



**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT  
CHANDIGARH**

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FAO-5100-2024 (O&M)  
Date of decision: 22.07.2025

Rambha Kumari and others

...Appellants

Versus

Fateh Mohd. and others

...Respondents

**CORAM: HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE SUDEEPTI SHARMA**

Present: Mr. Rahul Judge, Advocate for the appellants.

Mr. Harjinder Singh, Advocate  
for respondent No.3-Insurance Company.

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**SUDEEPTI SHARMA, J. (ORAL)**

**CM-19420-CII-2024**

1. This is an application under Section 5 of the Limitation Act for condonation of delay of 62 days in re-filing the appeal.
2. For the reasons as mentioned in the application, the same is allowed and delay of 62 days in re-filing the appeal is condoned.

**CM-19421-CII-2024**

1. This is an application under Section 5 of the Limitation Act for condonation of delay of 95 days in filing the appeal.
2. For the reasons as mentioned in the application, the same is allowed and delay of 95 days in filing the appeal is condoned.

**FAO-5100-2024**

1. The present appeal has been preferred against the award dated



30.08.2023 passed in the claim petition filed under Section 166 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 by the learned Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, Ludhiana (for short, 'the Tribunal') for enhancement of compensation granted to the claimants-appellants to the tune of Rs.16,42,800/- on account of death of Sangeeta Devi wife of Sh. Munna Mahato in a Motor Vehicular Accident, occurred on 17.03.2021.

2. As sole issue for determination in the present appeal is confined to quantum of compensation awarded by the learned Tribunal, a detailed narration of the facts of the case is not required to be reproduced here for the sake of brevity.

#### **SUBMISSIONS OF LEARNED COUNSEL FOR THE PARTIES**

3. The learned counsel for the claimants-appellants contends that the Ld. Tribunal has erred in assessing the income of the deceased as Rs.9000/- per month. Moreover, the amount awarded for funeral expenses, loss of estate and consortium is on the lower side and deserves to be enhanced. Therefore, the claimants-appellants pray that the present appeal be allowed and compensation be enhanced as per latest law.

4. Per contra, learned counsel for the respondent No.3-Insurance Company vehemently argues that the learned Tribunal has erred in granting compensation to the claimants/appellants. Therefore, he prays for dismissal of the appeal.

5. I have heard learned counsel for the parties and perused the whole record of this case.

#### **SETTLED LAW ON COMPENSATION**

6. Hon'ble the Supreme Court in the case of *Sarla Verma Vs.*



**Delhi Transport Corporation and Another [(2009) 6 Supreme Court Cases 121]**, laid down the law on assessment of compensation and the relevant paras of the same are as under:-

*“30. Though in some cases the deduction to be made towards personal and living expenses is calculated on the basis of units indicated in Trilok Chandra, the general practice is to apply standardised deductions. Having a considered several subsequent decisions of this Court, we are of the view that where the deceased was married, the deduction towards personal and living expenses of the deceased, should be one-third (1/3rd) where the number of dependent family members is 2 to 3, one-fourth (1/4th) where the number of dependent family members is 4 to 6, and one-fifth (1/5th) where the number of dependent family members exceeds six.*

*31. Where the deceased was a bachelor and the claimants are the parents, the deduction follows a different principle. In regard to bachelors, normally, 50% is deducted as personal and living expenses, because it is assumed that a bachelor would tend to spend more on himself. Even otherwise, there is also the possibility of his getting married in a short time, in which event the contribution to the parent(s) and siblings is likely to be cut drastically. Further, subject to evidence to the contrary, the father is likely to have his own income and will not be considered as a dependant and the mother alone will be considered as a dependant. In the absence of evidence to the*



*contrary, brothers and sisters will not be considered as dependants, because they will either be independent and earning, or married, or be dependent on the father.*

*32. Thus even if the deceased is survived by parents and siblings, only the mother would be considered to be a dependant, and 50% would be treated as the personal and living expenses of the bachelor and 50% as the contribution to the family. However, where the family of the bachelor is large and dependent on the income of the deceased, as in a case where he has a widowed mother and large number of younger non-earning sisters or brothers, his personal and living expenses may be restricted to one-third and contribution to the family will be taken as two-third.*

