2025 INSC 1212

REPORTABLE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA
CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION

CIVIL APPEAL NO. 11748 OF 2025

RAVI ORAON ... APPELLANT

VS.

THE STATE OF JHARKHAND & ORS. ... RESPONDENTS

WITH

CIVIL APPEAL NO. 11749 OF 2025

PREMLAL HEMBROM ... APPELLANT

VS.

THE STATE OF JHARKHAND & ORS. ... RESPONDENTS

WITH

CIVIL APPEAL NO. 11750 OF 2025

SURENDRA MUNDA ... APPELLANT

VS.

THE STATE OF JHARKHAND & ORS. ... RESPONDENTS

J U D G M E N T

DIPANKAR DATTA, J.

THE APPEALS

1. The lead appeal[1] challenges the judgment and order dated 3rd August, 2021 passed by the High Court of Jharkhand at Ranchi in L.P.A. No. 83 of 2019, whereby the High Court allowed the intra-court appeal filed by the respondents. Relying upon the said judgment, the High Court later allowed two other intra-court appeals of the respondents, viz. L.P.A. No. 332 of 2021 and L.P.A. No. 331 of 2021, by two separate judgments of the same date, i.e., 20th December, 2022. These latter judgments are under challenge in the connected appeals[2] before us.

FACTS

2. Facts, relevant for the disposal of the present appeals, are these:

a. Certain posts of Intermediate Trained Teacher (Classes I to V) were advertised on 10th August, 2015[3] by the District Education Superintendent, Dhanbad (respondent no. 4)[4]. The appellants applied for the post and acquitted themselves successfully in the recruitment process. After completion of the joining formalities, the appellants started discharging their duties from December, 2015 as teachers.

b. On 27th September, 2016, show cause notices were issued to the appellants alleging that they did not fulfil the eligibility criterion of having

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[1] Civil Appeal No. 11748 of 2025
[2] Civil Appeal Nos. 11749 and 11750 of 2025
[3] Advertisement No. 10/2015
[4] Department

secured a minimum of 45% marks in their intermediate examination (Class XII). Questions were also raised on the validity of their certificates of graduation.

c. In October 2016, through separate replies to the show cause notices, the appellants contended that being members of the Scheduled Tribe category, they were required to secure only 40% marks in the intermediate examination and not 45%. In other words, they were entitled to a relaxation of 5% marks in terms of the advertisement. It was further asserted that Ravi, Premlal and Surendra had secured 42.55%, 40.22%, and 41.33% marks, respectively, in the intermediate examination and, thus, were eligible for participation in the recruitment process. With respect to the issue concerning their graduation certificates, the appellants clarified that no graduation certificate was required for appointment on posts of teachers in Classes I–V, and that the same had been furnished by them only for the sake of completeness.

d. On 7th October, 2016, by separate office orders, the services of the appellants were terminated on the ground that they had secured less than 40% marks in the intermediate examination and that their certificates of graduation were not proper. According to the calculation made by the Department, Ravi, Premlal, and Surendra had secured 38.56%, 39.78%, and 39% marks, respectively in the intermediate examination. In arriving at this calculation, the Department excluded the additional marks secured by the appellants in the vocational subject. We shall examine the validity of this method of calculation a little later.

e. Appellants challenged the termination orders dated 7th October, 2016, before the High Court by filing separate writ petitions[5]. A Single Judge of the High Court allowed these petitions in the years 2018 and 2022 and, consequently, the impugned termination orders were set aside.

f. Aggrieved thereby, the respondents preferred intra-court appeals. As noted before, a Division Bench of the High Court allowed these appeals and dismissed the challenge laid by the appellants to the orders terminating their services.

g. Crestfallen by such determination, the appellants have invoked this Court's appellate jurisdiction.

