

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL  
ERNAKULAM BENCH

O.A. NO. 389/2009

Dated this the 5<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2010

C O R A M

HON'BLE MR.GEORGE PARACKEN, JUDICIAL MEMBER  
HON'BLE MRS. K. NOORJEHAN, ADMINISTRATIVE MEMBER

- 1 M.V Varghese S/o Varghese  
Catering Assistant, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya  
Vechoochira, Pathanamthitta  
Keerala -686511.
- 2 Aneesh K. S/o P.K.Krishnan  
Catering Assistant, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya  
PO Kulamavu, Idukki District  
Kerala-685601
- 3 Vinod C. S/o Chandran  
Catering Assistant, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya  
U.T. Mahe, Mahe
- 4 D. David Raja S/o S. Devai R.Vatham  
Catering Assistant, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya  
Bhagavatpadapuri P.O. Chendayad  
Cannanore District  
Kerala-670 692
- 5 Stheesh E.K. S/o A.T.Karunakaran  
Catering Assistant, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya  
Badagara, Palayadnada  
Calicut Dilstrict
- 6 Binu G. Nath S/o V.K. Gopinathan  
Catering Assistant, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya  
Neriamanlgalam, Ernakulam District,  
Kerala State-686 693

7 G. Prathapan Nair S/o late Gopalan Nair  
Catering Assistant, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya  
ETC Campus, Kottarakkara  
Kollam District, Kerala- 691531

8 P.K. Masnoharan S/o late Kochukunju  
Catering Assistant, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya  
P.O. Chennithala, TO Mavelikkara  
Alappuzha District.

9 A.V. Balachandran Nair S/o late Velayudhan Nair  
Catering Assistant, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya  
Vechoochira  
Pathanamthitta District  
Kerala -686511

10 T.M. Vijayakumar S/o late A. Velayudhan Nair  
Catering Assistant, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya  
A.E. QHS No. 5  
PO Malampuzha, Palakkad District.  
Kerala- 678651

By Advocate Mr. M.V. Bose

Vs

1 Union of India represented by  
its Secretary to  
Ministry of Human Resources Development  
Department of School Education & Literacy  
Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi.

2 The Secretary  
Ministry of Finance  
Department of Expenditure  
North Block, New Delhi.

3 Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti  
represented by its Commissioner  
A-28, Kailash Colony  
New Delhi-110 048

4 The Deputy Commissioner  
Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti  
Hyderabad Region  
1-1-10/3, S.P. Road,  
Secendrabad.

## Respondents

By Advocate Mr. Subhas Syriac, ACGSC for R 1 & 2  
Advocate Mr. M.K.Damodaran for R-4

The Application having been heard on 28.7.2010, the Tribunal delivered the following:

## ORDER

HON'BLE MRS. K. NOORJEHAN, ADMINISTRATIVE MEMBER

The applicants who are working as Catering Assistants in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas in the Kerala Region, challenge the denial of appropriate pay scale and special allowance as has been recommended by VI CPC and non fixation of their working hours.

2 The applicants submitted that the mess workers like the Catering Assistants work for about 18 hours a day without enjoying Sundays and holidays. A Catering Assistant has to take care of the food requirement of about 600 students. As per the statutory recruitment rules, the minimum educational qualifications was Senior Secondary School with three year Diploma in Hotel Management and Catering. However, this was modified to Secondary School with three year Diploma. Though they were placed under teaching cadre, subsequently they were changed to non-teaching cadre. According to them, they are identically placed with the Catering Assistants working in Oak Grove School under the Railway Ministry and Military Schools under the Ministry of Defence. Therfore, they contend that they are entitled to

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the same pay scale granted to the Caterian Assistants in Oak Grove School/Military Schools. Hence, they filed this O.A to direct the respondents 1 & 2 to assign them PB-2 pay band in the pay scale of Rs. 9300-34800 with the grade pay of Rs. 4200/- w.e.f. 1.1.2006, to grant special allowance at the rate of 10% of pay and grade pay, to create promotional avenue, to fix working hours and to quash Annexure A-VII. The VI CPC has recommended a special allowance at the rate of 10% of pay band and grade pay for teachers and other residential staff. Therefore, denial of the same is discriminatory. The Government is bound to accept the recommendations of the expert body like the CPC, the promotional prospects of them are bleak as there is no provision for promotion, the non-fixation of working hours is unconstitutional, illegal and unsustainable.