*\* \* \* \* \**

*42. We therefore hold that the multiplier to be used should be as mentioned in Column (4) of the table above (prepared by applying Susamma Thomas<sup>3</sup>, Trilok Chandra and Charlie), which starts with an operative multiplier of 18 (for the age groups of 15 to 20 and 21 to 25 years), reduced by one unit for every five years, that is M-17 for 26 to 30 years, M-16 for 31 to 35 years, M-15 for 36 to 40 years, M-14 for 41 to 45 years, and M-13 for 46 to 50 years, then reduced by two units for every five years, that is, M-11 for 51 to 55 years, M-9 for 56 to 60 years, M-7 for 61 to 65 years and M-5 for 66 to 70 years.*

7. Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of titled as **National**



**Insurance Company Ltd. Vs. Pranay Sethi & Ors. [(2017) 16 SCC 680]**

has clarified the law relating to Sections 166, 163-A and 168 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, on the following aspects:-

- (A) Deduction of personal and living expenses to determine multiplicand;
- (B) Selection of multiplier depending on age of deceased;
- (C) Age of deceased on basis for applying multiplier;
- (D) Reasonable figures on conventional heads, namely, loss of estate, loss of consortium and funeral expenses, with escalation;
- (E) Future prospects for all categories of persons and for different ages: with permanent job; self-employed or fixed salary.

The relevant portion of the judgment is reproduced as under:-

*“52. As far as the **conventional heads** are concerned, we find it difficult to agree with the view expressed in Rajesh<sup>2</sup>. It has granted Rs.25,000 towards funeral expenses, Rs 1,00,000 towards loss of consortium and Rs 1,00,000 towards loss of care and guidance for minor children. The head relating to loss of care and minor children does not exist. Though Rajesh refers to Santosh Devi, it does not seem to follow the same. The conventional and traditional heads, needless to say, cannot be determined on percentage basis because that would not be an acceptable criterion. Unlike*



*determination of income, the said heads have to be quantified. Any quantification must have a reasonable foundation. There can be no dispute over the fact that price index, fall in bank interest, escalation of rates in many a field have to be noticed. The court cannot remain oblivious to the same. There has been a thumb rule in this aspect. Otherwise, there will be extreme difficulty in determination of the same and unless the thumb rule is applied, there will be immense variation lacking any kind of consistency as a consequence of which, the orders passed by the tribunals and courts are likely to be unguided. Therefore, we think it seemly to fix reasonable sums. It seems to us that reasonable figures on conventional heads, namely, loss of estate, loss of consortium and funeral expenses should be Rs.15,000, Rs.40,000 and Rs.15,000 respectively. The principle of revisiting the said heads is an acceptable principle. But the revisit should not be fact-centric or quantum-centric. We think that it would be condign that the amount that we have quantified should be enhanced on percentage basis in every three years and the enhancement should be at the rate of 10% in a span of three years. We are disposed to hold so because that will bring in consistency in respect of those heads.*

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*59.3. While determining the income, an addition of 50% of actual salary to the income of the deceased towards future prospects, where the deceased had a permanent job and was below the age of 40 years, should be made. The addition should be 30%, if the age of the deceased was between 40 to 50 years. In case the deceased was between the age of 50 to 60 years, the addition should be 15%. Actual salary should be read as actual salary less tax.*

*59.4. In case the deceased was self-employed (or) on a fixed salary, an addition of 40% of the established income should be the warrant where the deceased was below the age of 40 years. An addition of 25% where the deceased was between the age of 40 to 50 years and 10% where the deceased was between the age of 50 to 60 years should be regarded as the necessary method of computation. The established income means the income minus the tax component.*

*59.5. For determination of the multiplicand, the deduction for personal and living expenses, the tribunals and the courts shall be guided by paras 30 to 32 of Sarla Verma<sup>4</sup> which we have reproduced hereinbefore.*

*59.6. The selection of multiplier shall be as indicated in the Table in Sarla Verma<sup>1</sup> read with para 42 of that judgment.*



*59.7. The age of the deceased should be the basis for applying the multiplier.*

*59.8. Reasonable figures on conventional heads, namely, loss of estate, loss of consortium and funeral expenses should be Rs 15,000, Rs 40,000 and Rs 15,000 respectively. The aforesaid amounts should be enhanced at the rate of 10% in every three years.”*

8. Hon’ble Supreme Court in case titled as **Magma General Insurance Company Limited Vs. Nanu Ram alias Chuhru Ram & Others [2018(18) SCC 130]** after considering **Sarla Verma (supra)** and **Pranay Sethi (Supra)** has settled the law regarding consortium. Relevant paras of the same are reproduced as under:-

