Government of West Bengal Labour Department, I. R. Branch

N.S. Buildings, 12th Floor, 1, K.S. Roy Road, Kolkata - 700001 No. Labr//(LC-IR)/22015(15)/29/2019 Date: 12:08:2021

ORDER

WHEREAS under the Government of West Bengal, Labour Department Order No. 1015-IR/10L-40/2000 dated 05.11.2009 the Industrial Dispute between M/s Larsen & Toubro Ltd., 71, Park Street, Kolkata - 700016 and its workman Vijoy Tiwari (now deceased) substituted by his wife Smt. Shila Tiwari and two daughters viz. Miss. Deepika Tiwari & Miss. Vishakha Tiwari, (PS No. 084324), 49/5/1K, Karl Marx Sarani, Kidderpore, Kolkata - 700023 regarding the issue mentioned in the said order, being a matter specified in the Second Schedule to the Industrial Dispute Act, 1947 (14 of 1947), was referred for adjudication to the Judge. Second Industrial Tribunal, Kolkata.

AND WHEREAS the Judge of the said Second Industrial Tribunal, Kolkata, has submitted to the State Government its award vide Memo No. 782-LT dated 19.07.21 on the said Industrial Dispute.

NOW, THEREFORE, in pursuance of the provisions of Section 17 of the Industrial Dispute Act, 1947 (14 of 1947), the Governor is pleased hereby to publish the said award as shown in the Annexure hereto.

ANNEXURE

(Attached herewith)

By order of the Governor,

Deputy Secretary to the Government of West Bengal

No. Labr/ /1(5)/(LC-IR)

Date: 12:08: . 2021

Copy, with a copy of the Award, forwarded for information and necessary action to:

- 1. M/s Larsen & Toubro Ltd., 71, Park Street, Kolkata 700016.
- 2. Late Vijoy Tiwari (PS No. 084324), 49/5/1K, Karl Marx Sarani, Kidderpore, Kolkata 700023.
- 3. The Assistant Labour Commissioner, W.B. In-Charge, Labour Gazette.
 - 4. The O.S.D. & E.O. Labour Commissioner, W.B. New Secretariat Buildings, 1, K. S. Roy Road, 11th Floor, Kolkata- 700001.
- 8. The Deputy Secretary, IT Cell, Labour Department, with the request to cast the Award in the Department's website.

Deputy Secretary

No. Labr/ /2(2)/(LÇ-IR)

Date: 2021

Copy forwarded for information to:

- 1. The Judge, Second Industrial Tribunal, Kolkata with reference to his Memo No. 782 L.T. dated 19.07.2021.
- 2. The Joint Labour Commissioner (Statistics), West Bengal, 6, Church Lane, Kolkata -700001.

Deputy Secretary

Before the 2nd Industrial Tribunal, Kolkata

Present : Shri Partha Sarathi Mukhopadhyay, Judge 2nd Industrial Tribunal, Kolkata

Case No. VIII-36 of 2009

Under Section 10 of The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947

Vijoy Kumar Tiwari (now deceased) substituted by his wife Smt. Shila Tiwari and two daughters viz., Miss. Deepika Tiwari & Miss. Vishakha Tiwari

-Vs-

M/S. Larsen & Toubro Limited



Dated, 19.04.2021

JUDGEMENT

This case has been referred by the Labour Department, Govt. of West Bengal to this Tribunal for adjudication of industrial dispute and two issues have been framed by the Labour Department, Govt. of West Bengal.

The two issues framed are as follows:-

- Whether the termination of service of Shri Vijoy Kumar Tiwari w.e.f. 31.07.2008 by the management in their letter dt. 24.07.2008 is justified.
- 2] To what relief, if any, is he entitled?



After reference both parties have appeared before this Tribunal and contested this case by filling written statements.

