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**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
BENCH AT AURANGABAD**

44 WRIT PETITION NO. 8188 OF 2024

**SANTOSH SITARAM BHALE AND OTHERS
VERSUS
THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA THROUGH ITS
SECRETARY AND OTHERS**

....

Mr S. B. Choudhari, Advocate for Petitioners
Mr V. M. Kagne, A.G.P. for Respondent Nos.1 & 2
Mr P. D. Suryawanshi, Advocate for Respondent Nos.3 & 4

**CORAM : RAVINDRA V. GHUGE
AND
Y. G. KHOBRADE, JJ.**

DATE : 5th August, 2024

PER COURT:

1. The Petitioners claim to be identically placed. They are aggrieved by the impugned orders dated 10/06/2022. Prayer clause (B) is reproduced hereunder:-

“B] Be please issue appropriate Writ, Order or Direction in the nature of writ, thereby quash and set aside the order Dtd. 10.06.2022 issued by the Respondent No. 4 thereby cancelled the Primary Graduate Pay Scale Order of recovery of surplus payment extent to Petitioners and for that purpose issue necessary orders.”

(2)

2. The learned Advocate for the Petitioners submits that the Petitioners have challenged the impugned order, as well as the Government Resolution dated 13/10/2016. However, by a further Government Resolution issued on 27/06/2022, a Committee has been formed to look into the grievances of the Employees like these Petitioners, who are insisting on the implementation of the legal principle in service jurisprudence i.e. “*equal pay for equal work*”. There is no dispute that, all these Petitioners are Graduate trained teachers and all of them have been granted the pay scale of the Graduate Teacher long ago, which has been altered by the impugned order of Respondent No.3/Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad, Beed.

3. It is undisputed that, prior to the introduction of the Government Resolution dated 13/10/2016, all the Graduate trained teachers have been granted the pay scale of Graduate trained teacher. It is equally undisputed that, by Government Resolution dated 11/08/1999, the State Government had resolved to pay the salary scale available to a Graduate trained teacher. For brevity, if there are 4 Graduate trained teachers in the subject of

(3)

Geology, the Senior Most Teacher would be eligible for the pay scale of a Graduate trained teacher, which would be 25% of the available strength of the eligible teachers. However, in several cases, every Graduate trained teacher was extended the said scale. By the Government Resolution dated 13/10/2016, the proportion of 25% of the Senior Most Graduate Teacher in the subject being eligible for the pay scale commensurate to the position held, was altered and the new proportion of 1/3rd was made applicable. For brevity, if the subject Geography has 3 teachers, 1/3rd, meaning 33 & 1/3rd % of the teachers would be eligible for the pay scale. If there are 6 teachers, 2 would get the pay scale of the Graduate trained teacher. If there are 9 teachers in Geography, who are Graduate trained teachers, 3 Senior Most Teachers would get the pay scale.

4. The grievance of these Petitioners is that, all the Graduate trained teachers were earlier paid the pay scale commensurate to the posts held by them. This position was not altered until the Government Resolution dated 13/10/2016, was introduced. According to the Petitioners, they are further

(4)

aggrieved by the impugned order, wherein the proportion of 1/3rd teachers as per the seniority/subject-wise, was not followed and the proportion was reduced to 25%.

5. The learned Advocate representing the Respondent/Zilla Parishad, Beed, has made a valiant attempt to defend the impugned order. He is supported in his submissions by the learned A.G.P., with equal vehemence. However, when confronted with Clause-3 of the Government Resolution dated 13/10/2016, they fairly submit that the said Government Resolution requires 33% of the Senior Most Graduate trained teachers to be considered for the pay scale, subject-wise, going by their seniority. In view of the above, it is obvious that the impugned order referring to the provision of 25%, instead of the referable Clause-3 of the 2016 Government Resolution of 33 1/3rd %, is unsustainable.

6. The learned A.G.P. and the learned Advocate for the Zilla Parishad, draw our attention to yet another Government Resolution dated 27/06/2022. The Government of Maharashtra

(5)

has formed a Committee. The terms of reference to the Committee, are as under:-

" २. अभ्यास समितीची कार्यकक्षा पूढीलप्रमाणे राहिल: -

उच्च प्राथमिक स्तरावरील २५% शिक्षकांना पदवीधर वेतनश्रेणी देण्यामागील पार्श्वभूमी, सदर शिक्षकांच्या शैक्षणिक / व्यावसायिक अर्हतेमध्ये कालोघात झालेले बदल, तत्संबंधाने सदर शिक्षकांना सरसकट पदवीधर वेतनश्रेणी देण्याची मागणी, त्यामुळे पडणारा आर्थिक भार इ. अनुषंगिक सर्व मुद्द्यांचा सर्वंकष अभ्यास करून शासनास शिफारस करणे.

३. या शासन निर्णयान्वये गठीत करण्यात आलेल्या अभ्यास समितीने उपरोक्त नमूद बाबींच्या अनुषंगाने तीन महिन्यात अहवाल शासनास सादर करावा.

४. अध्यक्ष, अभ्यास समिती आवश्यकतेनुसार सदर समितीवर शासकिय / अशासकिय सदस्यांना आमंत्रित करू शकतील. "

7. It is obvious that the above stated Committee had to submit a report within three months from the date of its constitution. There is no dispute that the Committee is in place.

8. In view of the above, **this Writ Petition is partly allowed.** The impugned order is quashed and set aside.

9. We expect the said Committee constituted under the Government Resolution dated 27/06/2022, to submit its recommendations to the Government, before 15/09/2024. The

(6)

position existing prior to the issuance of the impugned order, is restored. However, being conscious of the fact that, a Committee has been constituted by the Government Resolution dated 27/06/2022, any further decision of the Authorities, would be subject to the recommendations of the Committee, if accepted and implemented by the State Government.

10. In view of the delay and laches, the learned Advocate for the Petitioners submits that, each of these Petitioners would deposit an amount of Rs.500/- as donation to the Advocates' Association of Bombay High Court, Bench at Aurangabad, within 30 days from today.

(Y. G. KHOBRADE, J.)

(RAVINDRA V. GHUGE, J.)

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