



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

115

**CWP-28547-2025 (O&M)**  
**Date of decision: 23.09.2025**

Shakti Singh

....Petitioner

Versus

Uttar Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam Limited and others

....Respondents

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE HARPREET SINGH BRAR**

**Present:** Mr. B.S. Rathee, Advocate  
for the petitioner.

Mr. Prince Singh, Advocate  
for respondents No.1 to 7.

**HARPREET SINGH BRAR J. (Oral)**

1. Prayer in this writ petition filed under Articles 226/227 of the Constitution of India, is for issuance of a writ in the nature of mandamus, directing the respondent/authorities to grant benefit of stepping-up of pay as well as revision of pensionary benefit at par with his junior namely Om Parkash (proforma respondent No.8) and pay the arrears with interest @ 12% per annum from the day it became due. Further prayer has been made to direct the respondent/authorities to release the GIS contribution made by the petitioner with interest @ 12% per annum and to release the pay from 18.10.2007 to 23.10.2007 (06 days) with interest @ 12% per annum and to pay interest @ 12% per annum on the amount of Rs.17,291/- from 2011 to 2024, which has been



recovered from the petitioner in the year 2011 and refunded in the year 2024.

2. Learned counsel for the petitioner, *inter alia*, contends that the petitioner, was appointed on 17.02.1976 as Shift Attendant (*Ad hoc*) in the erstwhile Haryana State Electricity Board and was regularized as Shift Attendant on 19.09.1977, and retired as a Junior Engineer on 30.04.2011 after more than 35 years of unblemished service and he is entitled to the benefit of stepping-up of his pay and corresponding revision of pension at par with his junior, Om Parkash (proforma respondent No.8), who belongs to a reserved category and was promoted earlier, despite being junior to the petitioner. He further submits that the State Government has issued clear policy instructions dated 27.11.2006, 05.03.2009, and 18.12.2013, mandating that senior general category employees should be granted stepping-up of pay when their juniors from reserved categories draw higher pay due to earlier promotion under reserved category benefits. Despite being squarely covered under the said policies, the petitioner's repeated representations made in the year 2011, 2023 and on 11.07.2025, have not been acted upon. He further contends that the petitioner is also entitled to interest @ 12% per annum on the amount of Rs.17,291/-, which was wrongly recovered from him in the year 2011 in excess of the actual due amount of Rs.1,491/-, and the same was only refunded in the year 2024, after a lapse of 13 years, without any interest. Learned counsel for the petitioner concedes that the claim of the petitioner arose in the year



2011, however, he could not provide any satisfactory reason to justify the delay in approaching this Court.

3. Learned counsel for respondents No.1 to 7, appears on advance notice, submits that the identically circumstanced co-employee of the petitioner namely Shiv Charan has also approached this Court by filing a petition i.e. CWP No.27493 of 2025 seeking stepping-up of his pay as well as revision of pensionary benefits at par with his juniors Ish Kumar Sehgal and Om Parkash and his claim has already been dismissed by this Court vide order dated 15.09.2025. He further submits that the case of the petitioner is hit by the principles of delay and laches. The right of the petitioner crystallized in the year 2011, when he retired from service and first raised the claim through representation, however, he kept silent for approximately 14 years and has not offered any plausible or satisfactory explanation for the said inordinate and unexplained delay.

4. I have heard learned counsel for the parties and perused the record with their able assistance.

5. It is trite law that the delay in approaching this Court under Article 226 of the Constitution of India may be condoned if sufficient cause is indicated or a reasonable explanation is provided for the same. However, the facts of the matter at hand indicate otherwise. Learned counsel petitioner has failed to specify any compelling or extenuating circumstance which prevented him from approaching this Court for such a long time. Reference in this regard may be made to the judgment



rendered by a three-Judge Bench of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in *Chairman/Managing Director, U.P. Power Corporation Limited and Others vs. Ram Gopal (2021) 13 SCC 225*, wherein, the following was held:

“16. Whilst it is true that limitation does not strictly apply to proceedings under Articles 32 or 226 of the Constitution of India, nevertheless, such rights cannot be enforced after an unreasonable lapse of time. Consideration of unexplained delays and inordinate laches would always be relevant in writ actions, and writ courts naturally ought to be reluctant in exercising their discretionary jurisdiction to protect those who have slept over wrongs and allowed illegalities to fester. Fence-sitters cannot be allowed to barge into Courts and cry for their rights at their convenience, and vigilant citizens ought not to be treated alike with mere opportunists. On multiple occasions, it has been restated that there are implicit limitations of time within which writ remedies can be enforced. In *S.S. Balu v. State of Kerala*, this Court observed thus:

“17. It is also well settled principle of law that "delay defeats equity". .... It is now a trite law that where the writ petitioner approaches the High Court after a long delay, reliefs prayed for may be denied to them on the ground of delay and laches irrespective of the fact that they are similarly situated to the other candidates who obtain the benefit of the judgment.”