The case of the workman according to his written statement, in short, is that he was engaged as the driver on and from 11.10.1995 by the O.P. company and since then he worked continuously in the temporary cadre till 31.03.2002 and then w.e.f. 01.04.2002 the O.P. company offered him employment on probation and then his service was confirmed as the driver by the O.P. company w.e.f. 01.10.2002 and he was placed in the permanent cadre with specific grade and scale of pay, and thereafter w.e.f. 01.07.2006 the O.P. company placed him in the cadre of Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant with new terms and conditions and he was allotted the job of the Messenger or Office Peon and he objected to such nature of job instead of driver and then the O.P. company transferred him to the State of Arunachal Pradesh and then he joined there in spite of financial hardships and then the said office of Arunachal Pradesh returned him to the office of Kolkata and again he was transferred to the office of Sagardighi Site at Berhampore, West Bengal and there he was assigned the job of Technician to replace the pipelines of the pump house with some labourers working there and he was harassed and assaulted by some workmen there and then he was transferred to Kolkata on 08.07.2008.

The petitioner further submits that then he went to the office of the O.P. company in Kolkata on 09.07.2008 for reporting his duties but the O.P. company did not allow him to sign on the attendance register and then he regularly went to that office from 09.07.2008 but he was not allowed to sign in the attendance register and then one letter dt. 24.07.2008 was delivered to his residence by one person of his locality in September, 2008 and from that letter he came to know that his service was terminated on 31.07.2008 w.e.f. 01.08.2008 and then he made protest to the O.P. company by his letter dt. 17.09.2008 and requested to allow him to do the work of the driver but he was not allowed and then he approached the Labour Commissioner and the O.P. company did not settle the dispute in the conciliation meeting and then this present

Bengal, and without any opportunity of hearing, his service was terminated by the O.P. company illegally and he was not paid salary and allowance since 01.07.2008 and he accepted the cheque sent to him after termination on protest. Hence, the workman has prayed for a declaration that the termination of his service on 31.07.2008 is unjustified and illegal, and he is entitled to be reinstated with full back wages and other consequential benefits.

The O.P. company has contested this case by filing a written statement denying therein all the material allegations in the written statement of the petitioner.

The O.P. company submits that the reference is not maintainable under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 and the workman used to work as the driver but he used to drink alcohol and under the influence of alcohol he used to drive the office vehicles endangering human life and safety and on 25.11.2001 he was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol and he pleaded guilty before the Court and for his verbal promise not to do such incident again he was excused and allowed to continue his duties and on 15.11.2005 he was driving the office car to take one Martin Srinath to the airport but he made an accident causing serious injuries to the said officer and due to the excessive speed of the car the said accident took place and he was absent from duties for 461 days from 01.01.2004 to 31.07.2008 and when he sustained injuries in 2006, he was treated in the Woodlands Hospital, Kolkata with the money of the O.P. company and for such type of conduct of the workman he was transferred to Arunachal Pradesh as driver and then he was again treated in M/s. Kripa Foundation in Kolkata with the money of the O.P. company.

The O.P. company further submits that on 10.01.2008 the workman consumed alcohol and created nuisance in the bachelors' mess and then the workman by his letter dt. 16.02.2008 promised not to do such incident in future and then on 19.02.2008 the O.P. company gave him one more opportunity to rectify himself and



then at Sagardighi site on 04.07.2008 he tried to enter in the neighbour's house in drunken condition and set fire in curtains and bed sheet at mess on 06.07.2008 and damaged furniture in office and mess under alcoholic influence on 06.07.2008 and 07.07.2008 and thereafter he did not report to his duties from 08.07.2008 and then by a letter dt. 24.07.2008 the O.P. company terminated his service and the workman encashed Rs. 27,700/- as full and final settlement of his dues. Hence, this O.P. company has prayed for dismissal of this case.

DECISIONS WITH REASONS

In order to prove the case the petitioner has examined himself and proved some documents while the O.P. company has examined three witnesses and proved some documents.

Admittedly the workman viz., Vijoy Kumar Tiwari (now deceased) used to work as the driver temporarily from 11.10.1995 to 31.03.2002 under the O.P. company and then he was appointed as driver on probation w.e.f. 01.04.2002 (Exbt.1) and then his service as driver was confirmed by the O.P. company w.e.f. 01.10.2002 (Exbt.2) and his service was made permanent and then on 01.07.2006 he was appointed as Jr. Technical/Commercial Assistant by the O.P. company (Exbt.4) and his previous scale was changed and increased as Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant and he was allowed the job of the Messenger or Office Peon by the O.P. company as Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant from 01.07.2006.

