



FAO-1978-2019

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

FAO-1978-2019 (O&M)

Sharda Devi and others

.....Appellants

VS.

Mahavir and ors.

.....Respondents

Date of Reserve: 21.01.2026

Date of Pronouncement: 28.01.2026

Uploaded on:- 3001.2026

Whether only the operative part of the judgment is pronounced? ***No***
Whether full judgment is pronounced? ***Yes***

CORAM: HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE SUDEEPTI SHARMA

Present: Mr. Dheeraj Narula, Advocate
for the appellants.

Mr. Harjinder Singh, Advocate
for the respondent-Insurance Company.

SUDEEPTI SHARMA J.

1. The present appeal has been preferred against the award dated 03.01.2016 passed by the learned Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, Sirsa in the claim petition filed under Section 166 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 (for short, 'the Tribunal') for enhancement of compensation granted to the claimants to the tune of Rs.28,82,211/- along with interest @ 9% per annum, on account of death of Darshan Singh in a Motor Vehicular Accident, occurred on 31.08.2014.

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 is not required to be reproduced here for the sake of brevity.

**SUBMISSIONS OF LEARNED COUNSEL FOR THE PARTIES**

3. The learned counsel for the claimants-appellants contends that the amount assessed by the learned Tribunal is on the lower side and deserves to be enhanced. Therefore, he prays that the present appeal be allowed and compensation be enhanced as per latest law.

4. Per contra, learned counsel for respondents, 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. Therefore, they prays for dismissal of the appeal.

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

SETTLED LAW ON COMPENSATION

6. Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of **Sarla Verma Vs. Delhi Transport Corporation and Another** [(2009) 6 Supreme Court Cases 121], laid down the law on assessment of compensation and the relevant paras of the same are as under:-

“30. Though in some cases the deduction to be made towards personal and living expenses is calculated on the basis of units indicated in Trilok Chandra, the general practice is to apply standardised deductions. Having a considered several subsequent decisions of this Court, we are of the view that where the deceased was married, the deduction towards personal and living expenses of the deceased, should be one-third (1/3rd) where the number of dependent family members is 2 to 3, one-fourth (1/4th) where the number of dependent family members is 4 to 6, and one-fifth (1/5th) where the number of dependent family members exceeds six.



31. Where the deceased was a bachelor and the claimants are the parents, the deduction follows a different principle. In regard to bachelors, normally, 50% is deducted as personal and living expenses, because it is assumed that a bachelor would tend to spend more on himself. Even otherwise, there is also the possibility of his getting married in a short time, in which event the contribution to the parent(s) and siblings is likely to be cut drastically. Further, subject to evidence to the contrary, the father is likely to have his own income and will not be considered as a dependant and the mother alone will be considered as a dependant. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, brothers and sisters will not be considered as dependants, because they will either be independent and earning, or married, or be dependent on the father.

32. Thus even if the deceased is survived by parents and siblings, only the mother would be considered to be a dependant, and 50% would be treated as the personal and living expenses of the bachelor and 50% as the contribution to the family. However, where the family of the bachelor is large and dependent on the income of the deceased, as in a case where he has a widowed mother and large number of younger non-earning sisters or brothers, his personal and living expenses may be restricted to one-third and contribution to the family will be taken as two-third.

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42. We therefore hold that the multiplier to be used should be as mentioned in Column (4) of the table above (prepared by applying Susamma Thomas³, Trilok Chandra and Charlie), which starts with



an operative multiplier of 18 (for the age groups of 15 to 20 and 21 to 25 years), reduced by one unit for every five years, that is M-17 for 26 to 30 years, M-16 for 31 to 35 years, M-15 for 36 to 40 years, M-14 for 41 to 45 years, and M-13 for 46 to 50 years, then reduced by two units for every five years, that is, M-11 for 51 to 55 years, M-9 for 56 to 60 years, M-7 for 61 to 65 years and M-5 for 66 to 70 years.

7. Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of **National Insurance Company Ltd. Vs. Pranay Sethi & Ors. [(2017) 16 SCC 680]** has clarified the law under Sections 166, 163-A and 168 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, on the following aspects:-

- (A) Deduction of personal and living expenses to determine multiplicand;
- (B) Selection of multiplier depending on age of deceased;
- (C) Age of deceased on basis for applying multiplier;
- (D) Reasonable figures on conventional heads, namely, loss of estate, loss of consortium and funeral expenses, with escalation;
- (E) Future prospects for all categories of persons and for different ages: with permanent job; self-employed or fixed salary.