JUDGMENTS OF THE SINGLE JUDGE

3. The writ petition filed by Ravi was allowed *vide* judgment and order dated 16th August, 2018 whereas the remaining two writ petitions presented by Premlal and Surendra were allowed *vide* a common judgment and order dated 10th November, 2022. A summary of the judgments reads thus:

a. W.P. (S) No. 6607 of 2016 of Ravi: The Single Judge noted that the respondent (department), for ascertaining the minimum qualification of the candidate, erroneously relied on Rule 21 of the Jharkhand Primary School Teacher Appointment Rules, 2012[6], which laid down the procedure for preparing the 'merit-list' of candidates and did not provide for ascertaining 'minimum qualification'. It was further held that Ravi's

[5] W.P. (S) Nos. 6607, 6704 and 6608 of 2016
[6] 2012 Rules

services could not have been terminated merely on a show-cause notice without a departmental enquiry. Noting that Ravi had secured more than 40% (383/900) marks in his intermediate examination, the Court quashed the order of termination of service.

b. W.P. (S) Nos. 6704 & 6608 of 2016 of Premlal and Surendra, respectively: The Single Judge allowed the writ petitions upon finding that Premlal and Surendra had secured more than 40% marks in the intermediate examination taken by them. A submission was made by the counsel for the Council that in calculating the percentage of marks secured by Premlal and Surendra, the Department had considered only the marks secured in the main subjects and excluded the marks in the vocational subject. Had the marks secured in the vocational subject been included, both Premlal and Surendra would stand to score above 40%. In view of the submission made on behalf of the Council, the writ petitions were allowed and the termination orders quashed.

IMPUGNED JUDGMENTS AND ORDERS OF THE DIVISION BENCH

4. We propose to summarise the judgment and order impugned in the lead appeal as the other judgments and orders, impugned in the connected appeals, were passed relying upon the former.

a. In the impugned judgment the Division Bench reasoned that the marks secured by Ravi in the vocational subject could not have been included for preparing the "merit list". Although a regulation printed on the reverse side of the marksheet provided that the bonus marks (over and above the pass marks) secured in the vocational subject will be added

to the sum total of marks secured in the main subjects, the Division Bench held that such regulation would not apply for the purpose of calculation of marks under the present recruitment. In support thereof, the Division Bench assigned three reasons which are reproduced below:

> First, the Regulation, as mentioned in the mark-sheet does not govern the matter of recruitment rather it only governs the process of examination and nothing more. Secondly, when the rules have been framed in the year 2012 the recruitment process will proceed as per the statutory provision as framed in the year 2012. Thirdly, the Regulation only speaks about addition of marks obtained in the vocational subject for the preparation of result and nothing else.

b. Appellants argued that once the Department had accepted their reply to the show cause notice – wherein they explained that they were required to secure only 40% marks in the intermediate examination being members of the reserved category – the Department was obliged to issue a fresh show cause notice before terminating their services on the ground that they had not secured 40% marks. The Division Bench, placing reliance on paragraph 64 of the decision of this Court in ***Escorts Farms Ltd. v. Commissioner, Kumaon Division, Nainital, V.P. & others***[7], rejected this argument after noting that the offending act of the Department did not violate the principle of natural justice as there was *"no requirement to follow the principle of natural justice when the fact is not in dispute"*. Since, Rule 21 of the 2012 Rules precludes the addition of marks secured in the vocational subjects, the Division Bench

[7] (2004) 4 SCC 281

noted that even if fresh show cause notices were issued, the appellants could not have rebutted the requirement of the said rule.

c. The Division Bench noted that the Single Judge had held that since Ravi was allowed to participate in the Teacher Eligibility Test under Rule 4 (considering him to have secured 40% marks), he would be deemed to have secured 40% marks for the purpose of appointment as well. Disagreeing with this reasoning, the Division Bench observed that Rule 4 and Rule 21 operate in different contexts. Chapter 2 of the Rules deals with participation in the Teacher Eligibility Test, while Chapter 3 prescribes the process for recruitment as a teacher. Both chapters serve distinct purposes: Chapter 2 establishes eligibility to appear in the Test, whereas Chapter 3 governs the actual recruitment process. It was further noted that the Teacher Eligibility Test is only an eligibility criterion for consideration for appointment on the post of teacher. Allowing a candidate to appear in the Test, even without meeting the 40% marks requirement under Rule 4, does not confer any right to claim appointment. Thus, the Division Bench found the termination of the appellants to be proper.

DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE PARTIES WERE INVOLVED IN LITIGATION

5. Before proceeding to examine the merits of the rival contentions, it is necessary to note certain developments after the parties started litigating.