So the status of the workman was changed by the O.P. company from the permanent Driver to the Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant and his scale was increased since 01.07.2006.

The petitioner has submitted that thereafter he was sent to the State of Arunachal Pradesh as Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant though he had no training and then from Arunachal Pradesh he was transferred to the Office of the O.P. company at



Sagardighi site at Berhampore, West Bengal and he was directed to replace pipelines of the pump house there with some labourers.

The O.P. company admitted in its written statement that in 2007 the workman was sent to the office of the O.P. company at Arunachal Pradesh as there was requirement for a driver. So, from the statement of the O.P. company it is proved that though the status of the petitioner as driver from the very beginning was changed to the cadre of Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant from 01.07.2006 along with the change of scale by the O.P. company, he was transferred to Arunachal Pradesh as a driver. This is peculiar because the status of driver is quite different from the status of the Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant in the office of the O.P. company and the posts of the driver and the Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant are not the same and the working systems of both the above mentioned posts are different but the O.P. company sent him to Arunachal Pradesh to work as a driver though his status was changed as Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant earlier by the O.P. company. Moreover, again when he was transferred to Sagardighi site he was directed to work in the pump house of the office to replace the pipelines. So the above circumstances clearly prove that the O.P. company did not behave well with the petitioner, and with the monthly salary of Rs. 3300/- as the Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant the workman was sent to the Arunachal Pradesh, which is a long distance from Kolkata, to work there and thereafter again he was transferred to Sagardighi site at Berhampore and there he was forced to work in the pump house and in this way the workman was mentally persecuted by the O.P. company for a long time.

In its written statement, the O.P. company has submitted that on 25.11.2001 the workman was arrested and prosecuted under Section of 184/185 of the Motor Vehicles Act for driving dangerously under the influence of alcohol and he was kept in the police custody and before the Court he pleaded guilty and the O.P. company asked him for an explanation for his misconduct and prosecution in the Court of Law but no explanation was given by the workman and on his repeated verbal assurances that no such incident will ever happen again, he was admonished and allowed by the O.P.



company to continue his duties. So it is clear that the O.P. company excused the workman for the above mentioned incident, and as the O.P. company excused the workman for the said offence on 2001, the O.P. company cannot consider the said offence again as the misconduct for termination of his service from 31.07.2008 and by excusing the workman for the said offence, the O.P. company has waived its right to consider the said offence again later on against the workman in 2008 and the O.P. company cannot take such type of plea again in this case.

In its written statement the O.P. company has submitted that due to driving of the office vehicle dangerously and at a high speed on 15.11.2005, one officer of the O.P. company, Martin Srinath sustained serious injuries on his person. The said Martin Srinath has deposed in this case as the OPW-2 and he has stated that due to driving of the office vehicle by the workman at a high speed, the said car met an accident and he was severely injured and treated in the hospital for a number of days, but the O.P. company is silent as to whether any police case was started against the workman for the said incident on 15.11.2005 when the OPW-2 sustained serious injuries on his person.

In its written statement the O.P. company has submitted that one Sushil Chandra Basunia lodged a complaint to the authority at Arunachal Pradesh on 11.01.2008 by stating that on 10.01.2008 the workman consumed excessive alcohol and he locked him inside toilet and after hearing his shouting other colleagues came and opened the toilet and then he was recovered and on that date the workman was vomiting and thereafter he was shifted to a hospital in Guwahati and he uttered bad words towards him there. But the O.P. company has not examined said Sushil Chandra Basunia, who is the best witness in this matter, as witness in this case and accordingly the contents of the said complaint submitted by the said Basunia cannot be given any legal value.



In its written statement, the O.P. company has stated that by one letter dt. 08.02.2008 the O.P. company asked the workman to explain as to why the management would not take any disciplinary action against him for his behaviour on 10.01.2008 and by his letter dt. 16.02.2008, the workman regretted about his bad behaviour and promised not to do such misconduct in future and then by a letter dt. 19.02.2008 the O.P. company informed him that the management decided to give him one more opportunity.

The letter dt. 19.02.2008 issued by the O.P. company (Exbt.12) mentions that the O.P. company condoned the offence of the workman.

