



IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA AT  
CHANDIGARH

CWP No.14848 of 2025

Date of Decision: 22.05.2025

Union of India and others

...Petitioners

Versus

No.14458793H Ex Naik Tarlok Singh and another

...Respondents

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANJEEV PRAKASH SHARMA  
HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE MEENAKSHI I. MEHTA**

Present:- Mr. Angel Walia, Advocate, Panel Counsel UOI  
for the petitioners.

\* \* \* \*

**SANJEEV PRAKASH SHARMA J.(Oral)**

1. The order dated 14.10.2024 (Annexure P-3) passed by respondent No.2-Armed Forces Tribunal, Chandigarh (for short 'AFT') is under challenge before us whereby the learned AFT has held the applicant (respondent No.1 herein) to be entitled to disability pension @ 20% w.e.f. 01.04.1994 to 31.12.1995 and w.e.f. 01.01.1996 for life to be rounded off to 50% in terms of judgment of Hon'ble Supreme Court *Union of India vs. Ram Avtar* in *Civil Appeal No.418/2012 decided on 10.12.2014*.

2. Learned counsel for the petitioners submits that the judgment would have no application to the present case where respondent No.1 has been discharged from the service on 31.09.1994 and was granted disability pension element @ 20% for two years.

3. We find that if the afore-said judgment, which has been noticed by learned AFT, recently the Apex Court has again examined the issue in



***Bijender Singh vs. Union of India and others, 2025 INSC 549***, wherein after considering the judgments in ***Dharamvir Singh vs. Union of India (2013) 7 SCC 316*** and ***Union of India vs. Rajbir Singh (2015) 12 SCC 264***, and dealing with Rules 5, 9 and 14 of the Entitlement Rules for Casualty Pensionary Awards, 1982, held as under:-

*“45.1. Thus, this Court held that essence of the Rules is that a member of the armed forces is presumed to be in sound physical and mental condition at the time of his entry into the service if there is no note or record to the contrary made at the time of such entry. In the event of subsequent discharge from service on medical ground, any deterioration in health would be presumed to be due to military service. The burden would be on the employer to rebut the presumption that the disability suffered by the member was neither attributable to nor aggravated by military service. If the Medical Board is of the opinion that the disease suffered by the member could not have been detected at the time of entry into service, the Medical Board has to give reasons for saying so. This Court highlighted that the provision for payment of disability pension is a beneficial one which ought to be interpreted liberally. A soldier cannot be asked to prove that the disease was contracted by him on account of military service or was aggravated by the same. The very fact that upon proper physical and other tests, the member was found fit to serve in the army would give rise to a presumption that he was disease free at the time of his entry into service. For the employer to say that such a disease was neither attributable to nor aggravated by military service, the least that is required to be done is to furnish reasons for taking such a view.*”



46. Referring back to the impugned order dated 26.02.2016, we find that the Tribunal simply went by the remarks of the Invaliding Medical Board and Re-Survey Medical Boards to hold that since the disability of the appellant was less than 20%, he would not be entitled to the disability element of the disability pension. Tribunal did not examine the issue as to whether the disability was attributable to or aggravated by military service. In the instant case neither has it been mentioned by the Invaliding Medical Board nor by the Re-Survey Medical Boards that the disease for which the appellant was invalided out of service could not be detected at the time of entry into military service. As a matter of fact, the Invaliding Medical Board was quite categorical that no disability of the appellant existed before entering service. As would be evident from the aforesaid decisions of this Court, the law has by now crystalized that if there is no note or report of the Medical Board at the time of entry into service that the member suffered from any particular disease, the presumption would be that the member got afflicted by the said disease because of military service. Therefore the burden of proving that the disease is not attributable to or aggravated by military service rest entirely on the employer. Further, any disease or disability for which a member of the armed forces is invalided out of service would have to be assumed to be above 20% and attract grant of 50% disability pension.

47. Thus having regard to the discussions made above, we are of the considered view that the impugned orders of the Tribunal are wholly unsustainable in law. That being the position, impugned orders dated 22.01.2018 and 26.02.2016 are hereby set aside. Consequently, respondents are directed to grant the disability element of



*disability pension to the appellant at the rate of 50% with effect from 01.01.1996 onwards for life. The arrears shall carry interest at the rate of 6% per annum till payment. The above directions shall be carried out by the respondents within three months from today.”*

4. In view of above, the issue raised in the instant petition is no more *res-integra* and there is no reason to interfere in the order passed by respondent No.2-AFT. The present petition is devoid of any merit and the same is, accordingly, dismissed.

**(SANJEEV PRAKASH SHARMA)**  
**JUDGE**

**May 22, 2025**  
seema

**(MEENAKSHI I. MEHTA)**  
**JUDGE**

*Whether speaking/reasoned: Yes/No*  
*Whether Reportable: Yes/No*