6. First, the controversy as to whether the degrees awarded by Hindi Vidyapeeth, Deoghar[8] were valid was set to rest by a judgment and order of the High Court dated 10th May, 2022 in ***Vijoy Kumar v. State of Jharkhand***[9]. It was declared therein that the various degrees[10] awarded by the Vidyapeeth prior to 26th February, 2015 would be valid. *Vide* a letter[11] issued by the Secretary to the Government of Jharkhand, Department of Personnel, Administrative Reforms & Rajbhasha, the Government upon considering the opinion of the Advocate General notified its decision *inter alia* to the effect that the degrees awarded by the Vidyapeeth prior to 26th February, 2015 would be valid for appointment and promotion and those awarded thereafter would not be valid. It was also sought to be informed that the policy decisions taken by the Government, mentioned in such letter, would be effective from 26th February, 2015.

7. Secondly, consequent upon the aforesaid development, it has been brought to our notice that the appellants – Ravi and Premlal – have been freshly appointed as teachers on 17th January, 2025. As a result of such fresh appointment, however, they stand to lose the benefit of their past services.

8. Laslty, it has also been brought to our notice that the appellant – Surendra – breathed his last on 5th August, 2024, i.e., prior to fresh

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[8] Vidyapeeth
[9] W.P.(C) No.3115 of 2015 and batch matters
[10] Praveshika, Sahitya Bhushan and Sahitya Alankar
[11] No.-15/Policy Ni.-07-03/2022 Ka.-3475 dated 15th June, 2023

appointment of the other appellants – Ravi and Premlal. He could not thus be extended the benefit of fresh appointment. Be that as it may, if the other appellants – Ravi and Premlal – succeed in persuading us to hold in their favour, the heirs of the appellant – Surendra – would be entitled to similar but limited relief other than reinstatement in service.

QUESTIONS

9. Despite fresh appointment of the appellants – Ravi and Premlal – the basic question that survives for an answer by us is, whether the termination of services of the appellants, on the ground that their graduation certificates were not valid and they had not secured at least 40% marks in the intermediate examination taken by them, was proper? The other question would necessarily relate to the nature and extent of grant of relief, if any, should the basic question be decided in favour of the appellants – Ravi and Prem Lal. Also, we would be required to consider the claim of the other appellant – Surendra – in the changed circumstances.

ANALYSIS AND REASONS

10. The degrees were awarded to the appellants by the Vidyapeeth on unspecified dates but prior to 26th February, 2015. As discussed above, the degrees awarded prior to the said date have been treated to be valid by the Government of Jharkhand.

11. With the recognition of their degrees as valid, the surviving dispute in the present appeals is regarding the other ground of termination, i.e.,

whether the appellants had secured the minimum qualification marks in the intermediate examination taken by them.

12. According to the appellants, they scored more than the required qualifying marks after taking into account the marks secured by them in the respective vocational subjects. They assert that as per the guidelines contained on the reverse side of their marksheet, bonus marks secured in the vocational subjects, over and above the minimum pass marks, are to be added to the aggregate of compulsory and optional subjects and in this way, they scored more than 40% marks. The relevant paragraphs are reproduced below:

> 4. The result of a candidate offering an additional subject shall be determined on the basis of marks obtained by him in all the compulsory and in the three out of the four optional and additional subjects taken together in which he/she has secured higher marks.
>
> 6. The marks obtained by a candidate in vocational subjects over and above pass (theory and practical taken together) will be added in aggregate to improve his/her result and determine division. This advantage will be available only to such candidates who have appeared at the examination in both theory and practical papers.
>
> (emphasis ours)

13. On the other hand, countering this method of calculation, the respondents relied on Rule 21 A (ii)(A) of the 2012 Rules which provides that the marks secured by a candidate in an "additional subject" will not be taken into consideration while calculating the "educational merit point".

14. Before analysing the aforesaid contentions, we need to note and consider the 2012 Rules, to the extent relevant.

2012 RULES

15. In exercise of powers conferred under the proviso to Article 309 of the Constitution of India, the Governor of Jharkhand framed the 2012 Rules for "Appointment on posts of Teachers and Instructors in Primary Schools under Human Resources Development Department [Primary Education Directorate]".

16. Rule 3[12] provides that for testing the eligibility for appointment on the post of Teacher in schools including government and aided non-governmental schools, an examination shall be held by the concerned authority.

