

Court No. 2

ARMED FORCES TRIBUNAL, REGIONAL BENCH, LUCKNOW

ORIGINAL APPLICATION No. 739 of 2023

Tuesday this the 28th day of November, 2023

**“Hon’ble Mr. Justice Anil Kumar, Member (J)
Hon’ble Lt Gen Anil Puri, Member (A)”**

777478 JWO Swami Satyanand Pandey (Retd) S/o Shri Ram Chandra Pandey R/o Manas City Block C House No. 48 Munsipulia, Near City International School, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226016.

..... Applicant

Ld. Counsel for the : **Shri Raj Kumar Mishra**, Advocate
Applicant

Versus

1. The Union of India, Through Secretary, Ministry of Defence, DHQ PO, New Delhi-110011.
2. Chief of the Air Staff, Air Headquarters, Vayu Bhawan, Rafi Marg, New Delhi-110106
3. Principal Director, Directorate of Air Veterans, Air Headquarters (SP), Subroto Park, New Delhi-110010
4. Joint Controller of Defence Accounts (Air Force) AFCAO Bulding, Subroto Park, New Delhi-110010

.....Respondents

Ld. Counsel for the Respondents :**Shri Shyam Singh**,
Central Govt. Standing Counsel

ORDER

1. The instant Original Application has been filed under Section 14 of the Armed Forces Tribunal Act, 2007 for the following reliefs :-

*“(a) Quash the impugned order **(Annexure A-1)**, the letter AirHQ/99798/31/DAV/A&A/Corres/Cell-08 dated 07.02.2022 vide which notional increment has been denied to the applicant.*

(b) Pass an order re-calculating and other terminal benefits after taking into account the benefit of notional increment as on 30.06.2021.

(c) Pass an order granting interest @ 18% on the arrears of pension and other terminal benefits to which the applicant is held entitled in terms of the re-calculation after implementing the order at (b) above.

(d) Pass an order awarding cost of the present application for compelling the filing of the instant application.

(e) Pass any other or such further order(s) or direction(s) in favour of the applicant and against the respondents which this Hon’ble Tribunal feels necessary in the attendant circumstances of the case to meet the ends of justice.

2. Briefly stated, applicant was enrolled in the Indian Air Force on 20.06.2001 and was discharged on 30.06.2021 (AN). Applicant was granted service pension with effect from 01.07.2021. The applicant filed representation on 28.01.2022 for grant of increment which was due on 01.07.2021 and re-fixation of pension and for issuance of fresh Corrigendum P.P.O. on the ground that after the Sixth Central Pay Commission the Central Government fixed 1st July as the date of increment for all Government employees, but

the respondents have denied for grant of annual increment vide order dated 07.02.2022. It is in this perspective that the applicant has preferred the present Original Application.

3. Learned Counsel for the applicant pleaded that after the Sixth Central Pay Commission, the Central Government fixed 1st July & 1st January, as the date of increment for all Government Employees, therefore, the applicant being discharged from service on 30.06.2021, is entitled for grant of annual increment due on 01.07.2022. He relied upon the law laid down by the Hon'ble Madras High Court in the case of ***P. Ayamperumal Versus the Registrar, Central Administrative Tribunal, Madras Bench and Others*** (W.P. No. 15732 of 2017, decided on 15.09.2017), AFT (RB), Lucknow judgment passed in O.A. No. 366 of 2020 in case titled HFL Sarvesh Kumar Vs. UOI decided on 12.08.2021 and AFT (RB), Lucknow judgment passed in O.A. No 180 of 2022, ***Ex Sub Rampal Singh Rawat vs. Union of India and Others***, decided on 10.09.2022.

4. On the other hand, Ld. Counsel for the respondents contended that the applicant had served for complete one year from the date of his last annual increment, but he was not granted annual increment as on the date of his discharge i.e. 30.06.2021, since the date of annual increment fell on the following day i.e. 01.07.2021. Since the applicant was not on the effective strength of Indian Army on 01.07.2021, therefore, he has not been granted

annual increment on 01.07.2021 as per policy in vogue. Although, he conceded that against the Judgment dated 15.09.2017 passed by the Hon'ble Madras High Court in Writ Petition No.15753 of 2017 an Special Leave Petition (Civil) Diary No. 22282 of 2018 was filed by the Union of India before the Hon'ble Supreme Court which was dismissed vide order dated 23.07.2018. He also submitted that the notional increment could not be granted to the retirees of 30 June in terms of DoPT, Government of India letter No. 19/2/2018-Estt (Pay-1) dated 03.02.2021.

