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IN THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL
PRINCIPAL BENCH: NEW DELHI

DATE OF DECISION: 18.3.1991

1. OA No. 1346/89

SHRI P.K. DATTA CHOUDHURY APPLICANT
VERSUS
UNION OF INDIA & ORS. RESPONDENTS

2. OA No. 1357/89

SHRI JANAK RAM APPLICANT
VERSUS
UNION OF INDIA & ORS. RESPONDENTS

3. OA NO. 70/89

SHRI RAJA RAM RAO APPLICANT
VERSUS
UNION OF INDIA & ORS. RESPONDENTS

4. OA No. 1356/89

SHRI KHEM RAM APPLICANT
VERSUS
UNION OF INDIA & ORS. RESPONDENTS

5. OA No. 1355/89

SHRI D.P. GURU APPLICANT
VERSUS
UNION OF INDIA & ORS. RESPONDENTS

6. OA No. 1462/89

SHRI LAJPAT RAI BAKSHI APPLICANT
VERSUS
UNION OF INDIA & ORS. RESPONDENTS

CORAM:

THE HON'BLE MR. KAMLESHWAR NATH, VICE CHAIRMAN

THE HON'BLE MR. I.K. RASGOTRA, MEMBER(A)

FOR THE APPLICANTS

SHRI UMESH MISHRA ALONGWITH
SHRI R.R.RAI, COUNSEL

FOR THE RESPONDENTS

SHRI M.L. VERMA, COUNSEL

(JUDGEMENT OF THE BENCH DELIVERED BY
HON'BLE MR. I.K. RASGOTRA, MEMBER(A))

The issue raised in this bunch of applications
is: if the military service rendered in the capacity of

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¹⁰ See *W. H. H. Stoddard, The American Renaissance: A Study in National Culture* (1923).

OA No. 1357/89 - Janak Ram Vs. UOI

The applicant worked as Sepoy Clerk in AOC from 6.2.1950 upto 27.7.1955 when he was declared surplus. After obtaining No Objection Certificate he got himself registered with the Regional Employment Exchange for a suitable job. He joined the Civil Service as L.D.C. w.e.f. 27.7.1955 after he was released from the AOC in the cadre of Director General Technical Development (DGTD), Ministry of Defence on 27.7.1955. He was promoted as steno typist in performance between 30.1.1956 and confirmed as L.D.C. w.e.f. 1.5.1959. The applicant went on deputation to the National Coop. Union of India and remained there from 1.0.1964 to 30.6.1968. He was further promoted as Upper Division Clerk w.e.f. 1.8.1968. Further he was appointed as U.D.C. - Steno (i.e. UDC's pay plus Rs. 30 as Stenographic allowance) w.e.f. 20.12.1968 and he was promotion as Steno (Grade-II) on 1.5.1971 but was reverted as Steno (Grade III) w.e.f. 2.12.1972. The applicant joined Mining and Allied Machinery Corporation Ltd. (a Govt. of India enterprise) on permanent absorption basis as Assistant Administrative Officer w.e.f. 30.11.1989. On 26.9.1988 he made a representation refixation in the light of judgement in his case dated 28.5.1987 in R.L. Chhibber Vs. UOI of his seniority in the grade of LDC. But on 30.1.1989 the Department rejected the representation as according to them the applicant's case was not covered by the decision given in the case of Shri R.L. Chhibber Vs. UOI (Supra) which relates to a dispute between Ex-Servicemen for seniority in the civil posts. The case was not covered by the decision given in the case of Raja Ram Rao Vs. UOI (Supra) as the facts of the two cases are different.

The applicant worked in AOC as Sepoy Clerk from

19.1.1950 to 8.6.1955 when he was declared surplus and released from AOC. He joined as LDC in the ministry of Food and Agriculture on 9.6.1955 and thereafter was promoted and transferred during the course of employment.

He was posted as Assistant in the Office of Chief Controller of Imports & Exports, New Delhi when he retired on superannuation on 28.2.1989. He made a representation dt.