*“21. A Constitution Bench of this Court in Pranay Sethi<sup>2</sup> dealt with the various heads under which compensation is to be awarded in a death case. One of these heads is loss of consortium. In legal parlance, "consortium" is a compendious term which encompasses "spousal consortium", "parental consortium", and "filial consortium". The right to consortium would include the company, care, help, comfort, guidance, solace and affection of the deceased, which is a loss to his family. With respect to a spouse, it would include sexual relations with the deceased spouse.*

*21.1. **Spousal consortium** is generally defined as rights pertaining to the relationship of a husband-wife which*



*allows compensation to the surviving spouse for loss of "company, society, cooperation, affection, and aid of the other in every conjugal relation".*

*21.2. **Parental consortium** is granted to the child upon the premature death of a parent, for loss of "parental aid, protection, affection, society, discipline, guidance and training".*

*21.3. **Filial consortium** is the right of the parents to compensation in the case of an accidental death of a child. An accident leading to the death of a child causes great shock and agony to the parents and family of the deceased. The greatest agony for a parent is to lose their child during their lifetime. Children are valued for their love, affection, companionship and their role in the family unit.*

*22. Consortium is a special prism reflecting changing norms about the status and worth of actual relationships. Modern jurisdictions world-over have recognised that the value of a child's consortium far exceeds the economic value of the compensation awarded in the case of the death of a child. Most jurisdictions therefore permit parents to be awarded compensation under loss of consortium on the death of a child. The amount awarded to the parents is a compensation for loss of the love, affection, care and companionship of the deceased child.*

*23. The Motor Vehicles Act is a beneficial legislation aimed at providing relief to the victims or their families, in cases*



*of genuine claims. In case where a parent has lost their minor child, or unmarried son or daughter, the parents are entitled to be awarded loss of consortium under the head of filial consortium. Parental consortium is awarded to children who lose their parents in motor vehicle accidents under the Act. A few High Courts have awarded compensation on this count. However, there was no clarity with respect to the principles on which compensation could be awarded on loss of filial consortium.*

*24. The amount of compensation to be awarded as consortium will be governed by the principles of awarding compensation under "loss of consortium" as laid down in Pranay Sethi<sup>2</sup>. In the present case, we deem it appropriate to award the father and the sister of the deceased, an amount of Rs 40,000 each for loss of filial consortium.*

### **FINDINGS OF THE COURT**

9. A perusal of the record shows that the age of the deceased was 34 years at the time of accident. The factum of age is not disputed by either of the party before this Court. Consequently, the age of deceased is taken as 34 years.

10. Further perusal of the award reveals that the deceased was engaged in domestic work in multiple households chores and her monthly income was asserted as Rs.15,000, but no documentary evidence substantiating her employment as a domestic helper was produced before the Ld. Tribunal. Therefore, her income was to be taken as that of a



housewife.

11. This Court in FAO-1292-2006 in titled as ***R.D. Sharma and Another Vs. Kumari Santosh and Others***, decided on 22.03.2018 while assessing the notional income of the housewife has held as under:-

*“In FAO No. 218 of 2014, a co-ordinate Bench of this Court, while relying upon the principles laid down in **Lata Wadhwa and others v. State of Bihar and others 2001(4) RCR(Civil) 673**), made the following observations:-*

*"Learned counsel for the appellant has argued that even while noticing that the income of a skilled worker in 2012 was approximately Rs.8000/- the Tribunal has wrongly assessed the income of the deceased as Rs.9000/-. As per him once the notional income had been taken a deduction had to be made for personal expenses. This argument is flawed. In **Lata Wadhwa and others v. State of Bihar and others** reported as 2001(4) RCR (Civil) 673 (where the accident had taken place in 1981) the Hon'ble Supreme Court evaluated the contribution of a house wife at Rs.3000/-per month. The accident in the present case took place after 23 years. In my considered opinion to tag a house wife as a 'skilled worker' alone does not do complete justice to her multifarious role as a home manager. Keeping in view the lapse of 23 years between the accident in the case of **Lata Wadhwa** and the present accident and my*



*conclusion that a house wife is something more than a mere skilled worker it would not be unreasonable to estimate the contribution of the deceased in the present case at a higher figure. On the whole I see no reason for reducing the quantum."*

7. *I find sufficient reason to follow the judgment in FAO No. 218 of 2014, particularly as I am informed that the Special Leave Petition (SLP) filed against the order in this case has been dismissed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court. Similarly, the SLP filed in the other case cited by the appellants has also met the same fate. Consequently, these orders have attained finality, leaving no scope for further dispute regarding their binding nature.*