The relevant portion of the judgment is reproduced as under:-

*“52. As far as the **conventional heads** are concerned, we find it difficult to agree with the view expressed in Rajesh². It has granted Rs.25,000 towards funeral expenses, Rs 1,00,000 towards loss of consortium and Rs 1,00,000 towards loss of care and guidance for minor children. The head relating to loss of care and minor children does not exist. Though Rajesh refers to Santosh Devi, it does not seem to follow the same. The*



conventional and traditional heads, needless to say, cannot be determined on percentage basis because that would not be an acceptable criterion. Unlike determination of income, the said heads have to be quantified. Any quantification must have a reasonable foundation. There can be no dispute over the fact that price index, fall in bank interest, escalation of rates in many a field have to be noticed. The court cannot remain oblivious to the same. There has been a thumb rule in this aspect. Otherwise, there will be extreme difficulty in determination of the same and unless the thumb rule is applied, there will be immense variation lacking any kind of consistency as a consequence of which, the orders passed by the tribunals and courts are likely to be unguided. Therefore, we think it seemly to fix reasonable sums. It seems to us that reasonable figures on conventional heads, namely, loss of estate, loss of consortium and funeral expenses should be Rs.15,000, Rs.40,000 and Rs.15,000 respectively. The principle of revisiting the said heads is an acceptable principle. But the revisit should not be fact-centric or quantum-centric. We think that it would be condign that the amount that we have quantified should be enhanced on percentage basis in every three years and the enhancement should be at the rate of 10% in a span of three years. We are disposed to hold so because that will bring in consistency in respect of those heads.

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59.3. While determining the income, an addition of 50% of actual salary to the income of the deceased towards future prospects, where the deceased had a permanent job and was below the age of 40 years, should be made. The addition should be 30%, if the age of the deceased was between 40 to 50 years. In case the deceased was between the age of 50 to 60 years, the addition should be 15%. Actual salary should be read as actual salary less tax.

59.4. In case the deceased was self-employed (or) on a fixed salary, an addition of 40% of the established income should be the warrant where the deceased was below the age of 40 years. An addition of 25% where the deceased was between the age of 40 to 50 years and 10% where the deceased was between the age of 50 to 60 years should be regarded as the necessary method of computation. The established income means the income minus the tax component.

59.5. For determination of the multiplicand, the deduction for personal and living expenses, the tribunals and the courts shall be guided by paras 30 to 32 of Sarla Verma⁴ which we have reproduced hereinbefore.

59.6. The selection of multiplier shall be as indicated in the Table in Sarla Verma¹ read with para 42 of that judgment.

59.7. The age of the deceased should be the basis for applying the multiplier.

59.8. Reasonable figures on conventional heads, namely, loss of estate, loss of consortium and funeral expenses should be Rs



15,000, Rs 40,000 and Rs 15,000 respectively. The aforesaid amounts should be enhanced at the rate of 10% in every three years.”

8. Hon’ble Supreme Court in the case of **Magma General Insurance Company Limited Vs. Nanu Ram alias Chuhru Ram & Others [2018(18) SCC 130]** after considering **Sarla Verma (supra)** and **Pranay Sethi (Supra)** has settled the law regarding consortium. Relevant paras of the same are reproduced as under:-

“21. A Constitution Bench of this Court in Pranay Sethi² dealt with the various heads under which compensation is to be awarded in a death case. One of these heads is loss of consortium. In legal parlance, "consortium" is a compendious term which encompasses "spousal consortium", "parental consortium", and "filial consortium". The right to consortium would include the company, care, help, comfort, guidance, solace and affection of the deceased, which is a loss to his family. With respect to a spouse, it would include sexual relations with the deceased spouse.

*21.1. **Spousal consortium** is generally defined as rights pertaining to the relationship of a husband-wife which allows compensation to the surviving spouse for loss of "company, society, cooperation, affection, and aid of the other in every conjugal relation".*

*21.2. **Parental consortium** is granted to the child upon the premature death of a parent, for loss of "parental aid,*



protection, affection, society, discipline, guidance and training".