3 The respondents 3 & 4 filed separate reply statement. They stated that the Samiti which is subject to financial control by the 1<sup>st</sup> respondent is not in a position to implement the pay scale of Rs. 9300-34800 with Grade Pay of Rs. 4200/- to the applicants. They submitted that the recommendations made by the VI CPC has not been approved by the Ministry of Human Resources Development in respect of all the non-teaching category. They admitted that there is no avenue for promotion provided in the cadre of Catering Assistants. However, they are granted two financial upgradations oncompletion of 12/24 years of service under the ACP Scheme. They submitted that all the residential staff in the Vidyalayas are expected to work for 18 hours a day and that the applicants alone are not discriminated against.

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4 The respondents 1 & 2 in their reply statement submitted that the provision of promotional avenues etc. to the Catering Assistants are policy decision of the Government which cannot be challenged in a Court. They submitted that Navodaya Vidyalayas are residential schools set up in rural areas providing free education to the rural children. Therefore, the duty hours of the applicants are fixed on the basis of job requirement. There is no reason or logic in comparing the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas with special schools run by the Ministry of Defence or Ministry of Railways. As per the policy of the respondents, all the residential staff are expected to be on duty for 24 hours a day and 7 days per week. The special allowance of 10% of the pay scale and grade pay is declined in respect of all non-teaching staff. There is no discrimination as against the applicants. They further stated that even though there are no chances for promotion there is provision for financial upgradation under the ACP Scheme.

5 The applicants filed rejoinder reiterating their averments in the O.A. They further stated that the non-acceptance of the recommendations of the VI CPC is arbitrary and discriminatory and infringement of the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution of India.

6 We have heard learned counsel for the parties and have gone through the records produced before us.

7 We notice that the Catering Assistants/Mess employees in the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas are admittedly doing 18 hours work daily and 126 hours in a week whereas the other non-teaching staff like

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UDC/LDC etc. are doing 11 hours per day and 77 hours in a week. However, the Catering Assistant was clubbed with UDC and was drawing the pay scale of Rs. 1200-1800 during IV CPC, Rs. 4000-6000 during V CPC.

The VI CPC in its report at para 7.21.3 stated as follows:

7.21.3 High pay scales have been demanded for the teaching staff and Mess Workers of Navodaya Vidyalayas on the grounds that they have to put in higher hours of work every day of the week as compared to the staff working in day schools. They have also demanded introduction of pension scheme. Navodaya Vidyalayas are autonomous and as such are not covered under the terms of reference of the Commission. While no recommendation can be made in their case, however, their demand appears justified especially as the teachers and staff working in these schools will have to put in greater efforts vis-a-vis similar employees working in day schools. While the Commission makes no recommendation for residential allowance, because their terms of reference do not include Navodaya Vidyalayas, the Government should consider grant of special allowance in these schools on par with that being recommended by the Commission for Military Schools in Ministry of Defence and the Oak Grove School in Ministry of Railways. A similar dispensation can be considered for Sainik Schools as well.

The Commission at para 7.36.93 dealing with Oak Grove School, recommended as follows:

### **7.36.93: Teaching Staff in Oak Grove School**

Railways run residential school called Oak Grove School at Jharipani, Mussoorie. The teaching cadre in the school comprises Assistant Mistresses who are on par with Primary School Teachers, TGTs and PGTs. The Commission has made recommendations for various grades of Teachers in the Chapter on Common Categories. These recommendations will equally apply to the Teachers in Oak Grove School with the Assistant Mistresses being equated to Primary School Teachers. This relativity should be maintained in future as well. Elsewhere, the Commission has recommended a special allowance of 10% for Military Schools on account of special functions that need to be performed by Teachers/other residential staff working in the residential schools. Teachers and other residential staff in Oak Grove School are also similarly placed. Accordingly, a special allowance is recommended for Teachers/other residential staff in Oak Grove School. The allowance shall be payable at the rate of 10% of pay band and grade pay as recommended in the case of Military Schools.

