



IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION

WRIT PETITION NO.17165 OF 2024

Shamrao S/O Ramchandra Gaikwad

...Petitioner

Versus

The State Of Maharashtra

Throu. it's Sec. General

Administration Dept And Ors.

...Respondents

WITH

WRIT PETITION NO.4885 OF 2023

Shantaram Devji Raut And Ors

...Petitioners

Versus

The State Of Maharashtra

Throu. The Sec. And Ors.

...Respondents

WITH

WRIT PETITION NO.5401 OF 2021

Radhakrishna Pandurang Bhade And Ors

...Petitioners

Versus

Zilla Parishad Thane Thr.

It's Chief Officer And Anr.

...Respondents

...

Adv. Oak Jitendra for the Petitioners.

Adv. Vaidehi Deshmukh a/w Aniket Jadhav & Yashodeep Deshmukh for
Respondent No.3 (thr. Video Conference).

Adv. Bhvana Khichi for Respondent No. 3 in WP/17165/2024.

Adv. Shekhar Bhise for Respondent Nos. 1 & 2.

Adv.P. P. Kakade, Addl. GP a/w S. H. Kankal, AGP for Respondent Nos.
1 & 2.

...

CORAM : RAVINDRA V. GHUGE &
ASHWIN D. BHOBE, JJ.

DATE : 6th DECEMBER, 2024

Per Court :-

1. The Petitioners in these Petitions are admittedly identical placed. An identical cause of action is put forth. The issue is no longer *res integra*. All these Petitioners pray for the benefits of advance increment during the 6th pay commission regime, over a period from 1/10/2006 to 1/10/2015. It is undisputed that the State Government introduced a GR dated 24/08/2017, by which a decision is taken that such benefits of advance increments for excellent work/outstanding work, will not be paid during the 6th pay commission regime.

2. In various judgments of this Court, it was consistently held that the Government Resolution dated 24/08/2017, would operate prospectively and would not have the effect of retrospective denial of advance increments. The State Government and various Zilla Parishads had filed Review Petitions seeking review of various orders passed by this Court. It was *inter-alia* sought to be contended in the said review petitions that, even though the ultimate decision for stoppage of the scheme for advance increments might have been taken on 24/08/2017, it was earlier directed by way of a Circular dated 03/07/2009, to undertake

the exercise of pay fixation as per the 6th Pay Commission Pay scales without taking into consideration the advance increments.

3. By judgment and order dated 30/08/2022, this Court has rejected the Review Petitions after considering all the objections raised by the State Government. It was held that, no specific instructions were issued before 24/08/2017, for discontinuation of the scheme of advance increments. Paragraph Nos.12 to 15 of the judgment and order dated 30/08/2022, passed in Review Application (Civil) No.170 of 2022 in Writ Petition No.13760 of 2019 (***The State of Maharashtra and Anr. Vs. Rupchand S/o. Narayan Shinde and Ors.***), read as under :-

“12. After having heard learned Counsels at length, we find that the review applicants have not been able to point out any specific instructions issued prior to 24.08.2017/04.09.2018 for discontinuation of the schemes for grant of advance increments. Government Resolution dated 27.02.2009 and Circular dated 03.07.2009 do not indicate that any final decision was taken for discontinuation of schemes for advance increments. We proceed to examine the Government Resolution dated 27.02.2009 and Circular dated 03.07.2009 in details.

13. Government Resolution dated 27.02.2009 came to be issued by the State Government essentially for conveying the decision of the State Government about acceptance or otherwise of various recommendations made by the Hakim Committee constituted for implementation of recommendations of the 6th Central