*21.3. **Filial consortium** is the right of the parents to compensation in the case of an accidental death of a child. An accident leading to the death of a child causes great shock and agony to the parents and family of the deceased. The greatest agony for a parent is to lose their child during their lifetime. Children are valued for their love, affection, companionship and their role in the family unit.*

22. Consortium is a special prism reflecting changing norms about the status and worth of actual relationships. Modern jurisdictions world-over have recognised that the value of a child's consortium far exceeds the economic value of the compensation awarded in the case of the death of a child. Most jurisdictions therefore permit parents to be awarded compensation under loss of consortium on the death of a child. The amount awarded to the parents is a compensation for loss of the love, affection, care and companionship of the deceased child.

23. The Motor Vehicles Act is a beneficial legislation aimed at providing relief to the victims or their families, in cases of genuine claims. In case where a parent has lost their minor child, or unmarried son or daughter, the parents are entitled to be awarded loss of consortium under the head of filial consortium. Parental consortium is awarded to children who lose their parents in motor vehicle accidents under the Act. A



few High Courts have awarded compensation on this count. However, there was no clarity with respect to the principles on which compensation could be awarded on loss of filial consortium.

24. The amount of compensation to be awarded as consortium will be governed by the principles of awarding compensation under "loss of consortium" as laid down in Pranay Sethi². In the present case, we deem it appropriate to award the father and the sister of the deceased, an amount of Rs 40,000 each for loss of filial consortium.

9. A perusal of the impugned award reveals that the deceased was 44 years old at the time of the accident. He was further stated to be earning Rs.50,000/- per month through agricultural activities as well as by working as LIC Agent. It is further asserted that he was an Income Tax Payee. The learned Tribunal relied upon the income tax return Ex P70 of the year 2014-2015 and assessed the income of the deceased as Rs.18203/- per month. For proving the agricultural income, the claimants placed on record jamabandi of the year 2012-2013 (Ex P1). However, the learned Tribunal failed to consider the same.

10. It is trite law that where agriculture income is the only source of income then attendant circumstances are also be considered. Moreover, for calculation of the agricultural income where no land details are there, it can be calculated on the managerial skills of the individual. The same could be between 10 to 15% of the total rental income from the agricultural land.

11. The above view is settled in ***State of Haryana and others vs. Jasbir Kaur and others, 2003 (7) SCC 484***. The relevant portion of the same is reproduced as under:-



“8. It is clear on a bare reading of the Tribunal's decision as affirmed by the High Court that no material was placed before the former to prove as to what was the income. As rightly contended by learned counsel for the appellants, there was not even any material adduced to show type of land which the deceased possessed. The matter can be approached from a different angle. The land possessed by the deceased still remains with the claimants as his legal heirs. There is however a possibility that the claimants may be required to engage persons to look after agriculture. Therefore, the normal rule about the deprivation of income is not strictly applicable to cases where agricultural income is the source. Attendant circumstances have to be considered. Furthermore, there was no material before the Tribunal to arrive at the figure of Rs.4500 per month. No reason has been indicated to arrive at this figure. In the light of what has been discussed above about "just compensation" the income cannot be estimated without any material to justify the estimation. In the normal course, we would have remitted the matter back to the Tribunal for fresh consideration. But considering the fact that one young person lost his life, and the matter was pending before the Tribunal and the High Court for some years, we feel it appropriate to take all relevant factors into consideration, and decide the matter. Gauzing the relevant aspects, noted above, the monthly income is fixed at Rs.3000/- per month, and after deducting Rs.1,000/- for personal expenses, financial contribution so far as the claimants are concerned is fixed at Rs.2,000/- per



month. Worked out on the basis of multiplier of 18, the compensation is fixed at Rs.4,32,000/-. The amount of Rs.2,000/- awarded by the Tribunal for funeral expenses is not interfered with and thus the total compensation comes to Rs.4,34,000/-. The rate of interest i.e. 9% per annum as fixed by the Tribunal and affirmed by the High Court is appropriate, and does not need any alteration. After adjusting the sum which was deposited pursuant to the order of this Court dated 14.12.2001, the balance amount along with interest shall be deposited within three months from today before the Tribunal. On the deposit being made along with the amount already deposited, a sum of Rs.3 lakhs shall be kept in the fixed deposit in the name of the claimants and a sum of Rs.50,000/- shall be kept in fixed deposit in the name of Smt. Baldev Kaur, mother of the deceased. They shall be entitled to draw interest on the deposit, which shall be re-deposited for further terms of five years. In case of urgent need, it shall be open to the claimants to move Tribunal for release of any part of the amount in deposit. The Tribunal shall consider the request for withdrawal and shall direct withdrawal in case of an urgent need and not otherwise of such sum as would meet the need. It shall be specifically indicated to the Bank where the deposits are to be made that no advance or withdrawal of any kind shall be permitted without the order of the Tribunal. It shall be open to the claimants to approach the Tribunal for variance of the order relating to deposit in fixed deposit, if any other scheme would fetch



better returns and also would provide regular and permanent income.”

