

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

299

CWP-10610-2021 (O&M)
Date of decision: 26.02.2024

Rajinder Kaur

....Petitioner

Versus

The Principal Secretary and Others

...Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE AMAN CHAUDHARY

Present : None for the petitioner

Mr. Charanpreet Singh, AAG Punjab

AMAN CHAUDHARY. J.

1. The prayer in the present petition is for releasing the pensionary benefits to the petitioner, who had retired on attaining the age of superannuation on 31.03.2019 along with interest at the rate of 18%.
2. As is evident from the pleadings of the parties that the petitioner retired on 31.03.2019. However, his retiral benefits were not released, constraining him to approach this Court by way of the present writ petition, wherein the learned State counsel on 29.06.2021, on instructions from the concerned quarter had apprised the Court that the needful shall be done within a period of 6 weeks from that day. As is discernible from a Status Report filed by the Senior Medical Officer, dated 13.02.2023, that the GIS payment Rs.52,810 has been released to the petitioner on 22.09.202, however, some delay in releasing the GPF amount of Rs.14,96,831/- on 18.11.2021, had occurred, which was on account of Covid-19 pandemic.

3. The Division Bench, in a judgment dated 04.12.2023 in CWP-12083-2023, **Pritam Singh vs. State of Punjab and others**, while dealing with the question, “whether on account of COVID-19 lockdown, interest on delayed payment of retiral benefits can be given or not?”, held that on the said account, the benefit of interest could not be denied to the petitioner and allowed the writ petition granting interest at the rate of 9% on delayed payment of retiral benefits i.e., GP Fund, Leave Encashment and Gratuity, etc.
4. It is apparent that the amount due was released not only after the petitioner had approached this Court but even 5 months from the date of the order passed by this Court, i.e., 29.06.2021, wherein time sought, that too on instructions from the Department, was 6 weeks.
5. In wake of the aforesaid, the respondents are directed to grant the interest at the rate of 9% per annum on the delayed release of amount, within a period of two months from the date when a web-print of this judgment is received.
6. The present petition stands disposed of, accordingly.

(AMAN CHAUDHARY)
JUDGE

26.02.2024
M.Kamra

Whether speaking/reasoned : Yes / No
Whether reportable : Yes / No