

State of Orissa and Others

Vs

Ramanath Patnaik

Civil Appeal No. 2673 of 1986

(K. Ramaswamy, D. P. Wadhwa JJ)

02.04.1997

ORDER

1. This appeal by special leave arises from the judgment of the learned Single Judge of the Orissa High Court, made on 21-2-1986 in Second Appeal No. 767 of 1981, dismissing the second appeal in limine.

2. Admittedly, the respondent joined the State service as a Clerk on 21-3-1944. According to the Matriculation Certificate produced at the time of the entry into the service, his date of birth is 1-1-1921. On attaining the superannuation, he retired from service on 31-12-1976. He filed a suit in the year 1981 on the basis of rejection of his representation for declaration that his correct date of birth is 1-1-1925 and not 1-1-1921. The trial court dismissed the suit, but on appeal, the Additional District Judge, Bhubaneswar decreed the suit. As stated earlier, the second appeal was dismissed by the High Court. Thus, this appeal by special leave.

3. The controversy is no longer res integra. This Court has considered the entire case-law on this point in State of T.N. v. T.V. Venugopalan [(1994) 6 SCC 302 : 1994 SCC (L&S) 1385 : (1994) 28 ATC 294]. Therein, this Court has held thus : (SCC p. 305, para 4)

".... It is well known that the service record would be opened after the government servant enters the service and normally the entry in the service record would be countersigned by the government servant. The date of birth as entered in the school record ... is the source material for making entry in the service record."

4. When entry was made in the service record and when he was in service, he did not make any attempt to have the service record corrected. Therefore, any amount of evidence produced subsequently would be of no avail. The High Court, therefore, has committed manifest error of law in refusing to entertain the second appeal.

5. The appeal is accordingly allowed. The judgment of the High Court stands set aside. The judgment and decree of the appellate court stands reversed and that of the trial court stands confirmed. No costs.