Regarding the teachers and other staff in the Military schools the Commission recommended as follows:

### **7.10.21:-Teachers in Military Schools**

Higher pay scales for Teachers in Military Schools have been demanded. It is seen that presently the Assistant Masters in these schools are in the same pay scale as the entry grade of Trained Graduate Teachers i.e. TGT-III. The next higher post of

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Masters Gazetted is in the scale of Rs. 7500-12000 that corresponds to the Apex scale of Trained Graduate Teacher i.e. TGT-I. The Commission has recommended upgradation of the pay scales of common category of teachers with TGT-III being placed in the pay scale of Rs. 7450-11500 and TGT-I being extended the scale of Rs. 8000-13500. To maintain the existing parity between the posts of Masters and Assistant Masters vis-a-vis the various grades of TGTs, a similar dispensation will need to be extended in case of former. The Commission, accordingly recommends that the post of Assistant Master in Military Schools may be placed in the scale of Rs. 7450-11500 Corresponding to the revised pay band PB-2 of Rs. 8700-34800 along with a grade pay of Rs. 4600. Master Gazetted shall be placed in scale of Rs. 8000-13500 corresponding to the revised pay band PB-3 of Rs. 15600-39100 along with a grade pay of Rs. 5400. Further, as these schools are residential schools, a special allowances at the rate of 10% of the pay band and grade pay shall also be paid to the teachers librarians and other staff associated with teaching in these schools. This dispensation will also be extended to RIMC Dehradun. A similar allowance can be considered for analogous posts in Sainik Schools that are also residential schools being run as an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Defence

Based on the recommendations of the VI CPC to similarly situated employees, the applicants contended that they are also entitled to the same scale of pay and special allowances granted to the mess employees of the schools referred to above.

8 Jawahar Navodya Vidyalayas are residential schools upto Senior Secondary level set up with the noble intention of providing better educational facilities for economically backward children in rural areas. The students and teachers are required to stay in the Vidyalaya campus. The teaching staff and mess workers of the Vidyalayas are working more than 18 hours per day. They have to work on holidays including public holidays, 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays and Sundays. While a teacher/non-teaching staff in the Kendriya Vidyalayas which is also a society under the Ministry of Human Resources, work for 6.30 hours per day, they are getting more pay than the Navodaya Vidyalaya staff who work for more than 18 hours per day.

9 In this Application we are concerned with grievances of the Catering Assistants in the Navodya Vidyalayas. Admittedly they have

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to be present in the Vidyalayas to take care of basic needs of the students and that they are not given any compensatory off in lieu of working on holidays or any overtime or honorarium for putting in extra hours of duty. They have to reside within the campus. Thus, they are integral part of the Vidyalaya. The arduous nature of duty of the applicants have not been taken into consideration by the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> respondents while revising the pay scale.

10 Another ground raised by the applicants is that they have no promotional avenues. This has been answered by the respondents that the applicants are eligible for financial upgradation under the ACP/ MACP Schemes. In this case the Principal Bench of the Tribunal in O.A.2091/2007 dated 10.12.2008 considered the matter and directed respondents to expedite their consideration to create promotional avenue in consultation with the Government. No action appears to have been taken so far.

11 The Navodaya Vidyalaya Samit is a Society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. Though the Vidyalaya is fully financed by the Government of India, the pay scales recommended by the Central Pay Commissions are not automatically followed in the Vidyalaya. The Governing body of the Society has to deliberate on the service matters of its employees and take a decision as in the case of Kendriya Vidyalaya, to improve the scale of pay and other facilities to the staff, keeping in view that the Navodaya Vidyalaya is a residential school where the the teachers and other staff including the applicants are required to stay within the campus and work for long hours in all days.