So till 19.02.2008 the O.P. company condoned the conduct of the workman and the O.P. company did not take any final legal action against the workman though the O.P. company has raised allegations that in drunken condition the workman used to work during the working hours, but there is no cogent evidence on record in this respect. Even if it is taken into account that he used to work in drunken condition, then why the O.P. company allowed him to drive the office car for a long time!

In its written statement the O.P. company has alleged that at Sagardighi site the workman tried to enter into the neighbours house in drunken condition on the night of 04.07.2008 and set fire in curtains and bed sheet at mess where he used to reside on 06.07.2008 and damaged furniture in the office and mess under alcoholic influence on 06.07.2008 & 07.07.2008.

The Exbt.K shows that one Swapnamoy Banerjee, one staff of the Sagardighi site, informed the above allegations to the O.P. company but the O.P. company has not examined the said Swapnamoy Banerjee in this case as witness and no document has been produced and proved to show that any police complaint was made by said Swapnamoy Banerjee before the police station in respect of the above mentioned allegations of three days according to the Exbt.K.

Accordingly I hold that this statement of the O.P. company cannot be relied upon at all.

The OPW-1 Shri Gautam Dasgupta has deposed in respect of the case of the O.P. company and in his crossexamination he has stated that the reason of termination of the workman has not been mentioned in the termination letter and in the appointment letter it has not been mentioned that a driver can be posted as Commercial / Technical Assistant, and the workman has challenged his termination after accepting the full and final settlement.

The OPW-3, Somenath Mukherjee has deposed in respect of the case of the O.P. company and in his crossexamination he has stated that if any driver is found to drive the vehicle in drunken condition, then it is necessary to immediately stop him from driving the vehicle and report the matter to the police station and chargesheet has to be framed against him and he has to be suspended from his work and **on the basis of hearsay evidence** he has mentioned all the incidents in his affidavit-in-chief and the termination letter does not mention any reason for termination.

So, the above evidences of the OPW-1, the OPW-2 and the OPW-3 cannot be relied upon legally to prove the allegations of the O.P. company against the workman. On the contrary, the said witnesses have admitted that the termination letter issued to the workman does not mention any reason of termination and the workman challenged his termination after accepting full and final settlement.

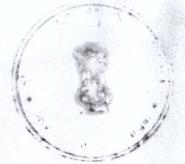
The petitioner has deposed as the PW-1 and he has stated that he went to attend his job in the Kolkata office of the O.P. company on 09.07.2008 but he was not allowed to join his duty and the termination letter was not served upon him by the company and he received this termination letter from his neighbour who got it from the O.P. company and he encashed Rs. 27700/- given by the O.P. company after termination to

him and in his crossexamination he has stated that he told the O.P. company that he had no experience as Technical Assistant and at the time of termination of service his work was to distribute the letters of the company and at Sagardighi site he had to work with the labourers to lift the pipes, and there is nothing in the crossexamination of the PW-1 to disbelieve his case completely.

In its written statement, the O.P. company has stated that since 08.07.2008 the workman would not attend the office and he was absent without prior intimation and for such absence it was deemed that he had abandoned his job and for these reasons and other repeated misconducts of the workman the O.P. company terminated his service by a letter dt. 24.07.2008 w.e.f. 31.07.2008.

The petitioner has submitted that since 08.07.2008 he went to the office at Kolkata to join his duty but he was not allowed to join his duty by the O.P. company. The O.P. company should have produced the attendance register of the office to show that since 08.07.2008 the workman was absent without any intimation from the office but that has not been done. Certainly there will be one attendance register in the office of the company to record the attendance or absence of all the staff and the workman was a permanent staff and in case of his absence, there would be certainly cross mark on the column by the side of the name of the workman to show his absence but the O.P. company has not produced the attendance register in this case for the best reasons known to it and without any attendance register it cannot be legally held that since 08.07.2008 the petitioner was absent in the office without any prior intimation and accordingly I hold that the O.P. company has failed to prove this allegation.