12. This view is further reiterated in the case of ***K. Ramya and others vs. National Insurance Co. Ltd 2022 SCC Online SC 1338***. The relevant portion of the same is reproduced as under:-

“21. Now, the sole issue which remains before this court is whether the entire amount under ‘Income from House Property and Agricultural Land’ should be deducted or not. In this respect, we are guided by the observations of this court in State of Haryana v. Jasbir Kaur¹⁶ wherein it was noted that –

8. x-x-x-x

The land possessed by the deceased still remains with his legal heirs. There is however a possibility that the claimants may be required to engage persons to look after agriculture. Therefore, the normal rule about the deprivation of income is not strictly applicable to cases where agricultural income is the source. Attendant circumstances have to be considered.

22. In our opinion, the above-mentioned observations, though made in the context of agricultural land, would also be applicable to rent received from leased out properties as the loss of dependency arises mainly out of loss of management capacity or efficiency. As a rule of prudence, computation of any individual’s managerial skills should lie between 10 to 15 per cent of the total rental income but the acceptable range can be increased in light of specific circumstances. The appropriate approach, therefore, is to



determine the value of managerial skills along with any other factual considerations.

23. In the instant case, documents produced on record indicate two salient aspects with respect to 'Lakshmi Complex', which was the sole source of rental income for the deceased. The partition deed related to the land on which the commercial building is situated, highlights that the building was constructed on account of the joint investment made by the Deceased and his partners. Furthermore, as per the rental records, 'Lakshmi Complex' was leased out to more than ten different commercial entities. Hence, keeping in mind that – first, the rental amount which is sought to be deducted partakes the character of investment; and second, that the managerial skills required for supervising the said building would require sophisticated contract management skills and goodwill among the business community, it is necessary that we determine the value of managerial skills of the Deceased on the higher side.'

13. Therefore, in accordance with the aforesaid judgment rendered by Hon'ble the Supreme Court and in the interest of justice and considering the entire evidence on record, this Court deems it fit to reassess the income of the deceased as Rs.30000/- per month.

14. A further perusal of the award reveals that the learned Tribunal has rightly deducted 1/3rd as expenses for personal expenditure. However, the learned tribunal erred in meagre amount under the heads of loss of estate, funeral expenses and loss of consortium. Therefore, the award requires indulgence of this Court.



CONCLUSION

15. In view of the law laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the above referred to judgments, the present appeal is allowed. The award dated 03.01.2016 is modified accordingly. The appellants-claimants are entitled to enhanced amount of compensation as per the calculations made here-under:-

Sr. No.	Heads	Compensation Awarded
1	Monthly Income	Rs.30000/-
2	Future prospects @ 25%	Rs.7500/- (25% of 30000)
3	Deduction towards personal expenditure 1/3rd	Rs.12500/- (37500X 1/3)
4.	Total Income	Rs.25000/-(37500-12500)
5	Multiplier	14
6	Annual Dependency	Rs.42,00,000/- (25000X12X14)
7	Loss of Estate	Rs.18,150/-
8.	Funeral Expenses	Rs.18,150/-
9	Medical Bills	Rs.2,63,819/-
10	Loss of Consortium Parental : Rs. 48,400/-x2 Spousal : Rs. 48,400/-x1	Rs.1,45,200/-
	Total Compensation	Rs.46,45,319/-
	Deduction Amount Awarded by the Tribunal	Rs.28,82,211/-
	Enhanced amount	Rs.17,63,108/- (4645319-2882211)

16. 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 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.

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17. Respondent-Insurance Company is directed to deposit the enhanced amount of compensation along with interest with the Tribunal within a period of two months from the receipt of copy of this judgment. The Tribunal is directed to disburse the enhanced amount of compensation along with interest in the accounts of the claimants/appellants, as per award dated 03.01.2016. The claimants/appellants are directed to furnish their bank account details to the Tribunal.

18. Pending applications, if any, also stand disposed of.

(SUDEEPTI SHARMA)
JUDGE

28.01.2026

Gaurav Arora

Whether speaking/non-speaking : Yes/No
Whether reportable : Yes