

SUPREME COURT OF INDIA

Besant TheosOphical College

Vs.

N. Ananthaiah

C.A.No.121 of 2007

(S.B. Sinha and Markandey Katju JJ.)

04.04.2007

JUDGMENT

S.B. SINHA J.

1. These appeals are directed against an order dated 22.8.2006 passed by a Division Bench of the Andhra Pradesh High Court in Writ Appeal No. 1043/2003 whereby and whereunder the judgment and order of the learned Single Judge of the said Court dated 23.7.2003 passed in Writ Petition No. 44 of 1999 allowing the Writ Petition filed by the first respondent herein was allowed.

2. Indisputably, the post of Lecturer fell vacant in the appellant- institution. Qualification for holding the said post, therefore, is prescribed by the State of Andhra Pradesh as the institution is a private aided one. On or about 16.11.84 G.O Ms. No. 491 was issued by the Government of Andhra Pradesh prescribing qualification for the post of Librarian which is in the following terms:

(i) Good academic record with at least a high second class Master's Degree in a subject other than Library Science.

(ii) Master's Degree in Library Science with first or high second class.

3. However, the University Grants Commission issued a notification dated 20.2.1990 prescribing minimum qualification for recruitment to the post of Librarian, Deputy Librarians, Assistant Librarian, whereafter G.O. Ms. No. 12 was issued by the Government of Andhra Pradesh on 10.1.1992 which is in the following terms:

"Lectures in Library Science in Degree Colleges Candidates who have passed P.G. Degree in any subject with 55% marks and also P.G. Degree in Library Science with First or Second Class with 55% marks and above.

OR

As prescribed by the Government, from time to time, shall be eligible to apply for the post of Lecturer in Library Science in Degree Colleges."

4. The Government of Andhra Pradesh thereafter issued G.O. Ms.No. 208 dated 29.6.1999 following the guidelines issued in that behalf by the University Grants Commission as would appear from the following stipulations made therein:

"After considering the recommendations of U.G.C. and after taking into consideration the recommendation of the Five Member Committee, the Government have decided that the service conditions of Teachers like recruitment and qualifications, selection procedure career advancement, teaching days, work load, code of professional ethics, accountability etc., shall be as indicated in the Appendix to this order. The same shall be implemented by all Universities and D.O.E. with in a time frame of three months from the date of issue of this order by amending necessary Statutes, Ordinances, Rules and Regulations".

5. In the Appendix to the G.O.Ms. No. 208, qualifications prescribed for the post of Librarian (University) were as under:

"(1) Librarian (University)

(i) Master's Degree in Library science/information science/documentation with at least 55% of the marks or its equivalent of B in the UGC seven point scale and consistently good academic record.

(ii) At least thirteen years as a Deputy Librarian in a University Library or eighteen years experience record;

(iii) Evidence of innovative library service and organization of published work".

6. It is not in dispute that the first respondent herein is holder of a Post-Graduate Degree in Political Science. He also possesses Post Graduate Degree in Library Science with 55% marks. As his case has not been considered by the appellant-institution relying on or on the basis of the qualifications prescribed in terms of G.O. Ms. aforementioned, he filed a writ petition. The said writ petition was allowed in part holding as under:

"On the other hand, it is submitted that as per G.O. Ms.No. 127 dated 7.6.1993, the post of Librarian shall be filled by promotion from the post of Assistant Librarians, provided they possesses the qualifications prescribed by the U.G.C. Admittedly the petitioner though possesses a Master's Degree, has not passed with high second class and he has passed the Master's Degree in Library Science with high Second Class. Though the petitioner is not qualification and not entitled for promotion to the post of Librarian, the fact remains that the said solitary post is reserved to BC `B' category and it is illegal and contrary to the rule of reservation. It cannot be said that the petitioner cannot question the said notification which was issued to fill up the post of Lecturer/Librarian, reserving the same is favour of special class. The said notification reserving the said post is illegal and therefore, the Notification issued by the 1st respondent is set aside. If the post is not reserved, many more would have applied in addition to the 3rd respondent.

It is stated that the 3rd Respondent is qualified as per G.O. Ms. No. 691 dated 16.11.1984 and she belongs to BC `B' category. Though she is qualified reserving the said post in favour of a single class is not contemplated in the rules and the Notification is quashed only on the ground that the reservation was made in favour of BC `B' category in contravention of the rule of reservation."

7. An Intra Court appeal preferred thereagainst has been allowed by a Division bench by reason of the impugned judgment.

8. Mr. Subba Rao, learned counsel appearing on behalf of the appellant would submit that having regard to the qualification prescribed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh in terms of the Circular letter dated 31.8.2000, the High Court must be held to have committed a manifest error in passing the impugned judgment.

9. The said letter reads thus:

"The Correspondent, Ideal College of Arts & Science, Kakinada has sought clarification with regard to the Selection procedure to be followed in view of the issue of G.O. Ms. No. 208 Education (UE.II-1) Department, dated 29.6.1999.

In this connection all the correspondents of aided colleges in the State are informed to follow the existing procedure of Selection Committee in terms of G.O. Ms. No. 12-Edn, dated 10.1.1992 until further orders."

10 It is not in dispute that G.O. Ms.No. 12 dated 10.1.1992 has been substituted by G.O. Ms.No. 208 dated 29.6.1999. Qualifications were prescribed for recruitment to the post of Librarian in later G.O. The said G.O. shall, in our opinion, operates in the field.

11. By reason of the aforementioned Circular letter dated 31.8.2000, the Commissioner and Director of Collegiate Education merely laid down that the existing procedure in regard to the constitution or otherwise of the Selection Committee as stated in the G.O.Ms. No. 12 dated 10.1.1992 should be followed until further orders. By reason of the Circular letter neither the effect of G.O.Ms. No. 208 was taken nor the said G.O. Ms. can be said to have been again replaced by G.O. Ms.No. 12 of 10.1.1992. At the cost of repetition, it may be stated that only the procedure laid down in the former was directed to be followed.

12. For the reasons aforementioned, we do not find any error in the judgment passed by the Division Bench of the High Court. These appeals are dismissed. No costs.