

* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

Judgment reserved on: 17.01.2023

% **Judgment delivered on: 23.01.2023**

+ **LPA 405/2021**

RAVI KANT SINHA Appellant

Through: Mr. Santosh Kumar Pandey,
Advocate

versus

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY Respondent

Through: Ms. Ginny J. Rautray with
Mr. Navdeep Singh and Ms. Tanvi
Bansal, Advs.

CORAM:
HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUBRAMONIUM PRASAD

J U D G M E N T

SATISH CHANDRA SHARMA, C.J.

REVIEW PETITION NO.214/2022

1. The present review petition is arising out of Judgment dated 02.08.2022 passed in LPA 405/2021, *Ravi Kant Sinha v. Jawaharlal Nehru University*. The brief facts relevant for adjudication of this instant Review are that the Review Petitioner had approached this Court by filing W.P. (C) 8516/2021 wherein he prayed for this Court to issue a writ of mandamus to

the Respondent to give effect to an ad hoc promotion from 05.06.2018 along with other consequential benefits, including arrears of salary, higher grade pay, etc.

2. The aforesaid Writ Petition was disposed of by a Judgment dated 17.08.2021 of a learned Single Judge, against which an LPA was preferred. The LPA has also been dismissed.

3. The facts of the case further reveal that the concerned Writ Petition was the third Writ Petition preferred by the Petitioner. The first Writ Petition preferred by the Petitioner was numbered as W.P.(C) No. 13715/2018, the second one preferred was W.P.(C) 1018/2019 and the third Writ Petition out of which the instant proceedings have arisen, was numbered as W.P.(C.) No. 8516/2021.

4. This Court after taking into consideration all the aspects has upheld the Judgment delivered by the learned Single Judge. Paragraphs 14 to 19 of the judgment dated 02.08.2022 read as under:

“14. The Respondent, keeping in view the urgency of service as Post of Deputy Registrar were lying vacant, have filled up the post of Deputy Registrars by posting persons on Deputation and the posts – which were filled up by posting persons on deputation, were, in fact, the posts where the post holder had to leave the University to work elsewhere on Deputation. Meaning thereby, certain other persons were holding lien against those posts, and, therefore, it not a case where a regular vacancy which was available in the University has been filled up by posting persons on Deputation to the post of Deputy Registrar.

15. So far as the posts of Deputy Registrar in the University are concerned, there are 11 posts of Deputy Registrar. There are 6 Deputy Registrar in the University, out of which 3 are on

Deputation, and 1 on lien. Meaning thereby, 5 posts of Deputy Registrar are vacant, and 2 were to be filled up by direct recruitment, and 3 by way of promotion.

16. The record of the case reveals that the process of filling up the post of Direct Recruitment is under process, and the petitioner, the moment he completed the eligibility criteria, has been granted promotion on Ad-hoc post with effect from year 2021.

17. Undisputedly, the Petitioner was also granted regular promotion just after 20 days of Ad-hoc Promotion, as he was fulfilling the eligibility criteria, and, therefore, keeping in view the earlier order passed by this Court, the Learned Single Judge were justified in dismissing the Writ Petition.

18. The Petitioner in the earlier round of litigation i.e. by filing W.P.(C.) No. 1675/2018 and 1018/2019 had challenged the appointment made to the Deputy Registrar by way of Deputation, and was claiming appointment with effect from 2018 to the post of Deputy Registrar. No relief was granted to the Petitioner for granting him Ad-hoc promotion with effect from 2018, and third Petition was a repetitive attempt on the part of the Petitioner for claiming the reliefs which were not granted in the earlier two rounds of litigation.

19. In view of the above, this Court does not find any reason to interfere with the order passed by the learned Single Judge, and, therefore, the present LPA stands dismissed.”

5. Learned Counsel for the Review Petitioner, at the outset, has argued before this Court that the Judgment is erroneous, and the LPA should be listed for appropriate adjudication afresh. In the opinion of this Court, on a perusal of the submissions, documents on record, pleadings and the Judgement of this Court dated 02.08.2022 which is under review vide this instant Review Petition, Learned Counsel has not been able to establish any error apparent on the face of record. Even if for the sake of argument it is

considered that the Judgement under review is erroneous and the Petitioner is aggrieved by the same, his remedy lies elsewhere. A Review Petition is not the correct recourse to be taken by the Petitioner as there is no error apparent on the face of the record. This Court cannot sit as an Appellate Authority/ Forum for adjudication on merits against a reasoning propounded by a Court within the narrow scope of Review Jurisdiction.

