

SUPREME COURT OF INDIA

Excise Superintendentmalkapatnam, Krishna District,Andhr

Vs.

K.B.N. Visweshwara Rao

(K. Ramaswamy, B.L. Hansaria and S.B. Majmudar JJ.)

22.08.1996

ORDER

Leave granted.

We have heard learned counsel on both sides. These appeals by special leave arise from the order dated April 21, 1992 of the Andhra Pradesh Administrative Tribunal in O.A.No.9501/91 and batch. The admitted position is that the respondents were not sponsored through the employment exchange for selection to the 723 posts sought to be filled up from the candidates sponsored through the medium of employment exchange. The respondents independently applied for consideration of their claims but they were not considered. Consequently, they approached the Tribunal and sought direction for their appointment. Interim directions were issued to consider their cases and to appoint, if selected by the selected authority. Though the Tribunal held that sponsorship of the candidates through the medium of employment exchange was valid and not violative of Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution, Since many of the candidates came to be selected in terms of the interim direction, orders were issued to appoint the selected candidates. There is a difference of opinion on this behalf. Whereas The majority of two members held that it is not violative of Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution, the minority view was that it was violative. Thus, these appeals by special leave.

This Court in *Union of India & Ors. Vs. N. Hargopal & Ors.* [(1987) 3 SCC 308] noted the contention of counsel appearing for respondents therein that excluding the candidates who were not sponsored through medium of employment exchange and restricting the choice of selection to the candidates sponsored through the medium of employment exchange, would offend the equality clause of Articles 14 and 16 and held that the contention was attractive and it was not open to the Government to impose restriction on the field of choice. But in view of the fact that even the paper publication would not reach many a handicapped who would be unable to have access to the newspaper, it was held that the sponsorship through the medium of employment exchange would not violate Articles 14 and 16. On the other hand, it would advance the rights to the handicapped imposed by the state and central Governments to consider the cases of the candidates through medium of employment exchange while holding that such a restriction was not intended to be applicable to the private employment as held in para 6 of the judgment.

Shri Ram Kumar learned counsel for the state contended that in view of the above decision the direction issued by the Tribunal is not in accordance with law. On the other, S/Shri Shanti Swarup and L.R.Rao, learned counsel appearing for the respondents, contended that the restriction of the

field of choice to the selected candidates sponsored through the medium of employment exchange prohibits sponsored the right to be considered for employment to a post under the state and many people cannot reach the employment exchange to get their names sponsored fair means and procedure to send the names strictly according to seniority in their record. So the better course would be to adopt both the mediums viz of employment exchange and publication in the newspaper as that would subserve the public purpose. Having regard to the respective contentions, we are of the view that contention of the respondents is more acceptable which would be consistent with the principles of fair play, justice and equal opportunity. It is common knowledge that many a candidates are unable to have the names sponsored, though their names are either registered or are waiting to be registered in the employment exchange with the result that the choice of selection is restricted to only such of the candidates whose names come to be sponsored by the employment exchange. Under these circumstances, many a deserving candidate are deprived of the right to be considered for appointment to a post under the state. Better view appears to be that it should be mandatory for the requisitioning Departments for selection strictly according to seniority and reservation as per requisition. In addition the appropriate Department or undertaking or establishment should call for the names by publication in the newspapers having wider circulation and also display on their office notice boards or announce on radio, television and employment news-bulletins: and then consider the cases of all the candidates who have applied. If this procedure is adopted, fair play would be subserved. The equality of opportunity in the matter of employment would be available to all eligible candidates.

The appeals are accordingly disposed of. No case is made out to disturb the directions issued by the tribunal for appointment of the selected candidates. Therefore, the directions survive. No costs.