8. *It is imperative to acknowledge the multifaceted role of a housewife as a homemaker. Her contributions extend beyond measurable economic parameters, encompassing household management, child care, emotional support, and the upkeep of familial stability. These services, though often unrecognized in monetary terms, are invaluable to the functioning and well-being of a household. In assessing compensation, the court must factor in this indispensable contribution, which would otherwise necessitate considerable expenditure if outsourced. In view of the above, it is just and reasonable to determine the monthly income of the deceased Charanjit Kaur, housewife at Rs.9,000/- per month, therefore, the award requires*



*interference by this Court.”*

12. In *R.D. Sharma’s case (supra)*, the notional income of a housewife was taken as Rs.9000/-. However, in the present case, with the accident occurring in 2021, and in view of sustained inflation, the rising cost of living, and jurisprudential acknowledgment of the far-reaching economic contribution of homemakers, it is both just and reasonable to reassess the notional income of the deceased.

13. A housewife’s work transcends caretaking embracing preparation of meals for the entire family; procurement of groceries and household supplies; cleaning and maintenance of the house and surroundings; financial planning and budget management; child care and education; tending to elderly dependents; coordinating repairs and home-based healthcare etc. These services, if procured in the open market, would command substantial remuneration, underscoring the integral role played by a homemaker in family stability.

14. In light of the above legal position and having due regard to the facts and circumstances of the present case, this Court finds it appropriate to assess the notional income of the deceased- Sangeeta Devi at **Rs.15,000/- per month.**

15. In addition to this, the amount awarded for funeral expenses, loss of estate and consortium is on the lower side and deserves to be enhanced. Therefore, the award requires indulgence of this Court.

### **CONCLUSION**

16. In view of the law laid down by the Hon’ble Supreme Court in the above referred to judgments, the present appeal is allowed. The award dated



30.08.2023 is modified accordingly. The appellants-claimants are held entitled to enhanced amount of compensation as per the calculations made here-under:-

| <b><i>Sr. No.</i></b> | <b><i>Heads</i></b>   | <b><i>Compensation Awarded</i></b>          |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| 1                     | Monthly Income  | Rs.15000/-                                  |
| 2                     | Future prospects @ 40%  | Rs.6000/- (40% of 15000)                    |
| 3                     | Deduction towards personal expenditure 1/4th                              | Rs.5250/- (21000 X 1/4th)                   |
| 4.                    | Total Income  | Rs.15750 (21000-5250)                       |
| 4                     | Multiplier  | 16  |
| 5                     | Annual Dependency   | Rs.30,24,000/-<br>(15750X16X12)             |
| 6                     | Loss of Estate  | Rs.18,000/-                                 |
| 7                     | Funeral Expenses  | Rs.18,000/-                                 |
| 8                     | Loss of Consortium<br>Spousal: Rs. 48,000/-x1<br>Parental: Rs. 48,000/-x3 | Rs.1,92,000/-                               |
| 9                     | <b>Total Compensation</b>   | <b>Rs.32,52,000/-</b>                       |
| 10                    | <b>Deduction</b><br>Amount Awarded by the Tribunal                        | <b>Rs.16,42,800/-</b>                       |
| 11                    | <b>Enhanced amount</b>  | <b>Rs.16,09,200/- (32,52,000-16,42,800)</b> |

17. So far as the interest part is concerned, as held by Hon'ble Supreme Court in **Dara Singh @ Dhara Banjara Vs. Shyam Singh Varma** 2019 ACJ 3176 and **R.Valli and Others VS. Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation** (2022) 5 Supreme Court Cases 107, the appellants-claimants are granted interest @ 9% per annum on the enhanced amount of compensation from the date of filing of claim petition till the date of its



realization.

18. The Insurance Company-respondent No. 3 is directed to deposit the enhanced amount of compensation along with interest with the Tribunal within a period of two months from the receipt of copy of this judgment. The Tribunal is directed to disburse the enhanced amount of compensation along with interest in the accounts of the claimants/appellants as per award dated 30.08.2023. The claimants/appellants are directed to furnish their bank account details to the Tribunal.

19. Further Insurance Company is directed to disburse the current schedule fee to Mr. Harjinder Singh Advocate, pursuant to order dated 18.07.2024 passed in FAO No.1682 of 2007 by this Court, within a period of twenty days from the date of receipt of copy of this judgment.

20. Pending application (s), if any, also stand disposed of.

**22.07.2025**

*Yogesh*

**(SUDEEPTI SHARMA)**  
**JUDGE**

**Whether speaking/reasoned:-**  
**Whether reportable:-**

**Yes/No**  
**Yes/No**