6. The grounds for review of a Judgement have been clearly laid down in a plethora of cases by this Court and the Hon'ble Supreme Court. To elucidate the principles for the same, reliance can be placed on the Judgement of ***Meera Bhanja (Smt.) v. Nirmala Kumari Choudury (Smt.)***, (1995) 1 SCC 170, wherein the Hon'ble Supreme Court, while explaining the scope of Review Jurisdiction of the High Courts has held as under –

“8. It is well settled that the review proceedings are not by way of an appeal and have to be strictly confined to the scope and ambit of Order 47, Rule 1, CPC. In connection with the limitation of the powers of the court under Order 47, Rule 1, while dealing with similar jurisdiction available to the High Court while seeking to review the orders under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, this Court, in the case of Aribam Tuleswar Sharma v. Aribam Pishak Sharma [(1979) 4 SCC 389 : AIR 1979 SC 1047], speaking through Chinnappa Reddy, J., has made the following pertinent observations: (SCC p. 390, para 3)

“It is true as observed by this Court in Shivdeo Singh v. State of Punjab [AIR 1963 SC 1909], there is nothing in Article 226 of the Constitution to preclude the High Court from exercising the power of review which inheres in every Court of plenary jurisdiction to prevent miscarriage of justice or to correct grave and palpable errors

committed by it. But, there are definitive limits to the exercise of the power of review. The power of review may be exercised on the discovery of new and important matter or evidence which, after the exercise of due diligence was not within the knowledge of the person seeking the review or could not be produced by him at the time when the order was made; it may be exercised where some mistake or error apparent on the face of the record is found; it may also be exercised on any analogous ground. But, it may not be exercised on the ground that the decision was erroneous on merits. That would be the province of a court of appeal. A power of review is not to be confused with appellate power which may enable an appellate court to correct all manner of errors committed by the subordinate court.”

9. *Now it is also to be kept in view that in the impugned judgment, the Division Bench of the High Court has clearly observed that they were entertaining the review petition only on the ground of error apparent on the face of the record and not on any other ground. So far as that aspect is concerned, it has to be kept in view that an error apparent on the face of record must be such an error which must strike one on mere looking at the record and would not require any long-drawn process of reasoning on points where there may conceivably be two opinions. We may usefully refer to the observations of this Court in the case of Satyanarayan Laxminarayan Hegde v. Mallikarjun Bhavanappa Tirumale [AIR 1960 SC 137 : (1960) 1 SCR 890] wherein, K.C. Das Gupta, J., speaking for the Court has made the following observations in connection with an error apparent on the face of the record:*

An error which has to be established by a long-drawn process of reasoning on points where there may conceivably be two opinions can hardly be said to be an error apparent on the face of the

record. Where an alleged error is far from self-evident and if it can be established, it has to be established, by lengthy and complicated arguments, such an error cannot be cured by a writ of certiorari according to the rule governing the powers of the superior court to issue such a writ.

.....

15. *In our view the aforesaid approach of the Division Bench dealing with the review proceedings clearly shows that it has overstepped its jurisdiction under Order 47, Rule 1 CPC by merely styling the reasoning adopted by the earlier Division Bench as suffering from a patent error. It would not become a patent error or error apparent in view of the settled legal position indicated by us earlier. In substance, the Review Bench has reappreciated the entire evidence, sat almost as court of appeal and has reversed the findings reached by the earlier Division Bench. Even if the earlier Division Bench's findings regarding C.S. Plot No. 74 were found to be erroneous, it would be no ground for reviewing the same, as that would be the function of an appellate court. Learned counsel for the respondent was not in a position to point out how the reasoning adopted and conclusion reached by the Review Bench can be supported within the narrow and limited scope of Order 47, Rule 1 CPC. Right or wrong, the earlier Division Bench judgment had become final so far as the High Court was concerned. It could not have been reviewed by reconsidering the entire evidence with a view to finding out the alleged apparent error for justifying the invocation of review powers. Only on that short ground, therefore, this appeal is required to be allowed. The final decision dated 8-7-1986 of the Division Bench dismissing the appeal from Appellate Decree No. 569 of 1973 insofar as C.S. Plot No. 74 is concerned as well as the review judgment dated 5-9-1984 in connection with the very same plot, i.e., C.S. Plot No. 74, are set aside and the earlier judgment of the High Court dated 3-8-1978 allowing the second*

