

Purpose for which 'family pension' is granted

"Family pension came to be conceptualised in the year 1950. When a Government servant die in harness or soon after retirement, in the traditional Indian family on the death of the only earning member, the widow or the minor children were not only rendered orphans but faced more often destitution and starvation. Traditionally speaking the widow was hardly in a position to obtain gainful employment. She suffered the most in as much as she was deprived of the companionship of the husband and also became economically orphaned. As a measure of socioeconomic justice family pension scheme was devised to help the widows tide over the crisis and till the minor children attain majority to extend them some succour. This appears to be the underlying motivation in devising the family pension scheme. It was liberalised from time to time. The liberalisation was however subject to the condition that the Government Servant had in his life time agreed that he shall make a contribution of an amount equal to two months' emoluments or Rs.5,000 whichever is less out of the death-cum-retirement gratuity. Those Government servants who did not accept this condition were denied the benefit of family pension scheme."

Poonamal v. Union of India, (1985) 3 SCC 345 : AIR 1985 SC 1196