

**Evidence collected during investigation by the investigating officer against all the accused by itself could not be treated to be evidence in the disciplinary proceeding.**

Indisputably, a departmental proceeding is a quasi-judicial proceeding. The enquiry officer performs a quasi-judicial function. The charges levelled against the delinquent officer must be found to have been proved. The enquiry officer has a duty to arrive at a finding upon taking into consideration the materials brought on record by the parties. The purported evidence collected during investigation by the investigating officer against all the accused by itself could not be treated to be evidence in the disciplinary proceeding. No witness was examined to prove the said documents. The management witnesses merely tendered the documents and did not prove the contents thereof. Reliance, *inter alia*, was placed by the enquiry officer on the FIR which could not have been treated as evidence.

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