appeal regarding suit Plot No. 74 is restored. The appeal is accordingly allowed. In the facts and circumstances of the case, there will be no order as to costs.”

Further, in the case of **Shri Ram Sahu (dead) through LRs v. Vinod Kumar Rawat & Ors.**, Civil Appeal No. 3601/2020, vide Judgement dated 03.11.2020, the Hon’ble Supreme Court, while explaining the power of Review has held as under –

“6. While considering the aforesaid question, the scope and ambit of the Court’s power under Section 114 read with Order 47 Rule 1 CPC is required to be considered and for that few decisions of this Court are required to be referred to.

6.1 In the case of Haridas Das vs. Usha Rani Banik (Smt.) and Others, (2006) 4 SCC 78 while considering the scope and ambit of Section 114 CPC read with Order 47 Rule 1 CPC it is observed and held in paragraph 14 to 18 as under :

“14. In Meera Bhanja v. Nirmala Kumari Choudhury, (1995) 1 SCC 170 it was held that: “8. It is well settled that the review proceedings are not by way of an appeal and have to be strictly confined to the scope and ambit of Order 47 Rule 1 CPC. In connection with the limitation of the powers of the court under Order 47 Rule 1, while dealing with similar jurisdiction available to the High Court while seeking to review the orders under Article 226 of the Constitution, this Court, in Aribam Tuleswar Sharma v. Aribam Pishak Sharma, (1979) 4 SCC 389 speaking through Chinnappa Reddy, J. has made the following pertinent observations: ‘It is true there is nothing in Article 226 of the Constitution to preclude the High Court from exercising the power of review which inheres in every court of plenary jurisdiction to prevent miscarriage of justice or to correct grave and palpable errors committed by it.

But, there are definitive limits to the exercise of the power of review. The power of review may be exercised on the discovery of new and important matter or evidence which, after the exercise of due diligence was not within the knowledge of the person seeking the review or could not be produced by him at the time when the order was made; it may be exercised where some mistake or error apparent on the face of the record is found, it may also be exercised on any analogous ground. But, it may not be exercised on the ground that the decision was erroneous on merits. That would be the province of a court of appeal. A power of review is not to be confused with appellate power which may enable an appellate court to correct all manner of errors committed by the subordinate court.”

15. A perusal of Order 47 Rule 1 shows that review of a judgment or an order could be sought: (a) from the discovery of new and important matters or evidence which after the exercise of due diligence was not within the knowledge of the applicant; (b) such important matter or evidence could not be produced by the applicant at the time when the decree was passed or order made; and (c) on account of some mistake or error apparent on the face of the record or any other sufficient reason.

16. In Aribam Tuleshwar Sharma v. Aribam Pishak Sharma, AIR 1979 SC 1047, this Court held that there are definite limits to the exercise of power of review. In that case, an application under Order 47 Rule 1 read with Section 151 of the Code was filed which was allowed and the order passed by the Judicial Commissioner was set aside and the writ petition was dismissed. On an appeal to

this Court it was held as under: (SCC p. 390, para 3) “It is true as observed by this Court in Shivdeo Singh v. State of Punjab, AIR 1963 SC 1909 there is nothing in Article 226 of the Constitution to preclude a High Court from exercising the power of review which inheres in every court of plenary jurisdiction to prevent miscarriage of justice or to correct grave and palpable errors committed by it. But, there are definitive limits to the exercise of the power of review. The power of review may be exercised on the discovery of new and important matter or evidence which, after the exercise of due diligence was not within the knowledge of the person seeking the review or could not be produced by him at the time when the order was made; it may be exercised where some mistake or error apparent on the face of the record is found; it may also be exercised on any analogous ground. But, it may not be exercised on the ground that the decision was erroneous on merits. That would be the province of a court of appeal. A power of review is not to be confused with appellate powers which may enable an appellate court to correct all manner of errors committed by the subordinate court.”

