

Working Journalists and Other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1955

Chapter II - Working Journalists

(1) The provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 (14 of 1947), as in force for the time being, shall, subject to the modification specified in sub-section (2), apply to, or in relation to, working journalists as they apply to, or in relation to, workmen within the meaning of that Act.

(2) Section 25F of the aforesaid Act, in its application to working journalists, shall be construed as if in clause (a) thereof, for the period of notice referred to therein in relation to the retrenchment of a workman, the following periods of notice in relation to the retrenchment of a working journalist had been substituted, namely:--

- (a) six months, in the case of an editor, and
- (b) three months, in the case of any other working journalist;

Section 4 - Special provisions in respect of certain cases of retrenchment

Where at any time between the 14th day of July, 1954, and the 12th day of March, 1955, any working journalist had been retrenched, he shall be entitled to receive from the employer--

- (a) wages for one month at the rate to which he was entitled immediately before his retrenchment, unless he had been given one month's notice in writing before such retrenchment; and
- (b) compensation which shall be equivalent to fifteen days' average pay for every completed year of service under that employer or any part thereof in excess of six months.

Section 5 - Payment of gratuity

¹ [5. Payment of gratuity

(1) Where--

(a) any working journalist has been in continuous service, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, for not less than three years in any newspaper establishment, and-

- (i) his services are terminated by the employer in relation to that newspaper establishment for any reason whatsoever, otherwise than as a punishment inflicted by way of disciplinary action; or
- (ii) he retires from service on reaching the age of superannuation; or

(b) any working journalist has been in continuous service, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, for not less than ten years in any newspaper establishment, and he voluntarily resigns on or after the 1st day of July, 1961, from service in that newspaper establishment on any ground whatsoever other than on the ground of conscience; or

(c) any working journalist has been in continuous service, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, for not less than three years in any newspaper establishment, and he voluntarily resigns on or after the 1st day of July, 1961, from service in that establishment on the ground of conscience; or

(d) any working journalist dies while he is in service in any newspaper establishment,

the working journalist or, in the case of his death, his nominee or nominees or, if there is no nomination in force at the time of the death of the working journalist, his family, as the case may be, shall, without prejudice to any benefits or rights accruing under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 (14 of 1947), be paid, on such termination, retirement, resignation or death, by the employer in relation to that establishment gratuity which shall be equivalent to fifteen days' average pay for every completed year of service or any part thereof in excess of six months:

Provided that in the case of a working journalist referred to in clause (b), the total amount of gratuity that shall be payable to him shall not exceed twelve and half months' average pay:

Provided further that where a working journalist is employed in any newspaper establishment wherein not more than six working journalists were employed on any day of the twelve months immediately preceding the commencement of this Act, the gratuity payable to a working journalist employed in any such newspaper establishment for any period of service before such commencement shall not be equivalent to fifteen days' average pay for every completed year of service or any part thereof in excess of six months but shall be equivalent to--

- (a) three days' average pay for every completed year of service or any part thereof in excess of six months, if the period of such past service does not exceed five years;
- (b) five days' average pay for every completed year of service or any part thereof in excess of six months, if the period of such past service exceeds five years but does not exceed five years; and
- (c) seven days' average pay for every completed year of service of any part thereof in excess of six months, if the period of such past service exceeds ten years.

Explanation.--For the purposes of this sub-section and sub-section (1) of section 17, "family" means--

(i) in the case of a male working journalist, his widow, children, whether married or unmarried, and his dependent parents and the widow and children of his deceased son:

Provided that a widow shall not be deemed to be a member of the family of the working journalist if at the time of his death she was not legally entitled to be maintained by him;

(ii) in the case of a female working journalist, her husband, children, whether married or unmarried, and the dependent parents of the working journalist or of her husband, and the widow and children of her deceased son:

Provided that if the working journalist has expressed her desire to exclude her husband from the family, the husband and his dependent parents shall not be deemed to be a part of the working journalist's family, and in either of the above two cases, if the child of a working journalist or of a deceased son of a working journalist has been adopted by another person and if under the personal law of the adopter, adoption is legally recognised, such a child shall not be considered as a member of the family of the working journalist.

(2) Any dispute whether a working journalist has voluntarily resigned from service in any newspaper establishment on the ground of conscience shall be deemed to be an industrial dispute within the meaning of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 (14 of 1947), or any corresponding law relating to investigation and settlement of industrial disputes in force in any State.

(3) Where a nominee is a minor and the gratuity under sub-section (1) has become payable during his minority, it shall be paid to a person appointed under sub-section (3) of section 5A:

Provided that where there is no such person, payment shall be made to any guardian of the property of the minor appointed by a competent court or where no such guardian has been appointed, to either parent of the minor, or where neither parent is alive, to any other guardian of the minor:

Provided further that where the gratuity is payable to two or more nominees, and either or any of them dies, the gratuity shall be paid to the surviving nominee or nominees.

