

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ORISSA AT CUTTACK

W.P.(C) No. 1239 of 2022

Pradipta Kumar Mohanty

.....

Petitioner

Mr. B.P. Satapathy, Advocate

-Versus-

State of Odisha & another

.....

Opposite Parties

State Counsel

CORAM:

DR. JUSTICE B.R. SARANGI

ORDER

20.01.2022

Order No.
01.

This matter is taken up through video conferencing.

2. Heard learned counsel for the parties.

3. The petitioner has filed this application seeking direction to the opposite parties to give him promotion to the post of Forest Ranger from 23.12.2016, i.e. the date from which his immediate juniors got such promotions, and to grant him all consequential service and financial benefits including further promotion within a stipulated time.

4. Moot question involves whether promotion of an employee can be withheld for indefinite period on the premises of pendency of vigilance proceeding and disciplinary proceedings over a period of times.

5. This Court considering such situation has already settled the position of law keeping the sealed cover promotion aspect in view of pendency of the Disciplinary Proceeding and/or Vigilance Proceeding for decades becomes bad.

6. Fact involving the case reveals that there is disciplinary proceeding pending against the petitioner and also the vigilance proceeding pending in the court of Special Judge, Vigilance, Sambalpur arising out of Sambalpur Vigilance P.S. Case No. 84 of 2014. Involving the allegation against the petitioner, it appears the Vigilance Proceeding initiated in the year 2014, but charge-sheet involving the Vigilance case is yet to be submitted. However the said vigilance case is yet to be disposed of. Pleading also further made clear that Disciplinary Proceeding pending against the petitioner is yet to be disposed of. In this

background of case an allegation is made that promotion of the petitioner taking effect in the year 2016 has been kept in sealed cover only on the premises that a vigilance proceeding involving the petitioner is pending since 2014 and a disciplinary proceeding on the self same allegation is pending since 2015. For the settled position of law, this Court in disposal of the writ petition observes, petitioner cannot suffer for the long pendency of the vigilance proceeding and disciplinary proceeding. It is also not known when the Vigilance Proceeding initiated in the year 2014 will come to end. It is keeping in this view, this Court in disposal of the writ petition directs the Principal Secretary to Govt. of Odisha, Forest and Environment Department, Bhubaneswar-O.P. No.1 and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Odisha, opposite party no.2 to give promotions to the petitioner to the rank of Forest Ranger from 23.12.2016, i.e. from the date of his juniors and batchmates got such promotions. However the promotions of the petitioner as per direction of this Court shall be subject to the ultimate outcome in the Vigilance Proceeding and Disciplinary Proceeding. Further it is also clarified that the promotions given to the petitioner to different ranks shall not confer equity in the event, he will ultimately lose the Vigilance Proceeding and Disciplinary Proceeding. Entire exercise shall be completed within four weeks from the date of communication of this direction. It is also clarified that upon promotions, petitioner shall also be entitled to all consequential benefits.

7. With the above observation and directions, the writ petition thus stands disposed of.

8. As the restrictions due to resurgence of COVID-19 situation are continuing, learned counsel for the parties may utilize a print out of the order available in the High Court's website, at par with certified copy, subject to attestation by the concerned advocate, in the manner prescribed, vide Court's Notice No.4587 dated 25th March, 2020, as modified by Court's Notice No. 4798 dated 15th April, 2021, and Court's Office Order circulated vide Memo Nos.514 and 515 dated 7th January, 2022.

Arun

(DR. B.R. SARANGI)
JUDGE