Pay Commission. In Annexure to the said Government Resolution, each recommendation and decision of the State Government thereon have been enumerated. So far as the scheme for advance increment is concerned, the same is to be found at serial number 27 of the Annexure (para 3.24 of Committees Report). In that paragraph, the Committee recommended that for employees/Officers rendering outstanding service, increment @ 4% be awarded instead of 3% and such increment be granted once in 5 years. It was further recommended that since increment at higher rate was being granted, the then existing scheme for grant of one or two advance increments be discontinued. However, in the column 'Decision of State Government' against para 3.24, remark is made stating that 'separate action would be taken by General Administration Department'. As against various other recommendations, the remark 'accepted' has been made. The recommendation made in para 3.24 by the Hakim Committee was not accepted at least on the date of issuance of Government Resolution dated 27.02.2009 and General Administration Department was to take a decision thereon separately. Thus, it cannot be inferred that any specific decision was taken by the State Government on 27.02.2009 for discontinuation of scheme for grant of advance increment. Therefore, we do not find that the orders under review need to be disturbed on the basis of the Government Resolution dated 27.02.2009.

14. Now, we come to the Circular dated 03.07.2009. By the said Circular, it was directed that the issue of discontinuation of scheme for grant of advance increment was under consideration with the State Government and that some time was required for taking final decision. Therefore, it was further directed that temporarily the pay fixation of the employees in the 6th Pay Commission scales be made without considering the advance increments. Thus, the Circular dated 03.07.2009 was clearly issued as a temporary measure. The said circular did not communicate any decision to the effect that the State Government discontinued the scheme for grant of advance increments. Therefore, we find that the reliance

of Mr. Dixit on the Circular dated 03.07.2009 is again of no avail.

15. We have carefully gone through the Government Resolution dated 24.08.2017 and Circular dated 04.09.2018. By the Government Resolution dated 24.08.2017, final decision came to be taken in respect of recommendation made by the Hakim Committee in para 3.24 of its report directing that during the period from 01.10.2006 to 01.10.2015 when revised pay scales as per 6th Pay Commission were admissible, the benefit of advance increments should not be granted. Thus, the final decision on para 3.24 of Committees Report was taken by the State Government only on 24.08.2017. However, instead of simply directing that the scheme for grant of advance increments is discontinued, the State Government sought to give retrospective effect to its decision by directing that the benefit of such advance increments be not given during the period from 01.10.2006 to 01.10.2015. While issuing such orders having retrospective effect, the State Government lost sight of the fact that several employees were already granted the benefit of advance increments during the relevant period. As we have observed earlier, the deliberations for discontinuation of the scheme started only on 27.02.2009/03.07.2009 and prior to that, admittedly, the issue of discontinuation of the scheme for grant of advance increment was not even under consideration. The instructions for temporarily doing pay fixation without advance increments were issued on 03.07.2009. This means that several employees must have already been granted advance increments during the period from 01.10.2006 to 03.07.2009. We, therefore, fail to comprehend as to how the State Government could have issued directions on 24.08.2017 that the benefit of advance increments should not be granted from 01.10.2006 onwards. Even in respect of employees becoming eligible for grant of advance increments after 27.02.2009, we do not find any error in the view taken by this Court that the Government Resolution dated 27.08.2017 would only have prospective effect.”

4. Thus, it is now a well settled position that the scheme of grant of advance increments was discontinued for the first time by the Government Resolution, dated 24/08/2017 and that, such decision would only operate prospectively.

5. In view of the above, **all these Petitions are disposed off** with the declaration that the GR dated 24/08/2017, would apply prospectively. The employers of these Petitions would carry out a verification exercise to assess which of these Petitioners are eligible for such grant of advance increments for outstanding work up to 24/08/2017.

6. Considering the delay aspect, the Petitioners are not claiming interest. If the Petitioners are found to be eligible and since there is no payment made and as such there is no question of recovery, the payable amounts shall be quantified by the respective employers and the said amount would be paid to these Petitioners (those who are eligible) within a period of 60 days.

7. It needs to be mentioned that such calculations are restricted only up to 24/08/2017, after which, these Petitioners are not entitled. If

the amounts are not paid within a period of 60 days, 6% interest would be computed from the date of this order until the amounts are actually paid. If any of the Petitioners have superannuated, all consequential benefits, post recalculation will be paid to them within a period 90 days.

(ASHWIN D. BHOBE, J.)

(RAVINDRA V. GHUGE, J.)