

"State of Jharkhand and others v. Jitendra Kumar Srivastava and another", 2013(12) SCC 210 discussed the entire law pertaining to the valuable rights pertaining to the grant of pensionary benefits. Para Nos.8 and 16 of the aforesaid judgment is reproduced as under:-

"8. It is an accepted position that gratuity and pension are not the bounties. An employee earns these benefits by dint of his long, continuous, faithful and unblemished service. Conceptually it is so lucidly described in D.S. Nakara and Ors. v. Union of India; (1983) 1 SCC 305 by Justice D.A. Desai, who spoke for the Bench, in his inimitable style, in the following words:

"18. The approach of the respondents raises a vital and none too easy of answer, question as to why pension is paid. And why was it required to be liberalised? Is the employer, which expression will include even the State, bound to pay pension? Is there any obligation on the employer to provide for the erstwhile employee even after the contract of employment has come to an end and the employee has ceased to render service?

19. What is a pension? What are the goals of pension? What public interest or purpose, if any, it seeks to serve? If it does seek to serve some public purpose, is it thwarted by such artificial division of retirement pre and post a certain date? We need seek answer to these and incidental questions so as to render just justice between parties to this petition.

20. The antiquated notion of pension being a bounty a gratuitous payment depending upon the sweet will or grace of the employer not claimable as a right and, therefore, no right to pension can be enforced through Court has been swept under the carpet by the decision of the Constitution Bench in Deoki Nandan Prasad v. State of Bihar and Ors. [1971] Su. S.C.R. 634 wherein this Court authoritatively ruled that pension is a right and the payment of it does not depend upon the discretion of the Government but is governed by the rules and a Government servant coming within those rules is entitled to claim pension. It was further held that the grant of pension does not depend upon any one's discretion. It is only for the purpose of quantifying the amount having regard to service and other allied matters that it may be necessary for the authority to pass an order to that effect but the right to receive pension flows to the officer not because of any such order but by virtue of the rules. This view was reaffirmed in State of Punjab and Another v. Iqbal Singh(6)".

It is thus hard earned benefit which accrues to an employee and is in the nature of "property". This right to property cannot be taken away without the due process of law as per the provisions of Article 300-A of the Constitution of India.

16. The fact remains that there is an imprimatur to the legal principle that the right to receive pension is recognized as a right in "property". Article 300-A of the Constitution of India reads as under:

"300-A Persons not to be deprived of property save by authority of law.- No person shall be deprived of his property save by authority of law."

Once we proceed on that premise, the answer to the question posed by us in the beginning of this judgment becomes too obvious. A person cannot be deprived of this pension without

the authority of law, which is the Constitutional mandate enshrined in Article 300-A of the Constitution. It follows that attempt of the appellant to take away a part of pension or gratuity or even leave encashment without any statutory provision and under the umbrage of administrative instruction cannot be countenanced."

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