in the scheme or policy of compassionate appointment of the State Government would not be sustainable. There ought to have been some sort of preliminary enquiry so far as dependency part is concerned conducted by the Respondents prior to reaching to a conclusion.
- 11.** Considering the fact that there is an elder brother in government employment, what needs to be verified is whether the said person can be brought within the ambit of dependent. Whether the said person can be compelled to take care of the petitioner and his widowed mother particularly when he has his own family and children to take care of and he has been living separately altogether. It would have been a different case if the government employee i.e. the elder brother to the petitioner could have been unmarried and was living along with the petitioners which

could have forced us to infer that he was there for sustenance of the family.

- 12.** In the absence of any such situation, the policy of the State Govt. to that extent so far as compassionate appointment is concerned, has to be read down to be decided only after an enquiry which needs to be conducted by the respondents, ascertaining the dependency part and also in respect of any support which the petitioners are getting from the elder brother. For the aforesaid reason, the impugned order needs to be reconsidered and the rejection of the candidature of the petitioner No.2 by strict interpretation of the policy would not be sustainable.
- 13.** Thus, for all the aforesaid reasons, the impugned order, Annexure P-3 dated 21.12.2020 deserves to be and is accordingly set aside. The authorities are directed to re-consider the claim of the Petitioner No.2 afresh taking into consideration the observations made by this Court in the preceding paragraphs and take a fresh decision at the earliest within an outer limit of 90 days from the date of receipt of copy of this order.
- 14.** Writ Petition is allowed and disposed of accordingly.

Sd/-
(P. Sam Koshy)
Judge