



FAO-3055-2007 (O&M)

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

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FAO-3055 of 2007(O&M)
Date of decision:- 25.03.2025

Anuradha and ors.

...Appellants

vs.

Gurjeet Singh and others

...Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE SUDEEPTI SHARMA

Present:- Mr. Saurabh Arora, Advocate
for the appellants.

Mr. Deepak Suri, Advocate
for the respondent-Insurance Co.

SUDEEPTI SHARMA, J. (Oral)

1. The present appeal has been preferred against the award dated 12.04.2007 passed in the claim petition bearing MACT No. 6 of 3.02.2005 filed under Section 163-A of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 by the learned Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, Fatehgarh Sahib (for short, 'the Tribunal') for enhancement of compensation granted to the claimants/appellants on account of death of Sandeep, who died in a motor vehicular accident, occurred on 30.04.2004, whereby the claimants/appellants were granted compensation to the tune of Rs.4,00,000/-.

However, the liability to pay the compensation was fastened upon respondent Nos. 1 & 2/owner and driver of the offending vehicle.

2. As sole issue for determination in the present appeal is confined to quantum of compensation awarded by the learned Tribunal, a detailed narration of the facts of the case are not reproduced for the sake of brevity.



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SUBMISSIONS OF THE LEARNED COUNSELS FOR THE PARTIES

3. Learned counsel for the claimants-appellants has made the following submissions:-

- i) That the amount assessed by the learned Tribunal is on the lower side.
- ii) That Section 163-A of Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 is now substituted by Section 164 of Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 (Act 32 of 2019 w.e.f 01.04.2022) and compensation should be enhanced as per the substituted statutory provision i.e. Section 164 of the Act.
- iii) That the present case is covered by the judgment rendered by this Court in **FAO No.4301 of 2006**, titled as **“Akaljit Kaur and Others Vs. Parveen Kumar and Others.”** wherein the claim under Section 163-A of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 was converted to Section 164 of Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 (Act 32 of 2019 w.e.f 01.04.2022) by relying upon the judgment of Hon’ble *Supreme Court in the case of Ram Murti and others Vs. Punjab State Electricity Board [2022(4) TAC 738]* wherein it was held that Section 164 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 (Act 32 of 2019 w.e.f 01.04.2022) provides for payment of compensation in case of death in the amount of Rs.5 lakhs and in the case of grievous hurt of Rs.2.5 lakhs.

4. Further learned counsel for the appellants has informed this Court that respondent Nos. 1 and 2 filed FAO No. 2514-2007 against the impugned award but their appeal was dismissed for non-prosecution, vide order dated

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24.07.2018 passed by this Court. Thus, respondent Nos. 1 and 2 were well aware about the pendency of the present appeal and wilfully did not appear in the present case.

5. Per contra, learned counsel for the respondent-Insurance Company, however, vehemently argues that the award has rightly been passed and the amount of compensation as assessed by the learned Tribunal has rightly been granted. He, thus prays for dismissal of the appeal.

6. I have heard learned counsel for the parties and perused the whole record of this case.

7. A perusal of the award indicates that in the present case, the claimants-appellants filed the claim petition seeking compensation on account of death of Sandeep who was aged about 32 years at the time of accident. Since section 163-A of Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 is now substituted by Section 164 of Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 (Act 32 of 2019 w.e.f 01.04.2022), compensation is liable to be enhanced as per the substituted statutory provision i.e. Section 164 of the Act, therefore, the appellants herein are entitled to be granted the benefit of beneficial provision enacted by the Parliament under Chapter 11 of which Section 164 provides for payment of compensation in case of death in the amount of Rs.5 lakh and in case of grievous hurt to the extent of Rs.2.5 lakhs.

8. Further, this Court in **FAO No.4301 of 2006**, titled as “**Akaljit Kaur and Others Vs. Parveen Kumar and Others**” held as under:-

“11. Hon’ble Supreme Court in the case of **Ram Murti and others Vs. Punjab State Electricity Board** [2022(4) TAC 738] held that the appellants therein to be granted the benefit of beneficial provision enacted by the Parliament under Chapter 11 of which Section 164 provides for payment of compensation in the case of

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death in the amount of Rs.5 lakhs and in the case grievous hurt of Rs.2.5 lakhs.

12. *This Court in **FAO-195-2006** titled as **Mamta and Others Vs. Happy and Others**, decided on 29.05.2024, held that since Motor Vehicle statute is a beneficial legislation, the Judge should not go into the technicalities of the provisions, under which the application or petition is moved but should apply his judicial mind, as these are only the irregularities and not illegalities which cannot be cured. It has been observed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court that the loss caused to the claimants or the relationship or to the victim of the limb cannot be compensated. Still the Court should make every effort by exercising its discretion empathetically. Further, Justice should actually be shown to be delivered by application of judicial mind with intelligence, prudence, care and caution and by showing empathy. The Court decision should be such that they strengthen the trust and confidence of public and litigants in judicial system and judiciary."*

9. In view of the above, the present appeal is allowed. Accordingly, the award dated 12.04.2007 is modified by converting the claim petition under Section 163-A (pre 2018 amendment) to Section 164 (post 2018 amendment) of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. As such, the claimants/appellants are held entitled to compensation to the tune of **Rs.1,00,000/-** (5,00,000-4,00,000), which shall be disbursed equally amongst the claimants/appellants. However, respondent Nos. 1 and 2 are liable to pay the compensation to the claimants/appellants.

10. So far as the interest part is concerned, as held by Hon'ble Supreme Court in **Dara Singh @ Dhara Banjara Vs. Shyam Singh Varma** 2019 ACJ



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3176 and **R.Valli and Others VS. Tamil Nandu State Transport Corporation**

(2022) 5 Supreme Court Cases 107, the appellants-claimants are granted the interest @ 9% per annum on the enhanced amount from the date of filing of claim petition till the date of its realization.

11. Respondent Nos. 1 and 2 are directed to deposit the enhanced amount of compensation along with interest with the Tribunal within a period of two months from the date of receipt of copy of this judgment. The appellants-claimants are directed to furnish their bank account details to the Insurance Company/Tribunal. The Tribunal is further directed to disburse the enhanced amount of compensation along with interest in equal shares in the bank accounts of the appellants-claimants, as per award dated 12.04.2007.

12. Further Insurance Company is directed to disburse the current schedule fee to Mr. Deepak Suri, Advocate, within a period of twenty days from the date of receipt of copy of this judgment, in view of the order dated 18.07.2024 passed in FAO No.1682 of 2007, by this Court.

13. Pending application (s), if any, also stand disposed of.

(SUDEEPTI SHARMA)
JUDGE

26.03.2025

Gaurav Arora

Whether speaking/non-speaking : Speaking
Whether reportable : Yes