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12 The VI CPC have taken the stand that the Navodaya Vidyalayas were not covered under the terms of reference of the Commission. However, the Commission have opined that their demands appear to be justified and suggested pay scales and allowances on par with the Military Schools in Ministry of Defence and Oak Grove School in Ministry of Railways.

13 We have an occasion to consider the case of promotion of Staff Car Drivers in the Kendriya Vidyalaya. The Department of Personnel & Training had introduced a scheme of promotion of Staff Car Drivers in 1993 and directed the manner in which promotion is to be effected vide its OM No. 22036/1/92-Estt(O) dated 30.11.93. The Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, also adopted the same promotion scheme to Staff Car Drivers, sometime in 1999. Under this scheme, 3 grades were introduced wherein the Driver in ordinary grade moves to Grade-II in 9 years and from there to Grade-I in another 6 years subject to availability of vacancy in Grade-II and Grade-I in the ratio fixed as 55:25:20 for Grade -II and I. In compliance with an order from the Principal Bench New Delhi, even a special grade after Grade-I was created and the ratio was revised vide DOPTs OM dated 15.2.2001 in the ratio 30:30:35:5, according to which Grade-I Driver can be promoted to Special grade after 3 years service, within 5% of total number of vacancies. The pay scales granted to various Drivers are given below:

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1 Driver Ord. Grade	Rs. 3050-4590
2 Driver Grade-II	Rs. 4000-6000
3 Driver Grade-I	Rs. 4500-7000
4 Driver Special Grade	Rs. 5000-8000

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In the case of Primary School Teachers, the following three scale of pay were recommended by IV CPC and accepted by the Government.:

Entry Scale	Rs.1200-2040
Senior Scale	Rs.1400-2600
Selection Scale	Rs.1640-2900

In the case of Librarians also, libraries are categorised as A, B, C and the scale of pay fixed accordingly.

14 Hence, we are of the view that a scheme fixing three or four grades of Catering Assistants in the Navodaya Vidyalayas should provide a practical solution for giving them timely promotion with suitable upgradation in pay. But for the fact that Government was keen to insist on the students getting nutritious and balanced diet, there was no need to recruit Catering Assistants, with Diploma in Catering management. They were expected to plan delicious, tasty and healthy food so that the children will eat proper food instead of skipping meals. If that objective is achieved, then these applicants have to be suitably compensated to keep their morale up. Even in the case of engineering cadres where degree was made compulsory, now, a certain per centage of posts is earmarked for Diploma holders for promotion up to Superintending Engineer in units under the ICAR. Therefore, there is a strong case for higher promotional avenues and enhancement of pay scales of the applicants.

15 Therefore, we direct the 1<sup>st</sup> respondent to evolve a scheme to grant higher pay scale, better career prospects and fix their working hours etc. to the Catering Assistants in the Navodaya Vidyalayas. The

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Governing body of the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti would have to deliberate on the issues and pass a resolution proposing the pay scales of the applicants, keeping in mind the case of the applicants as projected in this O.A and our observations above. They are also entitled to 10% of the pay or a lump sum amount of extra allowance per mensem, as they are required to be available in the Vidyalaya and work for more than 18 hours a day, on all days.

16 In the result, we direct the 1<sup>st</sup> respondent to call meeting of the Governing body of the Jawhar Navodaya Samiti, deliberate and reconsider the following issues, as early as possible at any rate within three months from the date of receipt of this order:

- (i) to grant higher pay scale w.e.f. 1.1.2006
- (ii) to grant special allowance @ 10% of pay.
- (iii) to evolve a scheme for promotion as in the case of Drivers /Teachers, etc. referred to above
- (iv) to fix the working hours

15 The O.A. is disposed of as above. No costs.

Dated 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2010

  
K. NOORJEHAN  
ADMINISTRATIVE MEMBER

  
GEORGE PARACKEN  
JUDICIAL MEMBER

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