5. We have heard Ld. Counsel for the applicant as also Ld. Counsel for the respondents and gone through the records and we find that the only question which needs to be answered is that whether the applicant is entitled for one notional increment?

6. The law on notional increment has already been settled by the Hon'ble Madra High Court in the case of ***P. Ayamperumal Versus the Registrar, Central Administrative Tribunal, Madras Bench and Others*** (Supra). Against the said Judgment, the Union of India had preferred Special Leave Petition (Civil) Diary No.22282 of 2018 which was dismissed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court vide order dated 23.07.2018. The relevant portion of the Judgment passed by the Hon'ble Madras High Court is excerpted below:-

"5. The petitioner retired as Additional Director General, Chennai on 30.06.2013 on attaining the age of superannuation. After the Sixth Pay Commission, the Central Government fixed 1st July as the date of increment for all employees by amending Rule 10 of the Central Civil Services (Revised Pay) Rules, 2008. In

view of the said amendment, the petitioner was denied the last increment, though he completed a full one year in service, i.e., from 01.07.2012 to 30.06.2013. Hence, the petitioner filed the original application in O.A.No.310/00917/2015 before the Central Administrative Tribunal, Madras Bench, and the same was rejected on the ground that an incumbent is only entitled to increment on 1st July if he continued in service on that day.

6. In the case on hand, the petitioner got retired on 30.06.2013. As per the Central Civil Services (Revised Pay) Rules, 2008, the increment has to be given only on 01.07.2013, but he had been superannuated on 30.06.2013 itself. The judgment referred to by the petitioner in State of Tamil Nadu, rep.by its Secretary to Government, Finance Department and others v. M.Balasubramaniam, reported in CDJ 2012 MHC 6525, was passed under similar circumstances on 20.09.2012, wherein this Court confirmed the order passed in W.P.No.8440 of 2011 allowing the writ petition filed by the employee, by observing that the employee had completed one full year of service from 01.04.2002 to 31.03.2003, which entitled him to the benefit of increment which accrued to him during that period.

7. The petitioner herein had completed one full year service as on 30.06.2013, but the increment fell due on 01.07.2013, on which date he was not in service. In view of the above judgment of this Court, naturally he has to be treated as having completed one full year of service, though the date of increment falls on the next day of his retirement. Applying the said judgment to the present case, the writ petition is allowed and the impugned order passed by the first respondent-Tribunal dated 21.03.2017 is quashed. The petitioner shall be given one notional increment for the period from 01.07.2012 to 30.06.2013, as he has completed one full year of service, though his increment fell on 01.07.2013, for the purpose of pensionary benefits and not for any other purpose. No costs.”

7. The Civil Appeal No. 4339 of 2023, Arising out of Diary No. 16764 of 2013, **Union of India & Others vs. Anand Kumar Singh** has been dismissed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court vide order dated 10.07.2023 in terms of earlier judgment passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Civil Appeal No. 2471 of 2023, **The Director (Admn. and HR) KPTCL & Ors vs. C.P. Mundinamani & Ors** dated 11.04.2023 in which the Hon'ble Supreme Court has held that an employee who has served for a complete year in an

organisation is entitled to annual increment on the last day of service for rendering one full year service.

8. In view of law laid down by the Hon'ble Madras High Court, upheld by the Hon'ble Apex Court, we are of the view that since the applicant had completed one full year service as on 30.06.2021, he is entitled to be granted one notional increment effective from 01.07.2021 though he was not in service on that date. In view of the above judgment, naturally he has to be treated as having completed one full year of service, though the date of increment falls on the next day of his retirement.

9. In view of the above, the Original Application is **allowed**. The impugned order is set aside. The applicant shall be given one notional increment for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021, as he has completed one full year of service, though his increment fell on 01.07.2021, for the purpose of pensionary benefits and not for any other purpose. The respondents are directed to issue fresh Corrigendum P.P.O. to the applicant accordingly. The respondents are further directed to give effect to this order within a period of four months from the date of receipt of a certified copy of this order. Default will invite interest @ 8% per annum till the actual payment.

10. No order as to costs.

11. Pending Misc. Application(s), if any, shall be treated to have been disposed off.

12. Departmental Representative for the respondents orally submitted to grant leave to appeal against the above order, which we have considered and no point of law of general public importance being involved in this case, the plea is rejected.

(Lt Gen Anil Puri)
Member (A)

Dated : 28th November, 2023

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(Justice Anil Kumar)
Member (J)