CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL
HYDERABAD BENCH
HYDERABAD

OA/021/00052/2019

Date of CAV : 03.11.2020
Date of Pronouncement : 23.11.2020

Hon'ble Mr. AshishKalia, Judl. Member
Hon'ble Mr. B.V. Sudhakar, Admn. Member

MuralaVaddi Kasulu S/o Late Murala Kotaiah,
Aged 60 years, Retd. Deputy Director / Executive Engineer,
(Group 'A'), O/o The Chief Engineer, Central Water
Commission, Krishna & Godavari Basin Organization,
Hyderabad, R/o Plot No.59, 1st Floor, Road No.3,
Vasanth Nagar, Kukatpally, Hyderabad-500 085, T.S.

...Applicant

(By Advocate :Mr.K.R.K.V.Prasad)

Vs.

1.Union of India represented by
The Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources,
RD & GR, Shram Shakti Bhawan,
Rafi Marg, New Delhi-110 001.

2.The Chairman, Central Water
Commission, Sewa Bhawan, R.K.Puram,
New Delhi-110 066.

3. The Ministry of Finance Rep by
The Secretary, Government of India,
Department of Expenditure,
North Block, New Delhi. ....Respondents

(By Advocate: Mrs.L.Pranathi Reddy, Addl. CGSC)

ORDER
(As per Hon'ble Mr.B.V.Sudhakar, Administrative Member)

2. This OA is filed for grant of notional increment due on 1st July of 2018 having retired from service on the 30th June of 2018, with consequential benefits.

3. The grievance of the applicant is that he has not been granted increment due on 01.07.2018 for having worked for one year prior to his retirement. He relied upon the order of the Hon'ble High Court of Madras in WP No.15732/2017 dt.15.09.2017, which has attained finality inasmuch as the SLP and the Review Petition filed before the Hon'ble Supreme Court have been dismissed. Aggrieved by non grant of the said benefit, the OA has been filed.

4. Heard both sides counsel. When the matter was taken up for hearing, learned counsel for respondents sought for further time for filing reply though this OA is pending since January 2019. Learned counsel for the applicant pleaded that in similar cases, this Tribunal passed orders against various Departments of Central Government and therefore, the applicant being similarly placed is also entitled for similar relief. Considering the above position, the matter was heard and reserved for orders on 03.11.2020. However, respondents were granted opportunity to file additional material, if any, in form of written submissions/ written arguments within two weeks. Though the said period lapsed, the respondents have not come forward with any additional material, etc. Thus, this order is being passed based on the material available on record.

5. This Tribunal passed orders in similar OAs, including OA Nos.1263/2018 and 1155/2018 wherein elaborate orders discussing the issue on hand threadbare have been passed. Further, on 17.07.2020, a batch of matters being OA Nos. 325/2020 & Batch were disposed of by a detailed order adverting to the averments and contentions of the respondents therein. Some of the observations, and the conclusions made in OA No. 325/2020 & batch, are reproduced as under:

> *"XVII. Continuing their defence, respondents have stated that the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in W.P (C) No. 9062/2018 & C.M No 34892/2018 has rejected similar relief in regard to increment and enhanced DA on 23.10.2018 even by referring to P. Ayyamperumal Judgment. However, the Hon'ble Delhi High Court in its later judgment in W.P (C) 10509/2019 in Gopal Singh v U.O.I did grant a similar relief on 23.01.2020, as under:*
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> > *"8. More recently, this Court in its decision dated 13th January, 2020 in W.P.(C) 5539/2019 (Arun Chhibber v. Union of India) has discussed the judgment in P. Ayyamperumal at some length in the context of the prayer of an officer of the Central Reserve Police Force ('CRPF') who had retired on 30th June, 2007 for notional increment. The Court rejected the contention of the Respondents therein that the judgment in P. Ayyamperuamal had to be treated as one that was in personam and not in rem. In relation to the Respondent's attempt to distinguish the applicability of the judgment in P. Ayyamperumal to CRPF personnel, the Court observed as under:-*
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> > > *"5. The Court finds that the only difference, if any, between P. Ayyamperumal (supra) and this case is that the former was an employee of the Central Government, whereas here the Petitioner superannuated from the CRPF. The Court, therefore, finds no reasons to deny the Petitioner same relief granted to Mr. P. Ayyamperumal by the Madras High Court. The similarity in the two cases is that here too, the Petitioner has completed one year of service, just one day prior to 1st July, 2007."*
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> > *9. The position here as regards CISF personnel can be no different and it was not, therefore, open to the Respondents to refuse to grant to the Petitioner notional increment merely because he superannuated a day earlier than the day fixed by the CPC for such benefit to accrue.*
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> > *10. Accordingly, the impugned order dated 3rd May, 2019 is set aside. A direction is issued to the Respondents to grant notional*

> *increment to the Petitioner with effect from 1st July, 2019. The Petitioner's pension will consequentially be re-fixed. The appropriate orders will be issued and arrears of pension will be paid to the Petitioner within a period of 6 weeks, failing which the Respondents would be liable to simple interest at 6% per annum on the arrears of period of delay."*

