

22.04.2022
SL No. 292
Court No. 24
CP

**In The High Court At Calcutta
Constitutional Writ Jurisdiction
Appellate Side**

WPA 19869 of 2021

**LAKSHMI KANTA PANDEY
Vs.
STATE OF WEST BENGAL & ORS.**

Mr. Biswajit Mal

... for the petitioner.

Mr. S. K. Ghosh
Mr. Manoj Kurmi

....for the State.

Affidavit-of-service filed in Court today is taken on record.

The petitioner was a Head Teacher who retired from service on 31.03.2016. The first Pension Payment Order was issued on 01.03.2016 and the arrear pension was disbursed on 31.05.2016. Under the ROPA Rules, 2019 there was revision of the pension and gratuity amount payable to the petitioner. The revised pension payment order was issued on 25.02.2021 and the arrear revised pension was disbursed on 26.02.2021 in terms of ROPA 2019. The petitioner claims interest on delayed payment of revised gratuity as also revised arrear pension.

I have heard learned counsel for the petitioner and considered the orders passed by this court in similar facts.

It is settled law that the right of a retired employee to get his/her retiral dues as and when the same becomes due and payable. If payment of the retiral dues is delayed the retired employee is surely entitled to get some interest for such delayed payment.

In the present case, it was the bounden duty of the State to disburse the amount on the due date. If it has failed to do so and has released such amount after unexplained delay, it is obliged to pay interest to the retired employee. Pension and gratuity are welfare provisions aimed at maintaining the life of a retired employee and his/her dependents. This is compensatory in nature.

In view of the aforesaid, I direct the concerned Treasury Officer to pay interest to the writ petitioner at the rate of 5% per annum on the revised gratuity and revised arrear pension calculated on and from 14.02.2020 till the date of actual payment, **provided the delay caused was not attributable to the petitioner.**

The Treasury Officer shall not be obliged to pay interest if the delay was caused on account of any lapse on the part of the teacher.

Such payment is to be made within eight weeks from the date of communication of the certified copy of this order to the concerned authorities.

The concerned respondent authority is directed to take appropriate steps in accordance with law against the erring officer(s) for whose fault there has been delay in releasing the retirement benefit to the petitioner.

Since no affidavit in opposition has been invited, the allegations contained in the writ petition are deemed not to be admitted.

The writ petition stands disposed of.

Urgent photostat certified copy of this order be supplied to the parties, if applied for, as early as possible.

(Amrita Sinha, J.)