1. Substituted by Act 65 of 1962, section 3, for section 5 w.e.f. 15-1-1963.

Section 5A - Nomination by working journalist

¹ 5A. Nomination by working journalist

(1) Notwithstanding anything contained in any law for the time being in force, or in any disposition, testamentary or otherwise in respect of any gratuity payable to a working journalist, where a nomination made in the prescribed manner purports to confer on any person the right to receive payment of the gratuity for the time being due to the working journalist, the nominee shall, on the death of the working journalist, become entitled to the gratuity and to be paid the sum due in respect thereof to the exclusion of all other persons, unless the nomination is varied or cancelled in the prescribed manner.

(2) Any nomination referred to in sub-section (1) shall become void if the nominee predeceases, or where there are two or more nominees, all the nominees predecease, the working journalist making the nomination.

(3) Where the nominee is a minor, it shall be lawful for the working journalist making the nomination to appoint any person in the prescribed manner to receive the gratuity in the event of his death during the minority of the nominee.]

1. Inserted by Act 65 of 1962.

Section 6 - Hours of work

(1) Subject to any rules that may be made under this Act, no working journalist shall be required or allowed to work in any newspaper establishment for more than one hundred and forty-four hours during any period of four consecutive weeks, exclusive of the time for meals.

(2) Every working journalist shall be allowed during any period of seven consecutive days rest for a period of not less than twenty-four consecutive hours, the period between 10 P.M. and 6 A.M. being included therein.

Explanation.--For the purposes of this section, "week" means a period of seven days beginning at mid-night on Saturday.

Section 7 - Leave

Without prejudice to such holidays, casual leave or other kinds of leave as may be prescribed, every working journalist shall be entitled to--

(a) earned leave on full wages for not less than one-eleventh of the period spent on duty;

(b) leave on medical certificate on one-half of the wages for not less than one-eighteenth of the period of service.

Section 8 - Fixation or revision of rates of wages

¹ [8. Fixation or revision of rates of wages

(1) The Central Government may, in the manner hereinafter provided,--

(a) fix rates of wages in respect of working journalists;

(b) revise, from time to time, at such intervals as it may think fit, the rates of wages fixed under this section or specified in the order made under section 6 of the Working Journalists (Fixation of Rates of Wages) Act, 1958 (29 of 1958).

(2) The rates of wages may be fixed or revised by the Central Government in respect of working journalists for time work and for piece work.

1. Substituted by Act 65 of 1962, section 4, for sections 8 to 13 w.e.f. 15-1-1963.

Section 9 - Procedure for fixing and revising rates of wages

¹ [9. Procedure for fixing and revising rates of wages

For the purpose of fixing or revising rates of wages in respect of working journalists under this Act, the Central Government shall, as and when necessary, constitute a Wage Board which shall consist of—

(a)² [three persons] representing employers in relation to newspaper establishments;

(b)² [three persons] representing working journalists;

(c)² [four independent persons], one of whom shall be a person who is, or has been, a Judge of a High Court or the Supreme Court and who shall be appointed by that Government as the Chairman thereof.

1. Substituted by Act 65 of 1962, section 4, for sections 8 to 13 w.e.f. 15-1-1963.

2. Substituted by Act 34 of 1996, section 2 w.e.f. 28-9-1996.

Section 10 - Recommendation by Board

(1) The Board shall, by notice published in such manner as it thinks fit, call upon newspaper establishments and working journalists and other persons interested in the fixation or revision of rates of wages of working journalists to make such representations as they may think fit as respects the rates of wages which may be fixed or revised under this Act in respect of working journalists.

(2) Every such representation shall be in writing and shall be made within such period as the Board may specify in the notice and shall state the rates of wages which, in the opinion of the person making the representation, would be reasonable, having regard to the capacity of the employer to pay the same or to any other circumstance, whichever may seem relevant to the person making the representation in relation to his representation.

(3) The Board shall take into account the representations aforesaid, if any, and after examining the materials placed before it make such recommendations as it thinks fit to the Central Government for the fixation or revision of rates of wages in respect of working journalists; and any such recommendation may specify, whether prospectively or retrospectively, the date from which the rates of wages should take effect.

(4) In making any recommendations to the Central Government, the Board shall have regard to the cost of living, the prevalent rates of wages for comparable employment, the circumstances relating to the newspaper industry in different regions of the country and to any other circumstances which to the Board may seem relevant.

¹[Explanation.—For the removal of doubts, it is hereby declared that nothing in this subsection shall prevent the Board from making recommendations for fixation or revision of rates of wages on all India basis.]

