

Supreme Court of India

J.N. Srivastava vs Union Of India (Uoi) And Anr. on 22 September, 1997

Equivalent citations: AIR 1999 SC 1571, (1999) ILLJ 546 SC, (1998) 9 SCC 559

Bench: S Majumdar, S S Ahmad

ORDER

1. Leave granted.

2. With the consent of learned counsel for the parties the appeals were heard finally.

3. The short question is whether the appellant was entitled to withdraw his voluntary retirement notice of three months submitted by him on 3-10-1989 which was to come into effect from 31-1-1990. It is true that this proposal was accepted by the authorities on 2-11-1989. But thereafter before 31-1-1990 was reached, the appellant wrote a letter to withdraw his voluntary retirement proposal. This letter is dated 11-12-1989. The said request permitting him to withdraw the voluntary retirement proposal was not accepted by the respondents by communication dated 26-12-1989. The appellant, therefore, went to the Tribunal but the Tribunal gave him no relief and took the view that the voluntary retirement had come into force on 31-1-1990 and the appellant had given up the charge of the post as per his memo relinquishing the charge and consequently, he was estopped from withdrawing his voluntary retirement notice. In our view the said reasoning of the Tribunal cannot be sustained on the facts of the case. It is now well settled that even if the voluntary retirement notice is moved by an employee and gets accepted by the authority within the time fixed, before the date of retirement is reached, the employee has locus poenitentiae to withdraw the proposal for voluntary retirement. The said view has been taken by a Bench of this Court in the case of Balram Gupta v. Union of India, 1987 Supp SCC 228. In view of the aforesaid decision of this Court it cannot be said that the appellant had no locus standi to withdraw his proposal for voluntary retirement before 31-1-1990. It is to be noted that once the request for cancellation of voluntary retirement was rejected by the authority concerned on 26-12-1989 and when the retirement came into effect on 31-1-1990 the appellant had no choice but to give up the charge of the post to avoid unnecessary complications. He, however, approached the Tribunal with the main grievance centering round the rejection of his request for withdrawal of the voluntary retirement proposal. The Tribunal, therefore, following the decision of this Court ought to have granted him the relief. We accordingly, allow these appeals and set aside the orders of the Tribunal as well as the order of the authorities dated 26-12-1989 and directed the respondents to treat the appellant to have validly withdrawn his proposal for voluntary retirement with effect from 31-1-1990. The net result of this order is that the appellant will have to be treated to be in service till the date of his superannuation which is said to be somewhere in 1994 when he completed 58 years of age. The respondent-authorities will have to make good to the appellant all monetary benefits by treating him to have continuously worked till the date of his actual superannuation in 1994. This entitles him to get all arrears of salary and other emoluments including increments and to get his pensionary benefits refixed accordingly. However, this will have to be subject to adjustment of any pension amount and other retirement benefits already paid to the appellant in the meantime up to the date of his actual superannuation. It was submitted by learned Senior Counsel for the respondent-authorities that no back salary should be allowed to the appellant as the appellant did

not work and therefore, on the principle of "no work, no pay", this amount should not be given to the appellant. This submission of learned Senior Counsel does not bear scrutiny as the appellant was always ready and willing to work but the respondents did not allow him to work after 31-1-1990. The respondents are directed to make available all the requisite monetary benefits to the appellant as per the present order within a period of 8 weeks on the receipt of copy of this order at their end. Office shall send the same to the respondents at the earliest.