18.8.1988 for refixation of his seniority to the Dy. Chief Controller of Imports and Exports for refixation of his seniority as LDC in the light of judgement dt. 28.5.1987 in the case of R.L. Chhibber vs. UOI (supra) which was rejected on 23.12.1988 after consultation with the Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Personnel, P.G. & Pensions.

iv) OA No.1356/89 - Khem Ram Vs. UOI

The applicant worked in the Army Ordnance Corps as Sepoy Clerk from 7.11.1949 upto 29.6.1965, when he was declared surplus and released. After obtaining No. Objection Certificate from the AOC on being rendered surplus got himself registered with the Regional Employment Exchange for a suitable job in civil service. He joined the Ministry of Industry as L.D.C. w.e.f. 30.6.1955. He was declared permanent as L.D.C. w.e.f. 1.5.1959 and promoted as U.D.C. w.e.f. 14.3.1969. He was promoted as Assistant w.e.f. 1.5.1978. He retired on attaining the age of superannuation on 31.7.1988 from D.G.T.D. Ministry of Industry. He made a representation on 26.9.1988 requesting for refixation of his seniority as L.D.C. in the light of judgement dt. 28.5.1987 in the case of R.L. Chhibber but the same was rejected by the respondents on 2.5.1989.

v) OA No. 1355/89 - D.P. Guru Vs. UOI

The applicant worked as Sepoy Clerk from 13.2.1950 to

24.8.1955 in the AOC when he was released from the Army on being rendered surplus. He got himself registered with the Regional Employment Exchange after obtaining No Objection Certificate from the AOC. The applicant joined civil service as L.D.C. in the Ministry of Industry on 24.8.1955 and was confirmed as L.D.C. w.e.f. 1.5.1959. He was promoted as Assistant w.e.f. 16.6.1978 and retired after attaining the age of superannuation on 31.12.88.

He made a representation on 26.10.1988 for refixation of seniority as L.D.C. in the light of the judgement dated 28.5.1987 in the case of R.L. Chhibber Vs. UOI which was rejected by the respondents on 24.11.1988.

.....(vi) 6.9. OA No. 1462/89 - Lajpat Rai Bakshi Vs. UOI
T.O. 1462/89 dated 26.10.1988

The applicant worked in the AOC as Sepoy Clerk from 28.2.1949 up to 7.1.1955 when he was declared surplus and released. Since he was rendered surplus he registered himself with the Regional Employment Exchange for a suitable job in the civil service after obtaining No Objection Certificate from AOC. He joined as LDC in the office of the Director General & Supplies & Disposals (D.G.S. & D.) on 8.1.1955. He was promoted to the post of UDC in 1968 and confirmed as UDC on 1.4.1975. He was promoted as an Assistant on 5.5.1980 and retired on attaining the age of superannuation on 30.10.1986 from the office of the Union Public Service Commission. He represented on 21.2.1989 for refixation of his seniority in the light of judgement in R.L. Chhibber Vs. UOI (supra). The same was, however, rejected vide order dated

5th July, 1989 by the respondent UPSC in consultation with the Department of Personnel & Training.

2. The applicants' pay as LDC was fixed after granting them increments depending on the length of past

service in the AOC. All the applicants except Shri Raja Ram Rao OA No. 70/89 have submitted that their pay was finalized and the increments and de-restrictions were also fixed after granting them 5 increments in the pay scale of 1954-55 before 1960. The applicants have also stated that the LDC reckoning the Army service for this purpose.

By way of relief the applicants have prayed that the respondents be directed to refix the seniority of the applicants taking into account their past service in the AOC with all consequential benefits regarding confirmation, promotion etc. with retrospective effect in terms of the decision given by this Tribunal in R.L. Chhibber Vs. UOI (supra).

Shri Umesh Misra with Shri R.R. Rai appearing for the applicants submitted that the applicants are similarly situated as Shri R.L. Chhibber and, therefore, they should be granted the same benefits which have been made available to Shri R.L. Chhibber in accordance with the judgement of the Tribunal dated 28.5.1987. In support he cited the case of Tota Ram Sharma v. UOI & Ors. 1990

(3) SLJ 181. A disparate treatment to the applicants would infringe the provisions of Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution of India. The thrust of the plea of the learned counsel was that the benefit of the judgement dated 28.5.1987 should be extended to the applicants, as any other course will be infraction of the constitutional provisions.

4. The case of the respondents as set out by Shri M.L. Verma, the learned counsel is that the applications are time barred, as the cause of action arose some time in 1954-55 while the OAs have been filed in 1989. The applicants have also not explained the delay in pursuing the matter in appropriate legal forum, soon after the cause of action arose in 1954/55. The learned counsel

submitted that the delay in such cases cannot be condoned and the learned judge before whom the application was heard and drew our attention to the judgement of the Allahabad Bench of the Tribunal in the case of Madhav Prasad Chaudhry v. UOI & Ors. 1990 (3) SLJ 528 where it was held that the challenge to the seniority in 1985 fixed in 1981 was barred by Section 21 of the Administrative Tribunals Act, 1985. He further submitted that the applicants had been declared surplus and released from the AOC. They joined the Civil Service on redeployment. The learned counsel contended that past service, in such cases cannot be counted and submitted that his view is supported by the decision of the Principal Bench in Chiranjiv Singh Jat v. UOI & Ors. 1988 (6) ATC 402. He further submitted that the applicants cannot claim seniority and promotion above others who have not been made the necessary parties. The applications are, therefore, bad in law for non-joinder of necessary and proper parties as held in the case of T.R. Gupta v. G.M. Central Rly. & Ors. 1989 (10) ATC 845.

