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COURT No.2
ARMED FORCES TRIBUNAL
PRINCIPAL BENCH: NEW DELHI

7.

OA 444/2025 with MA 717/2025

249192-F Sgt Krishna Rao
Narshima Swamy (Retd) ..... Applicant
VERSUS
Union of India and Ors. ..... Respondents

For Applicant : Mr. A K Chaudhary, Advocate
For Respondents : Mr. Satya Ranjn Swain & Mr. Ankush Kapoor, Advocates

CORAM
HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE ANU MALHOTRA, MEMBER (J)
HON'BLE REAR ADMIRAL DHIREN VIG, MEMBER (A

ORDER
20.02.2025

MA 717/2025

This is an application filed under Section 22(2) of the Armed Forces Tribunal Act, 2007 seeking condonation of delay of 312 days in filing the present OA. In view of the judgments of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter of ***UoI & Ors*** Vs ***Tarsem Singh*** 2009(1) SLJ 371 and in ***Ex Sep Chain Singh*** Vs ***Union of India & Ors-*** **CA No.022965/2017** filed vide Diary No. 30073/2017

and the reasons mentioned, the MA 717/2025 is allowed and the delay of 312 days in filing the OA 444/2025 is thus condoned. The MA is disposed of accordingly.

OA 444/2025

The applicant, vide the present OA makes the following prayers:

> *" (a) To direct the respondent to pay arrears of last rank from the date it is ceased because it is against the Law settled on the subject; and*
> *(b) To direct the respondents to revise the applicant's pension as per the last rank held at the time of retirement.*
> *(c) To direct the respondents to calculate the applicant's pension in the rank of Sgt as per the policies of Govt, and the Circular of PCDA bearing No.578/568/551.*
> *(d) To direct the respondent that arrears shall be paid to the applicant with 12% interest*
> *(e) Any other just and equitable order in the interest of justice may kindly be passed."*

2. The applicant 249192-F Sgt Krishna Rao Narshima Swamy (Retd) was enrolled in the **Indian Air Force** on **19th June, 1962** and

discharged from service on **30th June, 1977** after rendering 15 years and 12 days of service. The applicant was promoted to the rank of Sergeant(Sgt) on 01.11.1975 from the rank of Corporal(Cpl) and held this rank for 01 year and 08 months. The applicant submits that as per Policy decision dated 09.02.2001 and 11.11.2008, the pension of all the retired Armed Forces Personnel has been revised on the basis of the rank/group last held by the individual and the requirement of 10 months service in the last rank held for all the officers and personnel below of the officer rank is waived off.

3. The applicant further submits that with the implementation of the recommendations of the 5th CPC, the condition for holding last rank for 10 months has been waived off and even if a person holds a rank for 01 day, he was entitled for pension of last rank held. Furthermore, the MoD letter No.17(4)/2008(1)/D(Pen/Pol) dated 11.11.2008 expressly states that Rank means rank last held and not the rank for which pensioned. It is submitted by the applicant that he is entitled for the fixation of his pension in the rank of Sergeant as per Govt of India Letter No.PC10(1)/2008-D(Pen/Pol) dated 08.03.2010. The applicant submits that he had approached the respondents by

submitting a representation dated 18.09.2023 through Welfare Officer, District Sainik & Ardh Sainik Welfare Department, Gurugram which is yet to be replied by the respondents.

4. The applicant places reliance on the order dated 03.02.2015 in OA No.62/2014 in case of ***JWO P Gopalakrishna*** Vs ***Union of India & Ors***. and a catena of other orders of the Armed Forces Tribunal.

5. The respondents fairly do not dispute the settled proposition of law put forth on behalf of the applicant in view of the verdicts relied upon on behalf of the applicant.

