

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT PATNA
Civil Writ Jurisdiction Case No.15824 of 2021

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M/S Sudheer Kumar Jha through its Proprietor Sudheer Kumar Jha @ Sudhir Kumar Jha, aged about 37 Years, Male, Son of Babu Narayan Jha, Resident of Village - Benipur, P.S. - Benipur, District - Darbhanga.

... .. Petitioner/s

Versus

1. The State of Bihar through the Principal Secretary, Department of Building Construction Department, Government of Bihar, Patna.
2. The Principal Secretary, Department of Building Construction Department, Government of Bihar, Patna.
3. The Engineer-in-Chief cum Additional Commissioner cum Special Secretary, Department of Building Construction, Bihar, Patna.
4. The Chief Engineer (Patna), Department of Building Construction Department, Government of Bihar, Patna.
5. The Superintending Engineer, Patliputra Building Division, Department of Building Construction Department, Bihar, Patna.
6. The Executive Engineer, Patliputra Building Division, Department of Building Construction Department, Bihar, Patna.

... .. Respondent/s

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Appearance :

For the Petitioner/s	:	Mr.Ranjeet Kumar, Advocate Mr. Ayush Kumar, Advocate
For the Respondent/s	:	Mr. Manoj Kumar Ambasta, SC-26

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CORAM: HONOURABLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE
and
HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE S. KUMAR
ORAL JUDGMENT
(Per: HONOURABLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE)

(The proceedings of the Court are being conducted by Hon'ble the Chief Justice/ Hon'ble Judges through Video Conferencing from their residential offices/residences. Also, the Advocates and the Staffs joined the proceedings through Video Conferencing from their residences/offices.)

Date : 08-02-2022

Heard learned counsel for the parties.

Petitioner has prayed for the following relief(s):-



- i. For setting aside the order dated 14.06.2021 contained in Memo No.2922 issued under the signature of Engineer-in-Chief-cum Additional Commissioner-cum- Special Secretary, Department of Building Construction, Bihar, Patna whereby and whereby suspended the contractors registration of the petitioner for a period of three years in terms of Bihar Contractor Registration Rules, 2007 with effect from the date of order without considering the reply that no forged or fabricated documents was uploaded rather uploaded wrong experience certificate which was not at all required with respect to the work in question, is just a matter of mistake occurred inadvertently.
- ii. For any other relief/reliefs for which petitioner deemed entitled too.

We notice that the impugned order debarring the petitioner for participating in any of the works of the respondent-Department, for a period of three years does not contain any reason. The order entails civil consequences, inasmuch as petitioner's right to participate in the contracts to be awarded by the respondents would stand stunted. This Court in **CWJC No.2625 of 2021 titled as Satyendra Kumar and Co. Const. Pvt. Ltd. Company versus The State of Bihar & Ors. decided on 24.01.2022**, while extensively dealing with the



issue of following due process, as stipulated under the Bihar Contractors Registration Rules, 2007, has already warned the State to be careful in future.

In the instant case, we also reiterate the principles laid down by Hon'ble the Apex Court in **Kranti Associates (P) Ltd. v. Masood Ahmed Khan, (2010) 9 SCC 496**, emphasizing the need for the authorities to assign reasons. The relevant portion is extracted hereinunder:-

“47. Summarising the above discussion, this Court holds:

(a) In India the judicial trend has always been to record reasons, even in administrative decisions, if such decisions affect anyone prejudicially.

(b) A quasi-judicial authority must record reasons in support of its conclusions.

(c) Insistence on recording of reasons is meant to serve the wider principle of justice that justice must not only be done it must also appear to be done as well.

(d) Recording of reasons also operates as a valid restraint on any possible arbitrary exercise of judicial and quasi-judicial or even administrative power.

(e) Reasons reassure that discretion has been exercised by the decision-maker on relevant grounds and by disregarding extraneous considerations.

(f) Reasons have virtually become as indispensable a component of a decision-making process as observing principles of natural justice by judicial, quasi-judicial and even by administrative bodies.

(g) Reasons facilitate the process of judicial review by superior courts.

(h) The ongoing judicial trend in all countries committed to rule of law and constitutional governance is in favour of reasoned decisions based on relevant facts. This is virtually the lifeblood of judicial decision-making justifying the principle that reason is the soul of justice.



(i) Judicial or even quasi-judicial opinions these days can be as different as the judges and authorities who deliver them. All these decisions serve one common purpose which is to demonstrate by reason that the relevant factors have been objectively considered. This is important for sustaining the litigants' faith in the justice delivery system.

(j) Insistence on reason is a requirement for both judicial accountability and transparency.

(k) If a judge or a quasi-judicial authority is not candid enough about his/her decision-making process then it is impossible to know whether the person deciding is faithful to the doctrine of precedent or to principles of incrementalism.

(l) Reasons in support of decisions must be cogent, clear and succinct. A pretence of reasons or “rubber-stamp reasons” is not to be equated with a valid decision-making process.

(m) It cannot be doubted that transparency is the sine qua non of restraint on abuse of judicial powers. Transparency in decision-making not only makes the judges and decision-makers less prone to errors but also makes them subject to broader scrutiny. (See David Shapiro in *Defence of Judicial Candor* [(1987) 100 *Harvard Law Review* 731-37] .)

(n) Since the requirement to record reasons emanates from the broad doctrine of fairness in decision-making, the said requirement is now virtually a component of human rights and was considered part of Strasbourg Jurisprudence. See *Ruiz Torija v. Spain* [(1994) 19 *EHRR* 553] *EHRR*, at 562 para 29 and *Anyia v. University of Oxford* [2001 *EWCA Civ* 405 (CA)] , wherein the Court referred to Article 6 of the European Convention of Human Rights which requires,

“adequate and intelligent reasons must be given for judicial decisions”.

(o) In all common law jurisdictions judgments play a vital role in setting up precedents for the future. Therefore, for development of law, requirement of giving reasons for the decision is of the essence and is virtually a part of “due process”.



For the aforesaid reasons, we quash and set aside the order dated 14.06.2021 (Annexure-4) passed by respondent no.3, namely the Engineer-in-Chief-cum- Additional Commissioner-cum- Special Secretary, Department of Building Construction, Bihar, Patna, suspending the registration of the petitioner as a contractor for a period of three years and the matter is remanded back to the concerned authority to pass a speaking and reasoned order afresh, in accordance with law, within a period of one month from the date of receipt/production of a copy of this order.

The petition stands allowed in the above terms.

Interlocutory Application, if any, shall stand disposed of.

(Sanjay Karol, CJ)

(S. Kumar, J)

K.C.Jha//-

AFR/NAFR	
CAV DATE	
Uploading Date	
Transmission Date	