17. The judgment in Aribam case has been followed in Meera Bhanja. In that case, it has been reiterated that an error apparent on the face of the record for acquiring jurisdiction to review must be such an error which may strike one on a mere looking at the record and would not require any longdrawn process of reasoning. The following observations in connection with an error apparent on the face of the record in Satyanarayan Laxminarayan Hegde v. Millikarjun Bhavanappa Tirumale, AIR 1960 SC 137 were also noted:

“An error which has to be established by a longdrawn process of reasoning on points where there may conceivably be two opinions can hardly be said to be an error apparent on the face of the record. Where an alleged error is far from selfevident and if it can be established, it has to be established, by lengthy and complicated arguments, such an error cannot be cured by a writ of certiorari according to the rule governing the powers of the superior court to issue such a writ.”

18. It is also pertinent to mention the observations of this Court in *Parsion Devi v. Sumitri Devi*, (1997) 8 SCC 715. Relying upon the judgments in *Aribam* and *Meera Bhanja* it was observed as under:

“9. Under Order 47 Rule 1 CPC a judgment may be open to review inter alia if there is a mistake or an error apparent on the face of the record. An error which is not selfevident and has to be detected by a process of reasoning, can hardly be said to be an error apparent on the face of the record justifying the court to exercise its power of review under Order 47 Rule 1 CPC. In exercise of the jurisdiction under Order 47 Rule 1 CPC it is not permissible for an erroneous decision to be ‘reheard and corrected’. A review petition, it must be remembered has a limited purpose

and cannot be allowed to be ‘an appeal in disguise’.”

6.2 In the case of Lily Thomas vs. Union of India, (2000) 6 SC 224, it is observed and held that the power of review can be exercised for correction of a mistake but not to substitute a view. Such powers can be exercised within the limits of the statute dealing with the exercise of power.

It is further observed in the said decision that the words “any other sufficient reason” appearing in Order 47 Rule 1 CPC must mean “a reason sufficient on grounds at least analogous to those specified in the rule” as was held in Chhajju Ram vs. Neki, AIR 1922 PC 112 and approved by this Court in Moran Mar Basselios Catholicos vs Most Rev. Mar Poulose Athanasius, AIR 1954 SC 526. 12.3 In the case of Inderchand Jain vs. Motilal, (2009) 14 SCC 663 in paragraphs 7 to 11 it is observed and held as under:

7. Section 114 of the Code of Civil Procedure (for short “the Code”) provides for a substantive power of review by a civil court and consequently by the appellate courts. The words “subject as aforesaid” occurring in Section 114 of the Code mean subject to such conditions and limitations as may be prescribed as appearing in Section 113 thereof and for the said purpose, the procedural conditions contained in Order 47 of the Code must be taken into consideration. Section 114 of the Code although does not prescribe any limitation on the power of the court but such limitations have been provided for in Order 47 of the Code; Rule 1 whereof reads as under:

“17. The power of a civil court to review its judgment/decision is traceable in Section 114 CPC. The grounds on which review can be sought are enumerated in Order 47 Rule 1 CPC, which reads as under:

'1. Application for review of judgment.—(1) Any person considering himself aggrieved—

(a) by a decree or order from which an appeal is allowed, but from which no appeal has been preferred,

(b) by a decree or order from which no appeal is allowed, or

(c) by a decision on a reference from a Court of Small Causes,

and who, from the discovery of new and important matter or evidence which, after the exercise of due diligence, was not within his knowledge or could not be produced by him at the time when the decree was passed or order made, or on account of some mistake or error apparent on the face of the record, or for any other sufficient reason, desires to obtain a review of the decree passed or order made against him, may apply for a review of judgment of the court which passed the decree or made the order.' ”

8. An application for review would lie inter alia when the order suffers from an error apparent on the face of the record and permitting the same to continue would lead to failure of justice. In Rajendra Kumar v. Rambai this Court held: (SCC p. 514, para 6)

“6. The limitations on exercise of the power of review are well settled. The first and foremost requirement of entertaining a review petition is that

the order, review of which is sought, suffers from any error apparent on the face of the order and permitting the order to stand will lead to failure of justice. In the absence of any such error, finality attached to the judgment/order cannot be disturbed.”