17. Rule 4 provides for eligibility criteria, which a candidate must fulfil to appear in the Teacher Eligibility Test. Portion of the said rule, which is material, is reproduced below:

> **4. For appearing in Teacher Eligibility Test minimum qualification shall be as follows:-**
>
> (a) The candidate must be citizen of India.
>
> (b) Educational and Technical Qualifications.
> (i) For appointment of Teachers of Primary Class:-
>
> (a) Higher Secondary with minimum 50 % marks or its equivalent and two years Diploma in elementary Education. [Known by whatever name]
>
> Or

[12] For testing the eligibility for appointment on the post of Teacher, examination shall be held by Jharkhand Academic Council or any Authority, authorized by State Government, in which successful candidate shall be eligible of appointment in following schools.

A. All such school which are operated by the Government of Jharkhand or Jharkhand Education Project Council.
B. Such Non-Governmental School, which are aided by State Government.
C. Such Non-Governmental School, which are granted (sic.) by State Government.
D. Such Non-Governmental Non-Aided School, which are recognized by State Government.
E. Such School which is affiliated /recognized by any National Education Board and to whom No- Objection Certificate is issued by State Government.

Higher Secondary with minimum 45 % marks or its equivalent and two years Diploma in elementary Education Science [Known by whatever name], which is obtained as per National Teacher Education Council (Recognition, Standard and Activities) Regulation 2002,

Or
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Or
******
And

(b) Qualified in Teacher Eligibility Test (T.E.T.) held for class 6 to 8 by the Government of Jharkhand under guideline framed by National Teacher Education Council.

(c) To the candidates of Schedule Caste/Schedule Tribe and disabled category relaxation shall be given of 5 percent in minimum obtained marks mentioned in rule 4 (b) (i) (A) and 4 (b) (ii) (A).

(d) Such candidate of which training is complete and Teacher Training Examination is held, then also said candidate may appear in Teacher Eligibility Test Examination, but his final passing shall depend on the result of Teacher Training Examination.

(emphasis ours)

18. Furthermore, Rule 21 reads as follows:

21. For appointment of Teachers/Instructors on vacant posts Merit List shall be prepared at district level as per following process:-

A. Determination of Merit List for appointment of Inter Trained Teachers:-

(i) For appointment of Inter Trained Teachers category wise Merit List shall be prepared by Dist. Education Establishment Committee on basis of total merit point of candidate.

(ii) Total merit point of candidate shall be sum of educational merit point and merit point of Teacher Eligibility Test, of which calculation shall be made as follows:-

(A) For determination of educational merit point, after aiding percentage of obtained marks of Matric Examination, Intermediate Examination and Teacher Training Examination, on dividing total sum by three, resultant percentage shall be educational merit point of candidate. But in this calculation, marks obtained in additional subject shall not be included.

(B) On basis of obtained marks of Teacher Eligibility Test, the determination of merit point of Teacher Eligibility Test of candidate shall be made as follows: -

i. 90% and above 10 point

ii.	80% and above but Below 90%	06 point
iii.	70% and above but Below 80%	04 point
iv.	52% and above but Below 70%	02 point

B. Determination of Merit List for appointment of Graduate Trained Teachers:

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(emphasis ours)

19. The aforesaid rule provides for a method of calculation of merit point, for the purpose of preparation of merit list of eligible candidates. The merit point, as per the rule, shall be a sum total of "education merit point" (which shall be the equivalent of the sum total of percentage of marks secured by a candidate in his/her matric, intermediate and Teacher Training Examination, divided by three) and "merit point of Teacher Eligibility Test". For calculation of "educational merit point", it is provided that the marks secured by a candidate in his/her vocational subject shall not be taken into consideration. We have done a detailed analysis of the rule in the upcoming part of the judgment. At this point, it is suffice to mention that this rule applies at the time of preparation of "Merit List".

CALCULATION OF MARKS SECURED BY THE APPELLANTS

20. Admittedly, the Department, while calculating the percentage of marks secured by the appellants in the intermediate examination taken by them did not take into account the marks secured by them in the respective vocational subjects.

21. It is also clear that if the marks secured by the appellants in their vocational subjects are taken into account, then they score more than 40% marks; otherwise, not.