6. It cannot be overlooked that the verdict dated 29.01.2010 of the Armed Forces Tribunal (PB) in TA 339/2010(WP(Civil) No.567/2002 of Delhi High Court) ***Ex JWO Bharat Singh Khatana*** Vs ***Union of India & Ors.*** whereby it was observed to the effect that:

> *"According to the provisions of the Armed Forces Rules, the incumbent has to serve at least 10 months on the last rank for full pension of that post but he was not given the pension of the last rank held by him i.e. JWO. Hence, petitioner aggrieved by this filed the present petition before the Hon'ble Delhi High Court which has been transferred to this Tribunal after formation of Armed Forces Tribunal and prayed that his pension may be given on the basis of last rank held by him. In this connection, petitioner has referred to a Notification dated*

09.02.2001 whereby the Government of India, Ministry of Defence has issued a Circular implementing the Government decision on the recommendations of Fifth Pay Commission relating to pensionary benefits in respect of commissioned officers and personnel below officers ranks and in that it has been clarified that all Armed Forces pensioners irrespective of their date of retirement shall not get less than 50% of the minimum revised scale on pay introduced w.e.f. 01.01.1996. Since this was not being given by the PCDA, Allahabad and that matter came before the Government and the Government had clarified as under:

> *"It is clarified that pension of all pre-96 retiree Armed forces Personnel will be revised on the basis of the rank/group last held by the individual and the revised pay scales connected thereto, even if the rank/group was held for less than 10 months before retirement. Such pension will be reduced proportionately if the qualifying service is less than 33 years. Other conditions to earn pension will continue to apply."*
>
> *In view of this clarification, we do not find any reason as to why petitioner should not be given pension of the last rank held by him for a period of 06 months. Therefore, condition of 10 months has now been waived by the government. Consequently, we direct that petitioner's pension should be determined in the light of the aforesaid Circular and he may be given the pension @ 50% of the last post held by him as JWO. His pension should be worked out and arrears shall be paid to the petition with 12% interest. This whole exercise should be done within three months from today. Petition is according allowed. No order as to costs,"-*

has been upheld vide order dated 08.03.2016 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Union of India & Ors.*** vs ***Ex JWO Bharat Singh Khatana*** Civil Appeal no. 7366-7367/2011.

7. The judgments relied on behalf of the applicant make it apparent that pension cannot be declined to an individual for the rank he last held and rendered his services as laid down in ***Thiagrajan*** **vs** ***UoI & Ors*** in OA 93/2014 by the AFT (RB) Chennai. The said statutory right already earned by the applicant cannot be reduced even if an undertaking is executed by him for the receipt of any lower pension in a lower rank from that what he last held. Vide a catena of cases of this Tribunal it has been laid down that the Defence personnel are entitled to the benefits of the last rank held by them even if it has been of a duration of less than 10 months.

8. Thus, the respondents are required to implement the calculation of pension of the applicant in the rank of Sergeant as he is similarly placed as the applicant in the case of ***JWO P Gopalakrishnan*** vs ***UoI & Ors.*** in OA 62/2014 decided on

13.02.2015, by the AFT(RB), Chennai and OA 1038/2017 in the matter of ***Ex-JWO Krishna Moorthy K & Ors.*** Vs ***UoI & Ors.***

9. Inter alia, the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Uttaranchal Forest Rangers' Assn. (Direct Recruit)*** v. ***State of U.P.***, (2006) 10 SCC 346 has adverted to its verdict in ***State of Karnakata and Ors*** Vs ***C.Lalitha*** (2006) 2 SCC 747 wherein it has been observed that service jurisprudence evolved by the Hon'ble Supreme Court postulates that all the persons similarly situated should be treated similarly.

10. The OA 444/2025 is thus allowed subject to verification of facts averred in OA 444/2025.

11. The respondents are thus directed as under:-

(i) Calculate the pension of the applicant based on the last held rank by him before retirement i.e. Sergeant, and in consonance with the principles of calculation that have been upheld in *JWO Gopalakrishnan* in this regard; and

(ii) The applicant will be accordingly issued a fresh Corrigendum PPO in the last rank held by him within two months and the arrears be paid accordingly in terms

of para 10 hereinabove *failing which*, it shall carry interest @ 6% till actual payment.

(iii) However, in view of the order dated 20.12.2024 of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in Writ Petition (C) 6815/2024, the grant of arrears of the last rank pension due to the applicant shall be confined to commence to run from the period of three years prior to the institution of the present OA instituted on 23.01.2025.

12. No order as to costs.

(JUSTICE ANU MALHOTRA)
MEMBER (J)

(REAR ADMIRAL DHIREN VIG)
MEMBER (A)

/CHANANA/