



**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH**

114

CWP-16257-2025

Date of Decision: 18.08.2025

UNION OF INDIA AND OTHERS

...Petitioners

Versus

COLONEL NEERAJ KHURANA AND ANOTHER

...Respondents

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE HARSIMRAN SINGH SETHI
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE VIKAS SURI**

Present:- Ms. Sonia Sharma, Senior Panel Counsel,
for the petitioners.

Mr. Navdeep Singh, Advocate, with
Ms. Srishti Sharma, Advocate, for respondent No.1.

HARSIMRAN SINGH SETHI, J. (ORAL)

1. In the present petition, the challenge is to the impugned order dated 18.10.2024 (Annexure P-1) passed by respondent No. 2-Armed Forces Tribunal, Regional Bench, Chandigarh (hereinafter referred to as 'Tribunal') by which, respondent No.1 has been allowed the benefit of disability pension by rounding off the disability element from 30% to 50% for life, on the ground that the same is perverse.

2. Learned counsel for the petitioners places reliance upon the report of medical examination of respondent No.1 to hold that though the disability of "*Primary Hypertension*" has been found in respondent No.1, but the same has been held to be 'neither attributable to Military Service nor



aggravated by the Military service'. Hence, the grant of benefit of disability pension to respondent No.1 from 30% to 50% for life by placing reliance upon the judgment of the Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi in ***OA No. 1356 of 2022, with MA No.1047 of 2023*** titled as ***Ex. MWO Gulab Jha vs. Union of India and others***, and the judgment of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in ***Dharamvir Singh versus Union of India and others, (2013) 7 SCC 316***, is incorrect.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioners further submits that once, the report of the Medical Board clearly states that the disability suffered by respondent No.1 is neither attributed to military service nor aggravated by the military service, the grant of benefit of disability pension to respondent No. 1 by rounding off the disability from 30% to 50% for life is incorrect and the facts of the present case have not been appreciated in correct perspective by the Tribunal while passing the impugned order dated 18.10.2024 (Annexure P-1).

4. We have heard learned counsel for both the parties and have gone through the case file with their able assistance.

5. It is conceded fact that at the time when respondent No.1 retired from service on 31.05.2023, he had already rendered more than 33 years of service with the petitioners-Union of India. It is also a conceded fact that at the time when respondent No. 1 joined the armed forces i.e. on 15.12.1990, he was medically examined and was not found suffering from any such disease, on the basis of which, respondent No. 1 has been granted the benefit of disability pension. The claim of respondent No.1 is covered in his favour for the grant of disability pension as per the judgment of Hon'ble



Supreme of India in ***Dharamvir Singh's*** case (supra). The relevant para Nos.30, 32 and 33 of the said judgment are as under:-

30. In the present case it is undisputed that no note of any disease has been recorded at the time of appellant's acceptance for military service. The respondents have failed to bring on record any document to suggest that the appellant was under treatment for such a disease or by hereditary he is suffering from such disease. In absence of any note in the service record at the time of acceptance of joining of appellant it was incumbent on the part of the Medical Board to call for records and look into the same before coming to an opinion that the disease could not have been detected on medical examination prior to the acceptance for military service, but nothing is on the record to suggest that any such record was called for by the Medical Board or looked into it and no reasons have been recorded in writing to come to the conclusion that the disability is not due to military service. In fact, non-application of mind of Medical Board is apparent from Clause (d) of paragraph 2 of the opinion of the Medical Board, which is as follows:

“(d) In the case of a disability under C the board should state what exactly in their opinion is the cause thereof. YES Disability is not related to mil service”

32. In spite of the aforesaid provisions, the Pension Sanctioning Authority failed to notice that the Medical Board had not given any reason in support of its opinion, particularly when there is no note of such disease or disability available in the service record of the appellant at the time of acceptance for military service. Without going through the aforesaid facts the Pension Sanctioning Authority mechanically passed the impugned order of rejection based on the report of the Medical Board. As



per Rules 5 and 9 of 'Entitlement Rules for Casualty Pensionary Awards, 1982', the appellant is entitled for presumption and benefit of presumption in his favour. In absence of any evidence on record to show that the appellant was suffering from "Generalised seizure (Epilepsy)" at the time of acceptance of his service, it will be presumed that the appellant was in sound physical and mental condition at the time of entering the service and deterioration in his health has taken place due to service.