22. The relevant guideline from the marksheet has already been reproduced above. For better understanding of the same, we wish to look into the marks secured by the appellant – Prem Lal - in his intermediate examination with and without addition of the marks secured in the vocational subject and calculate the percentage of marks. It is found that:

a. In his two compulsory subjects, Prem Lal secured 30/100 marks in one and 87/200 marks in the other. In his optional subjects, he secured 80/200, 83/200 and 78/200 marks. Thus, the aggregate of marks secured by him in the main 5 subjects stood at 358/900 marks, which is roughly 39.77% (less than the required 40% for a candidate belonging to a Schedule Tribe).

b. Prem Lal secured 39/100 in his vocational subject. The minimum qualifying marks in the vocational subject was 35 marks. As per guideline 6 (on the reverse of the marksheet), the additional marks secured over and above the minimum qualifying marks are to be added to the aggregate to improve the result of a candidate and determine his division. The additional marks secured by Prem Lal (4 marks), when added to the aggregate (358/900) increased his score to 362/900, which is roughly 40.22%.

c. This is how addition of marks secured in the vocational subjects could come to the aid and advantage of the appellants.

23. In the present case, we find no reason as to why the method of calculation of the percentage, as provided on the reverse of the marksheet, should not be applied for the purpose of calculation of marks of the appellants. Marks secured in the vocational subject is a way for a candidate to improve his/her overall percentage of marks. The reasoning behind this method, is clear to us. A vocational subject, though optional, would place an additional burden on an examinee which he/she shoulders in the fervent hope of improving his/her overall percentage.

24. In the absence of a bar or an alternate method provided by any law, the method provided on the marksheet has to be followed. Therefore, the onus of proof shifted to the respondents to show that calculation as per the marksheet is not warranted. As discussed above, the respondents rely on Rule 21 of the 2012 Rules which the appellants have vehemently refuted. The only issue which therefore remains is, whether Rule 21 of the 2012 Rules will bar/override the method provided in the marksheet.

RULE 21 – WHETHER APPLICABLE?

25. Indeed, at first blush, it appears to be attractive on a plain reading of Rule 21 A (ii)(A) that the marks secured by the appellants in their vocational subjects could not have been considered for calculation of their overall percentage of marks in the intermediate examination.

However, on a deeper scrutiny, the argument suffers from a prodigious error.

26. The heading of Rule 21 makes it very clear that the procedure in this rule applies only at the time of preparing the "Merit List". Rule 21 is no way concerned with providing a mechanism for deciding whether a candidate is eligible or not. That consideration falls within the exclusive domain of Rule 4, which provides for an eligibility criteria for the purpose of appearing in the Teacher Eligibility Test.

27. That both these rules function in their exclusive domain is further strengthened by the fact that Rule 4 of the 2012 Rules is under Chapter 2 named "Teacher Eligibility Test" while Rule 21 falls under Chapter 3 named "Appointment".

28. A combined reading of both the rules, therefore, is that the eligibility of a candidate for appearing in the Teacher Eligibility Test is to be decided in accordance with Rule 4 and Merit list (for the purposes of appointment) is to be prepared in accordance with Rule 21. Thus, the respondents erred in applying Rule 21 for the purpose of deciding whether the appellants fulfilled the eligibility criteria. The Division Bench also committed the same error.

29. In accordance with Rule 4, which does not provide for exclusion of marks secured in the vocational subject, and Rule 21 not being applicable for determining the eligibility of a candidate, the only method which remains for calculation of the marks is the one which is provided on the reverse side of the marksheet of the appellants, according to which the

appellants have secured more that 40% marks. Therefore, the appellants were eligible to appear in the Teacher Eligibility Test Examination.

PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL JUSTICE – WHETHER VIOLATED?

30. A deeper concern now beckons our attention. We shall place the appellants' termination under the sharp lens of natural justice.

31. In the show cause notices issued to the appellants, a question was raised about them not fulfilling the eligibility criterion of having secured a minimum of 45% marks in their intermediate examination. The validity of their graduation certificates was also questioned. The appellants replied by stating that they secured more than 40% marks in their intermediate examination, which perfectly fulfilled the eligibility criterion. To wit, it was their contention that being members of the Scheduled Tribe, they were entitled to a 5% relaxation of marks. As regards the graduation certificate, it was made clear that the same was not a requirement for appointment of a teacher for Classes I-V and the same was provided only for the sake of completeness. However, on the very next day, the respondents terminated their services by following a course of action which shocks our conscience.