9. *The power of review can also be exercised by the court in the event discovery of new and important matter or evidence takes place which despite exercise of due diligence was not within the knowledge of the applicant or could not be produced by him at the time when the order was made. An application for review would also lie if the order has been passed on account of some mistake.*

Furthermore, an application for review shall also lie for any other sufficient reason.

10. *It is beyond any doubt or dispute that the review court does not sit in appeal over its own order. A rehearing of the matter is impermissible in law. It constitutes an exception to the general rule that once a judgment is signed or pronounced, it should not be altered. It is also trite that exercise of inherent jurisdiction is not invoked for reviewing any order. 11. Review is not appeal in disguise. In Lily Thomas v. Union of India this Court held: (SCC p. 251, para 56) “56. It follows, therefore, that the power of review can be exercised for correction of a mistake but not to substitute a view. Such powers can be exercised within the limits of the statute dealing with the exercise of power. The review cannot be treated like an appeal in disguise.”*

7. *The dictionary meaning of the word “review” is “the act of looking, offer something again with a view to correction or*

improvement". It cannot be denied that the review is the creation of a statute. In the case of *Patel Narshi Thakershi vs. Pradyumansinghji Arjunsinghji*, (1971) 3 SCC 844, this Court has held that the power of review is not an inherent power. It must be conferred by law either specifically or by necessary implication. The review is also not an appeal in disguise.

8. What can be said to be an error apparent on the face of the proceedings has been dealt with and considered by this Court in the case of *T.C. Basappa vs. T.Nagappa*, AIR 1954 SC 440. It is held that such an error is an error which is a patent error and not a mere wrong decision. In the case of *Hari Vishnu Kamath vs. Ahmad Ishaque*, AIR 1955 SC 233, it is observed as under:

"It is essential that it should be something more than a mere error; it must be one which must be manifest on the face of the record. The real difficulty with reference to this matter, however, is not so much in the statement of the principle as in its application to the facts of a particular case. When does an error cease to be mere error, and become an error apparent on the face of the record? Learned counsel on either side were unable to suggest any clearcut rule by which the boundary between the two classes of errors could be demarcated."

8.1 In the case of *Parsion Devi vs. Sumitri Devi*, (Supra) in paragraph 7 to 9 it is observed and held as under:

7. It is well settled that review proceedings have to be strictly confined to the ambit and scope of Order 47 Rule 1 CPC. In *Thungabhadra Industries Ltd. v. Govt. of A.P.*, AIR 1964 SC 1372 this Court opined:

"What, however, we are now concerned with is whether the statement in the order of September

1959 that the case did not involve any substantial question of law is an 'error apparent on the face of the record'). The fact that on the earlier occasion the Court held on an identical state of facts that a substantial question of law arose would not per se be conclusive, for the earlier order itself might be erroneous. Similarly, even if the statement was wrong, it would not follow that it was an 'error apparent on the face of the record', for there is a distinction which is real, though it might not always be capable of exposition, between a mere erroneous decision and a decision which could be characterised as vitiated by 'error apparent'. A review is by no means an appeal in disguise whereby an erroneous decision is reheard and corrected, but lies only for patent error."

8. Again, in *Meera Bhanja v. Nirmala Kumari Choudhury*, (1995) 1 SCC 170 while quoting with approval a passage from *Aribam Tuleswar Sharma v. Aribam Pishak Sharma* (supra) this Court once again held that review proceedings are not by way of an appeal and have to be strictly confined to the scope and ambit of Order 47 Rule 1 CPC.