1. Added by Act 31 of 1989, section 3 w.e.f. 28-8-1989.

Section 11 - Powers and procedure of the Board

(1) Subject to the provisions contained in sub-section (2), the Board may exercise all or any of the powers which an Industrial Tribunal constituted under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 (14 of 1947), exercises for the adjudication of an industrial dispute referred to it and shall, subject to the provisions contained in this Act, and the rules, if any, made thereunder, have power to regulate its own procedure.

(2) Any representations made to the Board and any documents furnished to it by way of evidence shall be open to inspection on payment of such fee as may be prescribed, by any person interested in the matter.

(3) If, for any reason, a vacancy occurs in the office of Chairman or any other member of the Board, the Central Government shall fill the vacancy by appointing another person thereto in accordance with the provisions of section 9 and any proceeding may be continued before the Board so reconstituted from the stage at which the vacancy occurred.

Section 12 - Powers of Central Government to enforce recommendations of the Wage Board

(1) As soon as may be, after the receipt of the recommendations of the Board, the Central Government shall make an order in terms of the recommendations or subject to such modifications, if any, as it thinks fit, being modifications which, in the opinion of the Central Government, do not effect important alterations in the character of the recommendations.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), the Central Government may, if it thinks fit,—

(a) make such modifications in the recommendations, not being modifications of the nature referred to in sub-section (1), as it thinks fit:

Provided that before making any such modifications, the Central Government shall cause notice to be given to all persons likely to be affected thereby in such manner as may be prescribed, and shall take into account any representations which they may make in this behalf in writing; or

(b) refer the recommendations or any part thereof to the Board, in which case, the Central Government shall consider its further recommendations and make an order either in terms of the recommendations or with such modifications of the nature referred to in sub-section (1) as it thinks fit.

(3) Every order made by the Central Government under this section shall be published in the Official Gazette together with the recommendations of the Board relating to the order and the order shall come into operation on the date of publication or on such date, whether prospectively or retrospectively, as may be specified in the order.

Section 13 - Working journalists entitled to wages at rates not less than those specified in the order

On the coming into operation of an order of the Central Government under section 12, every working journalist shall be entitled to be paid by his employer wages at the rate which shall in no case be less than the rate of wages specified in the order.

Section 13A - Power of Government to fix interim rates of wages

(1) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, where the Central Government is of opinion that it is necessary so to do, it may, after consultation with the Board, by notification in the Official Gazette, fix interim rates of wages in respect of working journalists.

(2) Any interim rates of wages so fixed shall be binding on all employers in relation to newspaper establishments and every working journalist shall be entitled to be paid wages at a rate which shall, in no case, be less than the interim rates of wages fixed under subsection (1).

(3) Any interim rates of wages fixed under sub-section (1) shall remain in force until the order of the Central Government under section 12 comes into operation.]

Section 13AA - Constitution of Tribunal for fixing or revising rates of wages in respect of working journalists

¹ [13AA. Constitution of Tribunal for fixing or revising rates of wages in respect of working journalists

(1) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, where the Central Government is of opinion that the Board constituted under section 9 for the purpose of fixing or revising rates of wages in respect of working journalists under this Act has not been able to function (for any reason whatsoever) effectively, and in the circumstances, it is necessary so to do, it may, by notification in the Official Gazette, constitute a Tribunal, which shall consist of a person who is, or has been, a Judge of a High Court or the Supreme Court, for the purpose of fixing or revising rates of wages in respect of working journalists under this Act.

(2) The provisions of sections 10 to 13A shall apply to, and in relation to, the Tribunal constituted under sub-section (1) of this section, the Central Government and working journalists, subject to the modifications that—

(a) the references to the Board therein, wherever they occur, shall be construed as references to the Tribunal;

(b) in sub-section (3) of section 11,—

(i) the reference to the office of Chairman or any other member of the Board shall be construed as a reference to the office of the person constituting the Tribunal; and

(ii) the reference to section 9 shall be construed as a reference to sub-section (1) of this section; and

(c) the references in section 13 and section 13A to section 12 shall be construed as references to section 12 read with this section.

(3) The Tribunal, in discharging its functions under this Act, may act on the evidence recorded by the Wage Board or partly recorded by the Wage Board and partly recorded by itself:

Provided that if the Tribunal is of opinion that further examination of any of the witnesses whose evidence has already been recorded is necessary in the interests of justice, it may re-summon any such witness, and after such further examination, cross-examination and re-examination, if any, as it may permit, the witness shall be discharged.

(4) On the constitution of a Tribunal under sub-section (1), the Board constituted under section 9 and functioning immediately before such constitution shall cease to exist and the members constituting that Board shall be deemed to have vacated their offices:

Provided that any interim rates of wages fixed by the Central Government under section 13A in respect of working journalists and in force immediately before the constitution of the Tribunal shall remain in force until the order of the Central Government under section 12 read with this section comes into operation].