(emphasis added)

6. Further, in *Mrinmoy Maity vs. Chhanda Koley and others 2024 AIR SC 2717*, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has categorically observed that the High Courts must factor in the delay, while exercising



its discretionary powers under Article 226 of the Constitution of India. It was further opined that undue and unexplained delay may be reason enough to dismiss a petition as indolent litigants ought not to be encouraged by writ Courts.

7. In *State of Uttarakhand v. Shiv Charan Singh Bhandari, (2013) 12 SCC 179*, while considering the issue regarding delay and laches and referring to earlier judgments on the issue, a Two-Judge Bench of the Hon'ble Supreme Court opined that repeated representations made will not keep the issues alive. A stale or a dead issue/dispute cannot be got revived even if such a representation has either been decided by the authority or got decided by getting a direction from the court as the issue regarding delay and laches is to be decided with reference to original cause of action and not with reference to any such order passed. Delay and laches on the part of a government servant may deprive him of the benefit which had been given to others. Article 14 of the Constitution of India, in a situation of that nature, will not be attracted as it is well settled that law leans in favour of those who are alert and vigilant.

8. In *Union of India and others v. M. K. Sarkar, (2010) 2 SCC 59*, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has ruled that when a belated representation in regard to a 'stale' or 'dead' issue/dispute is considered and decided, in compliance with a direction by the court/tribunal to do so, the date of such decision cannot be considered as furnishing a fresh cause of action for reviving the 'dead' issue or time-barred dispute. The



issue of limitation or delay and laches should be considered with reference to the original cause of action and not with reference to the date on which an order is passed in compliance with a Court's direction. Neither a court's direction to consider a representation issued without examining the merits, nor a decision given in compliance with such direction, will extend the limitation, or erase the delay and laches.

9. Moreover, with regards to issues regarding fixation of pay, the position of law has been settled by a two-Judge Bench Hon'ble Supreme Court in *M.R. Gupta v. Union of India, (1995) 5 SCC 628* and has been reaffirmed by a full bench decision of this Court in *Saroj Kumari v. State of Punjab, 1998(3) SCT 664*. Accordingly, so long as an employee **is in service**, a petition claiming refixation of pay is not barred by limitation or the doctrine of laches, as the denial of benefit occurs every month when the salary is paid, thereby giving rise to a fresh cause of action, based on continuing wrong. Such a case is not a case of one time action like the case of termination or dismissal from service. However, payment of arrears can be restricted to a reasonable period. Three years and two months has been considered to be a reasonable period as that is the period for which a person can ask for the payment of arrears before a Civil Court. However, once an employee **ceases to be in service**, the wrong fixation of pay can no longer be treated as a continuing wrong. Consequently, a petition seeking such fixation, if instituted after cessation of service and with substantial delay, is liable to be dismissed on the ground of delay and laches.



Reliance can be placed on the judgment of the co-ordinate bench of this Court in ***Prem Nath v. State of Punjab, 2018(2) SCT 687***, wherein the petitioners approached this Court seeking correct fixation of pay much subsequent to their superannuation. While dismissing the petition on the ground of delay and laches, the Court held as follows:

*“10. The reliance placed by counsel upon the judgment in Saroj Kumar's case, is wholly misplaced. **The observations and aspect of delay in Saroj Kumar's case, were in the light of the judgment of the Supreme Court in M.R. Gupta v. Union of India and others, 1996(1) S.C.T 8 : 1995(4) RSJ 502. In M.R. Gupta's case (supra), it had been categorically held that so long as an employee "is in service" a fresh cause of action arises every month when he is getting his monthly salary on the basis of a wrong calculation made contrary to rules. It was further held that the claim to be awarded the correct salary on the basis of a proper pay fixation "is a right which subsists during the entire tenure of service"***

*11. **In the present case, however, the petitioners choose not to agitate their claim while in service. It is much subsequent to their superannuation that they have woken up and seek to gain impetus from certain decisions that may have been rendered in the case of similarly situated employees.**” (emphasis supplied)*

10. In the present case, the petitioner has approached this Court after a considerable lapse of time. Repeated representations will not keep the issues alive and no plausible explanation has been offered by learned counsel for the petitioner for the delay in filing the present petition.



11. In view of the above discussions, this Court does not find it appropriate to invoke its extraordinary writ jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution of India. Accordingly, the present petition stands dismissed.

**(HARPREET SINGH BRAR)**  
**JUDGE**

**23.09.2025**  
*yakub*

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