33. As per Rule 423(a) of General Rules for the purpose of determining a question whether the cause of a disability or death resulting from disease is or is not attributable to service, it is immaterial whether the cause giving rise to the disability or death occurred in an area declared to be a field service/active service area or under normal peace conditions.

"Classification of diseases" have been prescribed at Chapter IV of Annexure I; under paragraph 4 post traumatic epilepsy and other mental changes resulting from head injuries have been shown as one of the diseases affected by training, marching, prolonged standing etc. Therefore, the presumption would be that the disability of the appellant bore a casual connection with the service conditions."

6. A bare perusal of the medical report would show that even the Medical Board had come to the conclusion that the *Primary Hypertension* and Type 2 diabetes Mellitus has been aggravated to the military service. Not only this, the disability was assessed at 44% for life, which fact has gone un rebutted as mentioned at pages 96 and 97 of the paper-book. Keeping in view this fact also, when even the Medical Board has conceded



that the disease which led to the invalidation of the officer concerned, aggravated by the military service, the filing of the present petition by the Union of India is contrary to the recommendations of the Medical Board itself.

7. Further, as per the settled principle of law settled by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in ***Union of India and others vs. Ram Avtar*, 2014 SCC Online SC 1761**, any officer serving in the Armed Forces, who had undergone the medical examination at the time of his/her selection and was found fit, subsequently upon suffering a disability, is entitled to the benefit of disability pension by rounding off the same as the presumption would be that the disability suffered is attributable to the Military service. Relevant paras of the judgment in ***Ram Avtar's*** case (supra) are as under:-

“4. By the present set of appeals the appellant(s) raise the question, whether or not, an individual, who has retired on attaining the age of superannuation or on completion of his tenure of engagement, if found to be suffering from some disability which is attributable to or aggravated by the military service, is entitled to be granted the benefit of rounding-off of disability pension. The appellant(s) herein would contend that, on the basis of Circular No. 1(2)/97/D(Pen-C) issued by the Ministry of Defence, Government of India, dated 31.01.2001, the aforesaid benefit is made available only to an Armed Forces Personnel who is invalidated out of service, and not to any other category of Armed Forces Personnel mentioned hereinabove.

5. We have heard learned counsel for the parties to the lis.

6. We do not see any error in the impugned



judgment(s) and order(s) and therefore all the appeals which pertain to the concept of rounding-off of the disability pension are dismissed, with no order as to costs.

7. The dismissal of these matters will be taken note of by the High Courts as well as by the Tribunals in granting appropriate relief to the pensioners before them, if any, who are getting or are entitled to the disability pension.”

8. Learned counsel for the petitioners has not been able to dispute the said proposition of law having been settled by the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India in ***Ram Avtar’s*** case (supra).

9. Keeping in view the facts and circumstance of the present case as well as the settled principle of law settled in ***Ram Avtar’s*** case (supra), once at the time of selection, respondent No. 1 was medically examined and was found fit in all respects and it was only during the service, respondent No.1 was found suffering from the *Primary Hypertension*. That being so, the said disabilities have to be attributed to the military service and the report of Medical Board cannot take away the right of respondent No.1 to claim the benefit of disability pension and that too, by rounding off the disability from 30% to 50% as per the settled principle of law settled in ***Ram Avtar’s*** case (supra).

10. No other argument has been raised.

11. Hence, in the absence of any perversity being pointed out in the impugned order dated 18.10.2024 (Annexure P-1) either on the basis of the facts or the settled principle of law, no ground is made out for any interference by this Court in the facts and circumstances of the present case.

12. Accordingly, the writ petition is dismissed.



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

(HARSIMRAN SINGH SETHI)
JUDGE

August 18, 2025
harish

(VIKAS SURI)
JUDGE

Whether speaking/reasoned	Yes
Whether reportable	No