9. Under Order 47 Rule 1 CPC a judgment may be open to review inter alia if there is a mistake or an error apparent on the face of the record. An error which is not selfevident and has to be detected by a process of reasoning, can hardly be said to be an

error apparent on the face of the record justifying the court to exercise its power of review under Order 47 Rule 1 CPC. In exercise of the jurisdiction under Order 47 Rule 1 CPC it is not permissible for an erroneous decision to be “reheard and corrected”. A review petition, it must be remembered has a limited purpose and cannot be allowed to be “an appeal in disguise”.

8.2 *In the case of State of West Bengal and Others vs. Kamal Sengupta and Anr., (2008) 8 SCC 612, this Court had an occasion to consider what can be said to be “mistake or error apparent on the face of record”. In para 22 to 35 it is observed and held as under:*

“22. The term “mistake or error apparent” by its very connotation signifies an error which is evident per se from the record of the case and does not require detailed examination, scrutiny and elucidation either of the facts or the legal position. If an error is not selfevident and detection thereof requires long debate and process of reasoning, it cannot be treated as an error apparent on the face of the record for the purpose of Order 47 Rule 1 CPC or Section 22(3)(f) of the Act. To put it differently an order or decision or judgment cannot be corrected merely because it is erroneous in law or on the ground that a different view could have been taken by the court/tribunal on a point of fact or law. In any case, while exercising the power of review, the court/tribunal concerned cannot sit in appeal over its judgment/decision.

23. We may now notice some of the judicial precedents in which Section 114 read with Order 47 Rule 1 CPC and/or Section 22(3)(f) of the Act have been interpreted and limitations on the power of the civil court/tribunal to review its judgment/decision have been identified.

24. *In Rajah Kotagiri Venkata Subbamma Rao v. Rajah Vellanki Venkatrama Rao (1899) 27 IA 197* the Privy Council interpreted Sections 206 and 623 of the Civil Procedure Code and observed: (IA p.205)

“... Section 623 enables any of the parties to apply for a review of any decree on the discovery of new and important matter and evidence, which was not within his knowledge, or could not be produced by him at the time the decree was passed, or on account of some mistake or error apparent on the face of the record, or for any other sufficient reason. It is not necessary to decide in this case whether the latter words should be confined to reasons strictly ejusdem generic with those enumerated, as was held in *Roy Meghraj v. Beejoy Gobind Burrall*, ILR (1875) 1 Cal 197. In the opinion of Their Lordships, the ground of amendment must at any rate be something which existed at the date of the decree, and the section does not authorise the review of a decree which was right when it was made on the ground of the happening of some subsequent event.” (emphasis added)

25. *In Hari Sankar Pal v. Anath Nath Mitter*, 1949 FCR 36 a five Judge Bench of the Federal Court while considering the question whether the Calcutta High Court was justified in not granting relief to nonappealing party, whose position was

*similar to that of the successful appellant, held:
(FCR p. 48)*

“That a decision is erroneous in law is certainly no ground for ordering review. If the court has decided a point and decided it erroneously, the error could not be one apparent on the face of the record or even analogous to it. When, however, the court disposes of a case without advertent to or applying its mind to a provision of law which gives it jurisdiction to act in a particular way, that may amount to an error analogous to one apparent on the face of the record sufficient to bring the case within the purview of Order 47 Rule 1, Civil Procedure Code.”

26. *In Moran Mar Basselios Catholicos v. Mar Poulouse Athanasius (supra) this Court interpreted the provisions contained in the Travancore Code of Civil Procedure which are analogous to Order 47 Rule 1 and observed:*

“32. ... Under the provisions in the Travancore Code of Civil Procedure which is similar in terms to Order 47 Rule 1 of our Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, the court of review has only a limited jurisdiction circumscribed by the definitive limits fixed by the language used therein.

It may allow a review on three specified grounds, namely, (i) discovery of new and important matter or evidence which, after the exercise of due diligence, was not

within the applicant's knowledge or could not be produced by him at the time when the decree was passed, (ii) mistake or error apparent on the face of the record and (iii) for any other sufficient reason.

It has been held by the Judicial Committee that the words 'any other sufficient reason' must mean 'a reason sufficient on grounds, least analogous to those specified in the rule'."