In the written statement in para-17 the O.P. company has alleged that for unauthorised absence since 08.07.2008 and for repeated misdemeanour by the workman as narrated in the written statement, the management decided to terminate his service, but as per the written statement and the exhibited documents, till 19.02.2008 the O.P. company has condoned or waived the bad conduct of the



workman, if any, though the said conduct or misconduct of the workman as per allegation of the O.P. company in this case have not been legally proved by the O.P. company.

According to law, as the previous alleged incidents which took place before 19.02.2008, have been condoned or waived by the O.P. company, the said prior incidents cannot be considered again for termination of service of workman on 31.07.2008 and the said previous matters also cannot be pleaded in this case, and I have already discussed above that the three allegations against the workman dt. 04.07.2008, 06.07.2008 & 07.07.2008 have not been legally proved by the O.P. company in this case, and only the oral statements of the witnesses for the O.P. company and the written statement cannot prove the said allegations legally without any cogent supportive legal evidence.

I have also discussed above that the O.P. company has not produced the attendance register of the company to show that since 08.07.2008 the workman was absent from office without any prior intimation and accordingly I hold that the O.P. company has also failed to prove legally this allegation of unauthorised absence of the workman.

In its written statement the O.P. company has admitted that before terminating the service of the workman, no domestic enquiry was held by the O.P. company and it is also the allegation of the workman and more surprisingly before terminating the service of the workman, he was not directed to explain as to why he was absent without any prior intimation since 08.07.2008. So it is clear that the O.P. company acted whimsically as well as arbitrarily before passing the order of termination.

The letter of termination (Exbt.8) has been issued by the O.P. company on 24.07.2008 stating that the service of the workman has been terminated on 31.07.2008.



Surprisingly this termination letter does not mention any reason or ground of termination and the ground of termination has to be mentioned in the termination letter mandatorily to inform the workman about the cause of termination but that has not been done.

The case of the O.P. company is mainly based on the allegations that during working hours the workman used to drive the office vehicle in drunken condition and at a high speed and he was habitual absentee from office without any prior intimation but the termination letter does not mention any of the above mentioned allegations as per the case of the O.P. company as the ground of termination of the workman. Hence, I hold that the said termination letter is legally defective.

According to the Exbt.1, the workman was appointed on probation as driver from 01.04.2002 and then on 01.10.2002 the said service of the work was confirmed by the O.P. company (Exbt.2) and then by Exbt.4 the cadre of the workman was changed and the O.P. company appointed him as the Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant with a different high scale.

So according to the Exbt.4, the workman was made the Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant by the O.P. company instead of permanent driver and according to the Exbt.4, the workman was also appointed as Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant permanently.

So it is clear that by virtue of the Exbt.4, the Exbt.1 and the Exbt.2 had no existence at the time of termination of service of the workman because the status of the workman has been changed by the company.

The Exbt.1 and the Exbt.2 mention grounds of termination while the Exbt.4 also mentions separate grounds of termination of the workman.

Now it is very much surprising and ridiculous to see that the termination letter (Exbt.8) mentions that "with reference to our offer of employment No. ECCG/HQ/P&OD-1/084324 dt. 15.04.2002, we hereby terminate your service as at the close of office hours on 31.07.2008".

So this termination letter is related to one reference as mentioned in the said termination letter and on perusing the Exbt.1, I find that the references made in the Exbt.1 and the Exbt.8 are same. So it is clear that by the Exbt.8, the service of the workman in respect of the reference no. mentioned in the Exbt.1 has been terminated, and the Exbt.1 is related to the employment of the workman on probation as driver. But this Exbt.1 or the Exbt.2 had no relevancy when the Exbt.8 was made because by a different reference no. the O.P. company appointed the workman as Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant (Exbt.4) and this Exbt.4 is relevant to the service of the workman since 01.07.2006 and so termination of service of the workman had to be made in terms of the reference no. as mentioned in the Exbt.4 but that has not been done.

The O.P. company is a famous as well as reputed company of our country and some highly educated persons are appointed as officers in the said company but on perusing the Exbt.8, I find how far negligent the officer concerned of the O.P. company may be!

The Exbt.8 should have been made in respect of the Exbt.4 but that has not been done and it has been done in respect of the Exbt.1, which was not in existence when the Exbt.8 was made. The Exbt.4 mentions three conditions as the grounds of termination but the case of the O.P. company is not concerned with any one of the said three conditions as the ground of termination according to the Exbt.4, and the Exbt.8 also does not mention violation of any one of the said three conditions as the ground of termination.