Contesting the above submissions, Shri Umesh Prasad Misra submitted that the application is not barred by limitation as the cause of action had last arisen in 1987 when the judgement was delivered in the case of Shri R.L. Chhibber (supra). In support of his contention the learned counsel cited the case of M.G. Rajashankar v. Workshop Manager, Central Rly., Bombay 1990 (3) SLJ 123.

The learned counsel further submitted that the decision of the Tribunal in R.L. Chhibber (supra) is not restricted to the fixation of inter-se-seniority between Shri Hari Bhagat and Shri R.L. Chhibber alone but also deals with fixation of seniority of Shri Chhibber after taking into account his past service rendered in AOC thereby conferring on him all the consequential benefits in regard to confirmation and promotion with retrospective effect.

Q.81. ~~Ans.~~ To a query from us whether the applicants had made their representations when they joined Civil Service for assigning them seniority after counting the Military Service, the learned counsel submitted that several representations were made by the applicants and that they, all were rejected by the concerned authorities. The learned counsel produced a copy of the memorandum No. A.III(1568)/A-II dated 28.2.1956 issued by the Ministry of Food & Agriculture to Shri P.K. Dutta Chowdhury, Lower Division Clerk, which is extracted below:

Subject: Counting of Military Service for fixation of pay etc. etc.

After receipt of your letter with reference to his representation dated 13th February, 1956, Shri P.K. Dutta Chowdhury was informed that under the rules, he is not entitled to get any benefit in respect of his service rendered by him in the Army for the purpose of fixation of his initial pay as Lower Division Clerk in this office as the basic pay of a Lower Division Clerk drawn by him in the Army is less than the minimum of the prescribed scale of Lower Division Clerk viz. Rs.55-130. Similarly his service in the Army cannot, for the same reason, be taken into account for purposes of fixing seniority and his seniority in the grade of Lower Division Clerk is to be calculated with other Clerks. It would appear that the representations were made by the applicants and the same were rejected by the respective authorities. To a further query that if they have filed the copies of the memoranda before the Ministry of Home Affairs and Department of Information to the concerned authorities, the learned counsel submitted that they have not filed the copies of the memoranda before the concerned authorities.

by the Ministry of Personnel, dated 18th July, 1956 and 28th June, 1972 respectively, the learned counsel submitted that they have ~~already~~ not filed copies of these memoranda as these have already been discussed in R.L. Chhibber (supra) judgement.

After due consideration of the above and thereafter, We have heard the learned counsel of both the parties and considered the material on record. We have also perused the Tribunal's judgement in the case of R.L. Chhibber (supra) dated 28.5.1987. The Office Memorandum dated 18th July, 1956 issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in answer to the specific queries which seem to have been made by the Defence Ministry by stating that:-

"the undersigned is directed to say that this Ministry have taken a decision to count for the purpose of seniority in the Grade of Lower Division Clerks in the Central Secretariat and in all other offices included under the Central Secretariat and the Civil and Clerical Service Scheme, all service rendered as ~~any~~ ~~any~~ ~~any~~ in clerical posts (including service rendered as ~~any~~ ~~any~~ ~~any~~ as Sepoy Clerk and Havilder Clerk) provided that ~~any~~ ~~any~~ ~~any~~ such service is continuous with service in the ~~any~~ ~~any~~ ~~any~~ grade of Lower Division Clerks. No general orders on the subject have however, been issued by this Ministry."

It is to be noted that ~~any~~ ~~any~~ ~~any~~ The above memorandum makes it clear that no general orders have been issued on the subject by the Ministry of Home Affairs although the Ministry of Home Affairs had taken a decision to count for the purpose of seniority the service rendered in clerical posts (including service rendered as Sepoy Clerk and Havilder Clerk) in the grade of Lower Division Clerks in the Central Secretariat Clerical Service Scheme provided such service is continuous. The Department of Personnel's

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Office Memorandum dated 28th June, 1972 is, however, of greater help. The relevant extract of the said Office Memorandum is reproduced below:-

"However, the controlling authority in the

Ministry of Home Affairs dealing with the

Central Secretariat Clerical Service had, in

1956, informed the Ministry of Defence vide

their Office Memorandum Number 4252/56-CS(C),

dated the 18th July, 1956 (copy enclosed) that

service rendered in clerical posts (including

service rendered as Sepoy Clerk and Havildar

Clerk) would count for purpose of seniority in

the grade of Lower Division Clerks in the

Central Secretariat and Offices included in the

Central Secretariat Clerical Service Scheme,

provided such service was continuous with

service in the grade of Lower Division Clerk.