27. *In Thungabhadra Industries Ltd. v. Govt. of A.P. (supra) it was held that a review is by no means an appeal in disguise whereof an erroneous decision can be corrected.*

28. *In Parsion Devi v. Sumitri Devi (Supra) it was held as under: (SCC p. 716)*

"Under Order 47 Rule 1 CPC a judgment may be open to review inter alia if there is a mistake or an error apparent on the face of the record. An error which is not selfevident and has to be detected by a process of reasoning, can hardly be said to be an error apparent on the face of the record justifying the court to exercise its power of review under Order 47 Rule 1 CPC. In exercise of the jurisdiction under Order 47 Rule 1 CPC it is not permissible for an erroneous decision to be 'reheard and corrected'. There is a clear distinction between an erroneous decision and an error apparent on the face of the record. While the first can

be corrected by the higher forum, the latter only can be corrected by exercise of the review jurisdiction. A review petition has a limited purpose and cannot be allowed to be 'an appeal in disguise'."

29. In *Haridas Das v. Usha Rani Banik*, (supra) this Court made a reference to the Explanation added to Order 47 by the Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act, 1976 and held:

"13. In order to appreciate the scope of a review, Section 114 CPC has to be read, but this section does not even adumbrate the ambit of interference expected of the court since it merely states that it 'may make such order thereon as it thinks fit'. The parameters are prescribed in Order 47 CPC and for the purposes of this lis, permit the defendant to press for a rehearing 'on account of some mistake or error apparent on the face of the records or for any other sufficient reason'. The former part of the rule deals with a situation attributable to the applicant, and the latter to a jural action which is manifestly incorrect or on which two conclusions are not possible. Neither of them postulate a rehearing of the dispute because a party had not highlighted all the aspects of the case or could perhaps have argued them more forcefully and/or cited binding precedents to the court and thereby enjoyed a favourable verdict. This is

amply evident from the Explanation to Rule 1 of Order 47 which states that the fact that the decision on a question of law on which the judgment of the court is based has been reversed or modified by the subsequent decision of a superior court in any other case, shall not be a ground for the review of such judgment. Where the order in question is appealable the aggrieved party has adequate and efficacious remedy and the court should exercise the power to review its order with the greatest circumspection.”

30. *In Aribam Tuleshwar Sharma v. Aribam Pishak Sharma (Supra) this Court considered the scope of the High Courts’ power to review an order passed under Article 226 of the Constitution, referred to an earlier decision in Shivdeo Singh v. State of Punjab (Supra) and observed: (Aribam Tuleshwar case (Supra), SCC p. 390, para 3)*

“3. ... It is true as observed by this Court in Shivdeo Singh v. State of Punjab (Supra), there is nothing in Article 226 of the Constitution to preclude a High Court from exercising the power of review which inheres in every court of plenary jurisdiction to prevent miscarriage of justice or to correct grave and palpable errors committed by it. But, there are definitive limits to the exercise of the power of review. The power of review may be exercised on the discovery of new and important

matter or evidence which, after the exercise of due diligence was not within the knowledge of the person seeking the review or could not be produced by him at the time when the order was made; it may be exercised where some mistake or error apparent on the face of the record is found; it may also be exercised on any analogous ground. But, it may not be exercised on the ground that the decision was erroneous on merits. That would be the province of a court of appeal. A power of review is not to be confused with appellate powers which may enable an appellate court to correct all manner of errors committed by the subordinate court.”

31. In *K. Ajit Babu v. Union of India*, (1997) 6 SCC 473, it was held that even though Order 47 Rule 1 is strictly not applicable to the tribunals, the principles contained therein have to be extended to them, else there would be no limitation on the power of review and there would be no certainty or finality of a decision. A slightly different view was expressed in *Gopabandhu Biswal v. Krishna Chandra Mohanty*, (1998) 4 SCC 447). In that case it was held that the power of review granted to the tribunals is similar to the power of a civil court under Order 47 Rule 1.

