

Moti Bai Vs. Bhagirathi and Others

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Court : Chhattisgarh

Decided On : Mar-23-2011

Judge : The Honourable Chief Justice Mr. Rajeev Gupta & Rangnath Chandrakar

Appeal No. : Misc Appeal C No 81 of 2006

Appellant : Moti Bai

Respondent : Bhagirathi and Others

Advocate for Def. : Shri. Shailendra Sharma, Shri. Akhilesh Mishra

Advocate for Pet/Ap. : Shri. Rakesh Sahu

Judgement :

(MISC APPEAL UNDER SECTION 173 OF THE MOTOR VEHICLES ACT 1988)

RAJEEV GUPTA, C.J.

1. Appellant/ claimant - Moti Bai is seeking enhancement of the compensation awarded by the Second Additional Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, Baloda Bazar, district Raipur (for short 'the Tribunal') vide award dated 29.10.2005, passed in Claim Case No.164/2004.

2) As against the compensation of Rs.5,07,000/- claimed by the appellant/claimant, by filing a claim petition under Section 166 of the Motor Vehicles Act, for the injuries sustained by her in the motor accident on 24.07.2004, the Tribunal awarded a total sum of Rs.20,000/- as compensation along with interest @ 9% per annum from the date of filing of the claim petition till the date of actual payment.

3) Shri Rakesh Sahu, learned counsel for the appellant vehemently argued that the Tribunal has erred in awarding low compensation of Rs.20,000/- only though the appellant/claimant sustained multiple serious injuries including fractures in the motor accident resulting in permanent disability.

4) Shri Shailendra Sharma, learned counsel for respondent No.2, the New India Insurance Company Limited, on the other hand supported the award and contended that the compensation of Rs.20,000/- awarded by the Tribunal is just and proper compensation in the facts and circumstances of the present case.

5) Shri Akhilesh Mishra, learned counsel for respondent No.1, the owner of the offending vehicle Tata Sumo also supported the award.

6) For the reasons best known to the claimant, no doctor was examined before the Tribunal to establish the nature of the injuries said to have been sustained by the claimant in the motor accident and the fact that those injuries resulted in any permanent disability.

7) The question whether the medical certificate produced by the claimant before the Tribunal without examining the Doctor who issued the certificate can be relied upon as substantive evidence for the assessment of the compensation came up for consideration before the Apex Court in the case of A.P. SRTC v. P. Thirupal Reddy, reported in (2005) 12 SCC 189, wherein it was observed in para 6 as under:

"6. After hearing learned counsel for the respondent-claimant who made an attempt to support the order of the High Court, we find that there was no justification for the High Court to rely on the disability certificate issued by Dr.

Sudhakar Reddy and enhance the compensation by treating the injury as permanent disability to be 45 per cent. The High Court committed gross error in overlooking the fact that Dr. Sudhakar Reddy's medical certificate was rejected by the Tribunal for non-examination of that doctor. The Tribunal has determined the physical disability at 15 per cent on the basis of the deposition of Dr. K.M. Mitra and awarded a just and fair compensation. The High Court erred in disturbing the same and enhancing the compensation. Consequently, we allow this appeal, set aside the impugned order and restore the award of the Claims Tribunal. The respondent-claimant is allowed to withdraw the amount of compensation awarded by the Tribunal, if it has not already been withdrawn."

8) The Apex Court in a recent dictum in the case of Rajesh Kumar alias Raju v. Yudhvir Singh and another, reported in (2008) 7 SCC 305, reiterated the same view with the following observations in para 11:

"11. The certificate in question in this case was obtained after two years. It is not known as to whether the Civil Surgeon of the hospital treated the appellant. On what basis, such a certificate was issued two years after the accident took place is not known. The author of the said certificate had not been examined. Unless the author of the certificate examined himself, it was not admissible in evidence. Whether the disability at 60% was calculated on the basis of the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act or otherwise is not known. It is also not known as to whether he was competent to issue such a certificate. It even does not appear that the contentions raised before us had either been raised before the Tribunal or the High Court. The Tribunal as also the High Court, therefore, proceeded on the materials brought on record by the parties. In absence of any contention having been raised in regard to the applicability of the Workmen's Compensation Act which, in our opinion, ex facie has no application, the same, in our opinion, cannot be permitted to be raised for the first time."

9) The medical certificates produced by the claimant before the Tribunal without examining the doctors who had issued those certificates, in view of the above quoted dicta of the Apex Court in the cases of A.P. SRTC v. P. Thirupal Reddy (Supra) and Rajesh Kumar alias Raju v. Yudhvir Singh and another (Supra),

cannot be taken into consideration for enhancement of the compensation in the case.

10) We, therefore, do not find any scope for enhancement of the compensation awarded by the Tribunal.

11) The appeal filed by the appellant/claimant for enhancement of the compensation, therefore, is liable to be dismissed and is hereby dismissed.

12) No order as to costs.

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