

HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH AT BILASPUR

Writ Petition (S) No. 4378 of 2021

1. Sandeep Kumar Kuldeep S/o Late Shivprasad Kuldeep Aged About 30 Years Caste - Gada, Residence of Village - Mangaltarai, Post - Singhola, Tahsil - Daundi, District - Balod (Chhattisgarh)

---Petitioner(s)

Versus

1. State of Chhattisgarh Through The Secretary, Forest Department, Mahanadi Bhawan Mantralay, Atal Nagar, Nawa Raipur District Raipur (Chhattisgarh)
2. The Divisional Forest Officer Forest Division Balod, District - Balod (Chhattisgarh)

---Respondents

For Petitioner	:	Shri Krishna Tandon, Advocate.
For State	:	Ms. Binu Sharma, Panel Lawyer.

Hon'ble Shri Justice P. Sam Koshy

Order on Board

19.08.2021

1. Aggrieved by the impugned order dated 15.06.2021, the present writ petition has been filed. Vide the impugned order the respondents have rejected the application of the petitioner for grant of compassionate appointment. The reason for rejecting the application was on the ground that the petitioner's brother was found to be in government employment.
2. Brief facts relevant for disposal of the writ petition is that the father of the petitioner was working under the respondents as Forest Guard and who died in harness on 03.09.2019. On the date of death of the deceased, he was survived by his wife, the widow and two children i.e. the petitioner and his elder brother. The elder brother to the petitioner was already married and in government employment and residing separately elsewhere from the family along with his own family.
3. The contention of the petitioner is that on the date of death of the deceased it was the petitioner and his mother i.e. widow of the deceased

employee alone who were totally dependent upon the income of the deceased. It is categorically submitted by the petitioner that since the elder brother of the petitioner was already married and he had his own wife and children to take care of, coupled with the fact that he was residing elsewhere staying separately from the family. Further they were not in any manner providing financial assistance to the petitioner and his mother for sustenance. This has led to the petitioner to move an application for compassionate appointment which however has subsequently been rejected vide impugned order leading to filing of the present writ petition.

4. According to the petitioner, this aspect of dependency part ought to have been verified by the respondent authorities before rejecting the claim. According to the petitioner only because elder brother in the family, though living separately with his own family and has his own responsibilities, the claim of the petitioner could not have been rejected by the respondents in a mechanical manner by strict interpretation of the policy for compassionate appointment of the State Govt.
5. 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.
6. 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 dis-entitling the Petitioner for claiming compassionate appointment in the event of family members of deceased employee being in government employment.

7. 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.

- 8.** 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.”

- 9.** 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.

- 10.** 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.
- 11.** 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 by strict interpretation of the policy would not be sustainable.
- 12.** Thus, for all the aforesaid reasons, the impugned order dated 15.06.2021 deserves to be and is accordingly set aside. The authorities are directed to re-consider the claim of the Petitioner 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.

13. Writ Petition is allowed and disposed of accordingly.

Sd/-
(P. Sam Koshy)
Judge

inder