32. In *Ajit Kumar Rath v. State of Orissa*, (1999) 9 SCC 596, this Court reiterated that power of review vested in the Tribunal is similar to the one conferred upon a civil court and held: (SCC p. 608, paras 3031) “

30. The provisions extracted above indicate that the power of review available to the Tribunal is the same as has been given to a court under Section 114 read with Order 47 CPC. The power is not absolute and is hedged in by the restrictions indicated in Order 47. The power can be exercised on the application of a person on the discovery of new and important matter or evidence which, after the exercise of due diligence, was not within his knowledge or could not be produced by him at the time when the order was made. The power can also be exercised on account of some mistake or error apparent on the face of the record or for any other sufficient reason. A review cannot be claimed or asked for merely for a fresh hearing or arguments or correction of an erroneous view taken earlier, that is to say, the power of review can be exercised only for correction of a patent error of law or fact which stares in the face without any elaborate argument being needed for establishing it. It may be pointed out that the expression 'any other sufficient reason' used in Order 47 Rule 1 means a reason sufficiently analogous to those specified in the Rule.

31. Any other attempt, except an attempt to correct an apparent error or an attempt not based on any ground set out in Order 47, would

amount to an abuse of the liberty given to the Tribunal under the Act to review its judgment.”

33. *In State of Haryana v. M.P. Mohla*, (2007) 1 SCC 457 this Court held as under: (SCC pp. 465-66, para 27) “27. A review petition filed by the appellants herein was not maintainable. There was no error apparent on the face of the record. The effect of a judgment may have to be considered afresh in a separate proceeding having regard to the subsequent cause of action which might have arisen but the same by itself may not be a ground for filing an application for review.”

34. *In Gopal Singh v. State Cadre Forest Officers’ Assn.*, (2007) 9 SCC 369 this Court held that after rejecting the original application filed by the appellant, there was no justification for the Tribunal to review its order and allow the revision of the appellant. Some of the observations made in that judgment are extracted below: (SCC p. 387, para 40)

“40. The learned counsel for the State also pointed out that there was no necessity whatsoever on the part of the Tribunal to review its own judgment. Even after the microscopic examination of the judgment of the Tribunal we could not find a single reason in the whole judgment as to how the review was justified and for what reasons. No apparent error on the face of the record was pointed, nor was it discussed. Thereby the Tribunal sat as an appellate authority over its own judgment. This was completely impermissible and we

agree with the High Court (Sinha, J.) that the Tribunal has travelled out of its jurisdiction to write a second order in the name of reviewing its own judgment. In fact the learned counsel for the appellant did not address us on this very vital aspect.”

35. The principles which can be culled out from the abovenoted judgments are:

(i) The power of the Tribunal to review its order/decision under Section 22(3)(f) of the Act is akin/analogous to the power of a civil court under Section 114 read with Order 47 Rule 1 CPC.

(ii) The Tribunal can review its decision on either of the grounds enumerated in Order 47 Rule 1 and not otherwise.

(iii) The expression “any other sufficient reason” appearing in Order 47 Rule 1 has to be interpreted in the light of other specified grounds.

(iv) An error which is not selfevident and which can be discovered by a long process of reasoning, cannot be treated as an error apparent on the face of record justifying exercise of power under Section 22(3)(f).

(v) An erroneous order/decision cannot be corrected in the guise of exercise of power of review.

(vi) A decision/order cannot be reviewed under Section 22(3)(f) on the basis of subsequent decision/judgment of a coordinate or larger Bench of the tribunal or of a superior court.

(vii) While considering an application for review, the tribunal must confine its adjudication with reference to material which was available at the

time of initial decision. The happening of some subsequent event or development cannot be taken note of for declaring the initial order/decision as vitiated by an error apparent.

(viii) Mere discovery of new or important matter or evidence is not sufficient ground for review. The party seeking review has also to show that such matter or evidence was not within its knowledge and even after the exercise of due diligence, the same could not be produced before the court/tribunal earlier.”

7. In light of the aforesaid law laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court, this Court does not find any reason to interfere with the order under review as there is no error apparent on face of record warranting review.

8. In the earlier round of litigation as well, no relief was granted to the Petitioner and he is still without any merit contesting that he has been entitled for appointment to the post of Deputy Registrar since 2018.

9. This Court does not find any reason to interfere with the order under Review dated 02.08.2022.

(SATISH CHANDRA SHARMA)
CHIEF JUSTICE

(SUBRAMONIUM PRASAD)
JUDGE

JANUARY 23, 2023

N.Khanna