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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

\+ W.P.(C) 15159/2025

SMT SATYAVATI .....Petitioner

Through: Dr. Gaurav Manuja and Ms. Nargis, Advocates.

versus

DELHI PUBLIC LIBRARY & ANR. .....Respondents

Through: Mr. Yudhishter Sharma, Advocate for R-1.

CORAM:
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANJEEV NARULA

O R D E R

% 16.02.2026

1. The Petitioner is the widow of Late Shri Jai Bhagwan, who served with Respondent No. 1/Delhi Public Library from 08th January, 1965 till his superannuation on 31st January, 2005.

2. Upon retirement, a Pension Payment Order was issued in favour of Late Shri Jai Bhagwan. Shri Jai Bhagwan subsequently passed away on 11th September, 2023. The Petitioner thereafter applied for grant of family pension.

3. The claim has not moved forward because the Respondents noticed a mismatch between the Petitioner's date of birth as recorded in the departmental record and the date of birth reflected in the documents furnished by her along with the application.

4. This has been communicated by the impugned letter dated 23rd April, 2025, which reads as follows:

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"F.No. A38011/02/2005/Ett./343 *Date :-23, April,2025*

To,
Smt. Satyavati W/o Late sh. Jai Bhagwan
E-1244
Jahagir Puri
North West Delhi-110033
Sub: The family pensions of Smt. Satyavati Reg:

Madam,

I am directed to refer to your application 06.02.2025 for consider yourself spouse/family pension of Sh. Jai Bhagwan deceased. After the security of the records it has been noticed that your date of birth mentioned in application does not match with our records. However, in order to take up your matter further you are on the above cited subject, it found that the DOB of Smt. Satyavati in Aadhar card and Pan Card do not match with official records. You are requested to get a Surviving Member Certificate from the SDM and get necessary corrections done in your Aadhar Card and pan Card.

Your faithfully
Sd/-
(Urmila Rautela)
Asst. Lib & Inf. Officer)"

5. The impugned communication, in essence, keeps the Petitioner's claim for family pension pending on account of a discrepancy in the date of birth reflected in the Aadhaar and PAN records vis-à-vis the departmental record and requires the Petitioner to first secure correction of those documents.

6. In the view of the Court, this approach is unduly rigid. Entitlement to family pension, in the case of a surviving spouse, turns on the fact of marriage, the death of the pensioner, and the status of the claimant as the surviving spouse. A discrepancy in the date of birth across KYC documents may require verification, but it cannot, by itself, become a reason to indefinitely withhold a subsistence benefit, particularly when the Petitioner

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asserts that she is the widow and there is no dispute that Late Shri Jai Bhagwan was a pensioner under a valid pension payment order.

7. At the same time, the Respondents are entitled to verify the identity of the claimant so that payment is released to the correct beneficiary. The appropriate course, therefore, is a time-bound verification exercise rather than postponement of the claim until correction of third-party identity records.

8. The writ petition is disposed of with the following directions:

(i) The Petitioner shall, within three weeks from today, shall submit to Respondent No. 1:

(a) a Surviving Member Certificate issued by the concerned SDM, as indicated in the impugned letter dated 23rd April, 2025;

(b) the death certificate of Late Shri Jai Bhagwan;

(c) a self-attested set of identity documents relied upon by her (including Aadhaar and PAN as available), and a bank account proof for pension credit;

(d) an affidavit explaining the discrepancy in the dates of birth appearing in different documents, affirming that all such documents relate to the same individual, and confirming that she is the legally wedded spouse and has not re-married; and

(e) an indemnity undertaking to refund any amount found to have been wrongly released, if at any later stage it is discovered that the claimant was not entitled in law.

(ii) Within two weeks of receipt of the above documents, Respondent No. 1 shall:

(a) complete verification of the claimant's identity and marital status through the Surviving Member Certificate and such record-based

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verification as is considered necessary; and

(b) if any further document is required, communicate the deficiency to the Petitioner through a single, consolidated communication, identifying the precise requirement and the reason for it. The Respondents shall not issue repeated piecemeal requisitions.

(iii) Upon completion of verification, Respondent No. 1 shall process and release family pension to the Petitioner, if otherwise admissible under the applicable rules, within six weeks thereafter. Arrears, if found payable under the rules, shall also be computed and released within the same period.

(iv) The Respondents shall not insist, as a pre-condition for processing family pension, that the Petitioner must first obtain correction of her date of birth in Aadhaar or PAN, if the identity and entitlement are otherwise established through the Surviving Member Certificate and allied verification. Any such correction, if required, may be pursued independently.

9. It is clarified that the Court has not expressed any opinion on the merits of entitlement beyond directing an expeditious and fair verification process. If, after completing verification, the Respondents propose to reject the claim, they shall pass a brief reasoned order and furnish it to the Petitioner. The Petitioner shall be at liberty to pursue appropriate remedies against such rejection as available in law.

10. The writ petition stands disposed of in the above terms.

SANJEEV NARULA, J

FEBRUARY 16, 2026/as

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