32. Why is this course of action shocking? The appellants, in their replies to the show cause notices, had categorically demonstrated that they were not required to secure 45% marks in their intermediate examination. They were required to secure more than 40% marks in the intermediate examination, which they did secure. Confronted with this situation, the

respondents conveniently proceeded to terminate the appellants' services by computing their marks after excluding the marks secured in the vocational subject. Significantly, the allegation that the appellants had failed to secure 40% marks (after exclusion of marks secured in the vocational subject) in the intermediate examination did not even figure as an allegation in the show cause notices. Therefore, findings were returned by the respondents which were at variance with the allegations levelled in the show cause notices. The appellants having successfully defended the allegations, the respondents were precluded in law from proceeding with such notices. In the absence of fresh show cause notices specifically requiring the appellants to explain why the marks secured in the vocational subject should not be taken into account for determining their overall percentage, in our considered view, the appellants had been denied a fair and reasonable opportunity of hearing and the termination orders are wholly unsustainable and stand vitiated being in violation of the principles of natural justice.

33. The present is akin to a situation where the noticee successfully defends the charge against him but is made to suffer civil consequences because the notifier finds the noticee guilty of a different charge in respect whereof he is not put to notice. In such a case, the finding of guilt which is at variance with the original charge without proper opportunity to respond offends due process and renders any order or action unsustainable.

34. Therefore, the Division Bench of the High Court fell in error in holding that the principles of natural justice were not violated on the ground that a fresh show cause notice was unnecessary, as there was *"no requirement to follow the principles of natural justice when the fact is not in dispute."* This conclusion was reached only after the Division Bench held that Rule 21 was applicable to the case of the appellants, thereby precluding the inclusion of marks secured in vocational subjects. However, as already discussed, since Rule 21 has no application to the present case, the very foundation upon which the Division Bench rested its decision stands vitiated.

35. Reliance placed by the Division Bench on ***Escorts Farms*** (supra) appears to be wholly misplaced. The approach of the Division Bench was flawed as would appear from the foregoing discussions. Appellants, if provided a fair and reasonable opportunity, could have pointed out the error committed by the respondents. Complying with natural justice principles, on facts and circumstances, would not have been an idle formality and/or the decision a forgone conclusion.

CONCLUSION

36. For these two reasons, i.e., (i) the procedure that Rule 21 enshrined is only to be used for the purpose of preparation of merit list and Rule 4 does not provide for exclusion of marks secured in the vocational subject; and (ii) the termination order stands vitiated for violation of principles of natural justice, inasmuch as the respondents excluded the marks secured in the vocational subjects without affording the

appellants notice or an opportunity to contest such exclusion, we have no other option but to interfere.

RELIEF

37. The judgments and orders of the Division Bench under challenge in these appeals are set aside.

38. Since the respondents had acted in a rather highhanded, arbitrary and illegal manner in terminating the services of the appellants without justifiable reason and also following due process, the orders terminating the services of the appellants are also set aside.

39. The appellants – Ravi and Prem Lal – shall be treated to have been in continuous service right from the date(s) of their original appointment (December, 2015), as if their services were never terminated. They shall be entitled to service benefits like arrears of pay in full and seniority counted from the dates of initial appointment. However, for the purpose of meeting the experience criterion for promotion, the period not spent on duty will not be counted. The rationale behind this direction is that practical experience of teaching is gained through imparting of lessons to the students. They cannot, thus, be held to have acquired experience without hands-on work. Though the appellants are not at fault, we have attempted to suitably compensate them by awarding full arrears of pay.

40. Insofar as the appellant – Surendra – is concerned, he cannot be reinstated in service. However, while setting aside the order of his termination from service, we order that from the dates of termination of service till his death, his heirs too would be entitled to full arrears of pay.

Additionally, Surendra shall be deemed to have died-in-harness and if there be a scheme for compassionate employment, his heirs may apply thereunder. If an application is received, the respondents shall proceed to consider the same on its own merits.

41. Arrears of pay shall be released to the appellants – Ravi and Premlal – as early as possible but not later than 3 (three) months from date of receipt of a copy of this judgment and order.

42. Insofar as release of arrears to the heirs of the appellant – Surendra – is concerned, such heirs shall be at liberty to approach the Department with all supporting documents. Upon a satisfaction being reached that they are the heirs of late Surendra, the Department shall proceed to disburse the amount payable in equal shares. If any heir is a minor, his/her share shall be released in favour of the widow of Surendra. The disbursement be effected also within three months of the heirs approaching the Department.

43. The appeals are, accordingly, allowed on the aforesaid terms. No costs.

44. Pending applications, if any, shall stand disposed of.

.....J.
(DIPANKAR DATTA)

.....J.
(K.V. VISWANATHAN)

NEW DELHI;
OCTOBER 09, 2025.