It requires no reiteration that the later judgment of Hon'ble High Court of Delhi on 13.1.2020 on the same issue holds the ground. It must be noted that the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi has rejected the contention that P.Ayyamperumal Judgment is in personam on which the respondents harped by stating that the nodal Ministry i.e DOPT has taken such a stand. Moreover, the judgment of the Hon'ble High Court of A.P. in Principal Accountant General, AP & others v C. Subba Rao& others in ***2005(2) ALD 1 = 2005 (2) ALT 25*** *cited by the respondents to back their defence would not be relevant in view of the latest Judgment of the Hon Delhi court on 23.1.2020 referred to above and the dismissal of both the SLP (C) No.22008/2018 plus the Review Petition vide RP (C) No.1731/2019 filed thereupon against Ayyamperumal judgment in WP No.15732/2017 dt.15.9.2017, by the Hon'ble Apex Court on 23.7.2018 and 8.8.2019 respectively, for reasons expounded in para XVI. It is also pertinent to point out that when the C. Subba Rao judgment was delivered in 2005 by the Hon'ble High Court of A.P. the rule for granting increment was the date of joining of the service/ date of promotion. The rule has been changed after the 6th CPC with the date of increment being taken as a uniform date of 1st July and as per CCS revised pay rules of 2008 after completion of 6 months of service in the grade/pay scale, one would become eligible for grant of an increment. Moreover, the concept of taking 50% of last pay drawn for granting of pension has been brought into vogue from 2006 onwards. The change in the rules subsequent to C. Subba Rao judgment have made it irrelevant.*

XVIII) Further, the Hon'ble Ernakulam Bench of this Tribunal in OA No.180/1055/2018 and batch, vide order dt.03.12.2019, extended the same relief as sought by the applicants by opining as under:

> *"9. We find that the Hon'ble Madras High Court had already considered the issue raised by the applicants in the present OAs, we are in full agreement with the judgment passed by the Hon'ble Madras High Court in P. Ayyamperumal's case (supra) upheld by the Hon'ble apex court.*
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> *10. Therefore, the impugned orders of rejection Annexure A4 in OA No. 180/654/2019 and Annexures A5 in OAs Nos. 180/1055/2018 and 180/61/2019 are quashed and set aside. The applicant in OA No. 180/109/2019 had sought relief to quash Annexure A6 which is only a reply to the question posed by a Member of Parliament in Lok Sabha. The applicants shall be given one notional increment for the purpose of calculating the pensionary benefits and not for any other purpose as held by the Hon'ble Madras High Court in P. Ayyamperumal's case (supra) upheld by the Hon'ble apex court. The respondents shall implement the order of this Tribunal within three months from the date of receipt of a copy of this order. There shall be no order as to costs."*

It is the cardinal principle of judicial discipline, as held by the Apex Court in the case of ***S.I.Rooplalvs Lt. Governor of Delhi***[1] *that precedents are to be strictly adhered to.*

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XIX. Respondents banking on the fact that the Hon'ble Madras Bench of this Tribunal has dismissed OAs 1710 to 1714/2018, 309/2019, 312/2019, 26/2019, 498/2019 and MA 226/2019 filed seeking similar relief in March and April 2019, urged that the instant OAs be dismissed. However, in the context of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dismissing the relevant SLP and Review Petition cited supra and in the context of the observation at para XVI above in regard to review of P. Ayyamperumal judgment, as well as the later judgments of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi on 23.01.2020 plus that of the Hon'ble Ernakulam Bench of this Tribunal on 3.12.2019, which are later to the Hon'ble Madras Tribunal Bench orders, it is incumbent on the respondents to grant the increment on 1st July. Respondents did point out that even this Tribunal has also dismissed OA 1275/2013 on 20.6.2019 seeking the relief sought. However, it is to be observed that as on 20.6.2019, the dismissal decision of Hon'ble Apex Court in the Review Petition delivered on 8.8.2019 filed against P. Ayyamperumal verdict was obviously not available and therefore, the dismissal. Subsequently, this Tribunal, in the light of the dismissal of the review petition referred to, disposed of OA Nos.1263/2018, 1155/2018 & 229/2020 on 13.03.2020; OA No.430/2020 on 26.06.2020 & OA Nos. 431/2020 & 432/2020 on 08.07.2020. In addition, keeping in view of the law laid down by the Hon'ble Apex Court in ***Roop Lal,*** *to abide by the precedent, the respondents cannot afford to take any other view but are bound by the latest judgments of the superior judicial forums referred to above.*

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XXIII) Now coming to the aspect of DA on 1st July consequent to retirement of an employee, the matter is under adjudication by the Hon'ble Apex Court in SLP No.5646 of 2018 and 5647 of 2018 and therefore, applicants can pursue for appropriate remedies from the respondents based on the decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court on the issue.

XXIV. In view of the aforesaid, it is evident that the respondents have transgressed the rules and laws related to the issue adjudicated upon. Therefore, the OAs fully succeed. Hence, there can be no better conclusion other than to direct the respondents to consider as under:

i)Re-fix the pension of applicants by allowing the eligible increment for rendering an year of service due on 1st July.

ii) Release pension and pensionary benefits with all consequential benefits thereof, based on (i) above.

iii) While releasing benefits as at (ii) above, in regard to the quantum of arrears to be released, the judgment of Hon'ble Apex Court in Union of India & Ors Vs. Tarsem Singh in Civil Appeal Nos. 5151-5152 of 2008 vide para 5, has to be borne in mind and followed.

iv) Time calendared to implement the judgment is 3 months from the date of receipt of this order.

[1] (2000) 1 SCC 644

XXV. With the above directions, the OAs are allowed to the extent stated above.“

7. In view of the above, it is deemed fit to direct the respondents to consider and dispose of the case of the applicant for eligible relief with consequential benefits, keeping in view the orders of various Courts including this Tribunal cited supra, by treating the OA and the averments made therein as a representation of the applicant and while doing so, the respondents shall pass speaking and reasoned orders, within a period of 3 months from the date of receipt of this order.

With the above directions, the OA is disposed of. No order as to costs.

(B.V.SUDHAKAR)
ADMINISTRATIVEMEMBER

(ASHISH KALIA)
JUDICIAL MEMBER

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