So considering the Exbt.8 and the above mentioned discussions on the basis of materials on record I hold that this termination letter issued by the O.P. company is totally illegal and invalid, and it shows reckless and negligent attitude of the officer concerned of the O.P. company.

So considering the above materials on record I hold that the termination of service of the workman w.e.f. 31.07.2008 by the O.P. company by a letter dt. 24.07.2008 is unjustified, illegal and invalid, and the workman, who was a permanent staff of the O.P. company, has been illegally terminated by the O.P. company whimsically and arbitrarily.

By the Exbt.8 the O.P. company has terminated the service of the workman on 31.07.2008 and thereafter the workman issued some letters to the company to reconsider the order of termination but that was not done and then he has filed this case after reference and during pendency of this case he died on 09.04.2018, and his wife and two unmarried daughters have been substituted on record in his place.

As the materials on record prove that the workman was illegally terminated, he was entitled to be reinstated to his previous service and status but during pendency of this case unfortunately he expired on 09.04.2018 and he has received Rs.27700/- during his life-time after his termination from the O.P. company, and as his termination was illegal and he died on 09.04.2018 and as he did not receive any salary from 01.08.2008 from the O.P. company, his legal heirs are entitled to get full back wages with consequential reliefs as per the previous monthly salary as on 01.08.2008 together with periodical increments on behalf of the deceased workman from the O.P. company from 01.08.2008 to 09.04.2018 and the O.P. company is directed to adjust said Rs. 27700/- at the time of making payments to the legal heirs of the deceased workman.



There is no cogent evidence on record to show that after 01.08.2008, the workman used to work elsewhere and earn something.

The materials on record show that the workman was a permanent driver under the O.P. company and then he was made the Jr. Technical / Commercial Assistant by the O.P. company and then he was transferred to Arunachal Pradesh and then to Sagardighi site at Berhampore and he was directed to work in the pump house instead of driving the office car and thereafter he was terminated illegally without giving him any opportunity to explain regarding his alleged unauthorised absence and no domestic enquiry was held before termination and in this way he was mentally persecuted by the O.P. company for a long time and finally he died during pendency of this case and due to illegal termination, he was entitled to be reinstated but at present he is dead and for such type of inhuman torture on the workman I hold that the legal heirs of the workman are entitled to get compensation from the O.P. company as cost.

So considering the entire materials on record I hold that this case is maintainable in its present form and law and the petitioners have cause of action to file this case against the O.P. company and the petitioners are entitled to get relief as per their prayer except the prayer of reinstatement.

In result the case succeeds.

Hence, it is

ORDERED

that the Case No. VIII-36 of 2009 under Section 10 of The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 is allowed on contest against the Opposite Party company with cost of Rs. 5,00,000/- [Rupees Five Lacs] as compensation.

It is hereby declared that the termination of service of the deceased workman w.e.f. 31.07.2008 by the management by their letter dt. 24.07.2008 is unjustified and illegal.

The petitioners viz., Smt. Shila Tiwari, Miss. Deepika Tiwari & Miss. Vishakha Tiwari, being the legal heirs of the deceased workman viz., Vijoy Kumar Tiwari, are entitled to get full back wages of the deceased workman with periodical increments and other consequential reliefs as on 01.08.2008 with compound interest @ 10% p.a. from the O.P. company from 01.08.2008 to 09.04.2018 and the O.P. company is directed to pay the above mentioned entire arrear of full back wages along with increments, other consequential reliefs and cost to the above mentioned three legal heirs of the deceased workman by 19.05.2021.

Let this judgement and order be treated as an award.

According to Section 17AA of The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, let a certified copy of this award be sent to the Principal Secretary to the Government of West Bengal, Labour Department, New Secretariat Buildings, 1, K.S. Roy Road, Kolkata 700 001 for information, and let a certified copy of this award be supplied to each of both the parties of this case, free of cost, forthwith for information.

The case is disposed of today.

Dictated & corrected by me.

Bubhofell

(P.S. Mukhopadhyay) Judge

2nd Industrial Tribunal