No general orders on the subject were, however,

issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs and, as

such, this Department is not aware whether any

such benefit was allowed to Lower Division

Clerks serving in Offices not participating in

the Central Secretariat Clerical Service

Scheme.

2. In this connection a copy of Unstarred

Question Number 614 by Shri Sande Narayanappa

and of the reply given to thereto in the Rajya

Sabha on the 25th May, 1972, is enclosed. To

enable this Department to fulfil the assurance

given in the reply to the Rajya Sabha Question,

it is requested that this Department may kindly

be informed whether a similar benefit as laid

down in the Ministry of Home Affairs Office

Memorandum dated the 18th July, 1956 referred

to above was given to ex-Servicemen absorbed as
Lower Division Clerks, prior to the 22nd

December, 1959, in Offices under the Ministry
of Finance etc. which are not included in
C.S.C.S. and, if so, whether such a benefit was

given by the cadre authorities on volition or
only entitled to voluntary and honorary

in consultation with the Ministry of Home
Affairs (now Department of Personnel). The

required information may be given in the
proforma enclosed."

Reference was also made as to whether service

rendered in the Army as Sepoy Clerk and Havaldar Clerk

would count for purpose of seniority in the grade of Lower
Division Clerks in the Central Secretariat and Offices

included in the Central Secretariat Clerical Service

Scheme provided such Army Service was continuous with
service in the grade of Lower Division Clerks. Thus the

position explained by the Ministry of Home Affairs which
was then the controlling authority dealing with the
Central Secretariat Clerical Service can be construed as

having statutory force. No material has been produced

before us if any follow up action by issuing a general
circular after considering the position in response to

Department of Personnel's Office Memorandum dated 28th
June, 1972 was taken by the said Department. This is

however not material in these cases as the applicants
before us belong to the Central Secretariat Clerical
Service Scheme.

A point was made by the learned counsel for the
respondents that since the applicants had been rendered
surplus, their service cannot be counted in accordance
with the Statutory Rules. The Statutory Rules regarding

Redeployment of Surplus Staff issued by the Ministry of

Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Department of

Personnel and Training are not applicable to the surplus

ex-servicemen. That Scheme is applicable only to non-

-gazetted staff, Ministerial and non-Ministerial

identified as surplus as a result of the studies made by

Staff Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Finance and the

Administrative Reforms in the Ministry of Personnel. In

fact the 'surplus staff' covered by the Scheme is defined

in that Scheme as:-

"the Central Civil Servants (other than those

employed on ad-hoc casual, work-charged or

contract basis) who--

(a) are permanent or quasi-permanent or, if

temporary, have rendered not less than five

years regular continuous service, and

(b) have been rendered surplus alongwith their

posts from the Ministries/Departments/Offices

of the Government of India as a result of --"

Even the judicial pronouncement in Chiranjiv Singh Jat v. UOI & Ors. (supra) cited by the learned

counsel of the respondents relates to a Government Servant

(RAJAN AGARWAL) (KARTIK SINGH)

who had been rendered surplus from Civil Service and later

provided another job on redeployment.

We are also not persuaded to accept that the case is barred by limitation. It is apparent that the representations made by the applicants, assigning them seniority by counting their past Army Service were rejected by the respondents. In that view of the matter, the matter having ended there got resurrected only with the decision in the case of R.L. Chhibber v. UOI (supra)

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the applicants, as far as financial loss is concerned, is not barred by the Tribunal on 28.5.1987. The cause of action can, in the view of the Tribunal, not be statute-barred, therefore, be said to have been arisen only from the date of the establishment of the Central Board of Supply and Stores on 28.5.1987. Further the financial loss to the applicants being of recurring nature cannot be barred by limitation. The applicants set to file a writ petition in the High Court, In view of the facts and circumstances of the case, as discussed hereinbefore, we are of the view that the applicants are entitled to the same reliefs as provided to the applicant in Shri R.L. Chhibber v. UOI (supra) case. Accordingly, the applications are allowed with the direction that the applicants seniority in all the six OAs listed above shall be refixed, taking into account their past service in the Army. They shall be given the consequential benefits in regard to confirmation and promotion with retrospective effect. The refund of service gratuity, if any, received by the applicants from the Army Authorities at the time of release, shall be regulated as per the relevant Rules.

There will be no order as to costs.

(I.K. RASGOTRA) (KAMELESHWAR NATH)
MEMBER (A) MEMBER, VICE-CHAIRMAN.

Dated this 13/3/1991.