

ARMED FORCES TRIBUNAL, REGIONAL BENCH,
LUCKNOW

Court No. 1

Misc. Application No. 1613 of 2014
With
Misc. Application No. 1623 of 2014
(Inre : Original Application No. 363 of 2011)

Wednesday the 22nd day of April, 2015

“Hon’ble Mr. Justice S.C. Chaurasia, Member (J)
Hon’ble Air Marshal Anil Chopra, Member (A)”

1. Union of India, Through the Secretary
Ministry of Defence, Government of India
New Delhi
2. The Chief of Army Staff, Integrated Headquarters of the
Ministry of Defence (Army), South Block
New Delhi-110011
3. Principal Controller Defence Accounts (Pension)
Draupadi Ghat, Allahabad.
4. Additional Directorate General Personnel Services,
Adjutant General’s Branch, Integrated Headquarters
of Ministry of Defence (Army) DHQ PO
5. Commandant, Military Hospital, Bhopal.

..... Applicants

By Legal Practitioner Mrs. Deepti Prasad Bajpai, Sr. Standing
Counsel for the Central Government

Versus

A.K. Sethi son of Late C.L. Sethi, presently residing
at 60 CI Enclave Chuna Bhatti, Kolar Road,
District: Bhopal.

..... Respondent

By Legal Practitioner, Shri P.N. Chaturvedi, Advocate, Counsel
for the respondent

ORDER

Hon'ble Mr. Justice S.C. Chaurasia, Member (J)

1. This application for condonation of delay, supported with an affidavit, has been moved on behalf of the applicants, Union of India and others, for condonation of delay in moving the Application for Leave to Appeal under Section 31 of the Armed Forces Tribunal Act, 2007, against the Judgment dated 13.08.2013, passed by the Bench consisting of Hon'ble Mr. Justice B.N. Shukla, Member (J) (since deceased) and Hon'ble Lt. General R.K. Chhabra, Member (A) (since retired) in Original Application No. 363 of 2011, Ex Colonel A.K. Sethi Versus Union of India and Others, on the grounds that in taking instructions from the competent authority and seeking legal advice, delay has been caused and hence, the delay in filing the application for leave to appeal may be condoned.

2. Heard Mrs. Deepti Prasad Bajpai, Learned Counsel for the applicants, and perused the record. None appeared on behalf of the respondent.

3. As per office report dated 14.11.2014, there is delay of 01 year, 01 month and 28 days in filing the application for leave to appeal.

4. From the perusal of record, it transpires that the final Judgment in Original Application No. 363 of 2011, Ex Colonel A.K. Sethi Versus Union of India and others, was delivered on 13.08.2013. Thereafter, application for leave to appeal, along with an application for condonation of delay in filing the said application, was moved on 12.11.2014. The application for leave to appeal has been filed under Section 31 of the Armed Forces Tribunal Act, 2007. It provides as under:-

“31. Leave to Appeal -(1) An appeal to the Supreme Court shall lie with the leave of the Tribunal; and such leave shall not be granted unless it is certified by the Tribunal that a point of law of general public importance is involved in the decision, or it appears to the Supreme Court that the point is one which ought to be considered by that Court.

(2) An application to the Tribunal for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court shall be made within a period of thirty days beginning with the date of the decision of the Tribunal and an application to the Supreme Court for leave shall be made within a period of thirty days beginning with the date on which the application for leave is refused by the Tribunal.

(3) An appeal shall be treated as pending until any application for leave to appeal is disposed of and if leave to appeal is granted, until the appeal is disposed of; and an application for leave to appeal shall be treated as disposed of at the expiration of the time within which it might have been made, but it is not made within that time.”

5. In view of Sub Section (2) of Section 31 of the said Act, an application for leave to appeal to the Hon'ble Supreme Court should have been moved within a period of 30 days beginning with the date of the decision of the Tribunal, but, in the instant case the application for leave to appeal has been moved after 01 year, 02 months and 29 days from the date of passing of impugned final Judgment i.e. beyond the statutory period. No sufficient cause has been shown for condonation of such inordinate delay in moving the application for leave to appeal. Since the application for leave to appeal has not been moved within the statutory period of thirty days, it shall be treated as disposed of at the expiration of said period, in view of Section 31(3) of the Armed Forces Tribunal Act, 2007.

6. In Misc. Application No. 32 of 2011, Lt. Col. Ranjodh Singh Vs. Union of India and others, vide Order dated 23.02.2012, it has been held by this Bench of the Tribunal that the application under Section 5 of the Limitation Act is not maintainable. Learned Counsel for the applicants has not made out any case for taking a different view in the matter. Thus, we are in agreement with the said Order dated 23.02.2012 delivered by this Tribunal in Misc. Application No. 32 of 2011, Lt. Col. Ranjodh Singh Vs. Union of India and others.

7. In view of the aforesaid discussion, we are of the view that the application for leave to appeal has been moved after considerable delay, which has not been explained satisfactorily, and the application under Section 5 of the Limitation Act is also not maintainable and it is rejected, accordingly. Consequently, the application for Leave to Appeal under Section 31 of the Armed Forces Tribunal Act, 2007, being highly time barred, is also rejected.

(Air Marshal Anil Chopra)
Member (A)

(Justice S.C. Chaurasia)
Member (J)

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