Serial No. 01 Regular List

HIGH COURT OF MEGHALAYA AT SHILLONG

WP(C) No. 133 of 2021

MeECL Progressive Workers' Union
Represented by its General Secretary

Mrs. Angelina M. Hynniewta W/o (L) John. C. Ryntathiang

R/o Mawpat, Shillong, East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya

.....Petitioners

Date of Decision: 15.07.2024

-VERSUS-

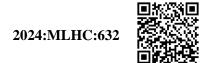
- 1. The State of Meghalaya Represented by the Chief Secretary, Government of Meghalaya, Shillong
- 2. The Director Corporate Affairs
 Government of Meghalaya
 Lum Jingshai, Short Round Road, Shillong, East Khasi Hills,
 Meghalaya-793001.
- 3. The Chairman-cum-Managing Director Meghalaya Energy Corporation Lum Jingshai, Short Round Road, Shillong, East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya-793001.

.....Respondents

Coram:

Hon'ble Mr. Justice W. Diengdoh, Judge

Appearance:



For the Petitioner/Appellant(s) : Mr. P. Yobin, Adv.

Mr. S. Singpho, Adv.

For the Respondent(s) : Mr. N.D. Chullai, AAG with

Mr. E.R. Chyne, GA (For R 1) Mr. A.S. Pandey, Adv. with

Ms. R. Colney, Adv. (For R 2 and 3)

i) Whether approved for reporting in

Yes/No

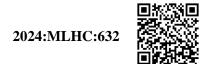
Law journals etc.:

ii) Whether approved for publication

in press: Yes/No

JUDGMENT

- 1. The petitioner MeECL Progressive Workers' Union espousing the cause of the regular casual/contractual workers, such Union duly registered under the Indian Trade Union Act, 1926, has approached this Court with this instant application under Article 226 of the Constitution of India on behalf of its members who are employees working under the respondent/ Meghalaya Energy Corporation Limited (MeECL), inter alia with a prayer that this Court be pleased to issue a writ of mandamus directing the respondents to pay the members of the petitioner who are appointed as regular casual/contractual employees to Grade-III and IV posts with minimum pay scale revised from time to time, with permissible allowances such as dearness allowance as are being paid to similarly placed regular employees with arrears of pay.
- 2. Heard Mr. P. Yobin, learned counsel for the petitioner/Union who



has submitted that the members of the petitioner/Union are appointed in the sanctioned posts which posts are also available in the regular cadre, however they were appointed on a casual/contractual basis, having been in service for about two decades or so. Some of these posts includes the post of Mali, Sweeper, Cleaner, Pump Operators, Chowkidar, Peon, Teacher, Carpenter etc.

- 3. The learned counsel has also submitted that the members of the Union are appointed against the posts available in the regular cadre and are also performing similar duties as was discharged by regular employees holding the same/corresponding posts.
- 4. Again, para 6 of this petition was referred to wherein a chart was presented to show a comparison of the pay as per the Meghalaya Energy Corporation Limited (Revision of Pay) Regulations, 2020 between the members of the Union and regular employees performing the same nature of work. Extract of a few entries, that is Sl. No. 1, 2 and 3 made in the chart is reproduced herein below:

Sl.	Designati	Existing	Revised Pay Matrix	Monthly salaries		
No	on	Scales		paid to the		
		(ROP		member of the		
		2105)		Union		
1	Cleaner,	Rs.	Rs 20900 - 21500	Unskilled		
	Mali,	13000-	-22100-22800-23500-	343/day x 30 =		
	Sweeper,	290(4)-	24200-24900-25600-	10,290+Increme		

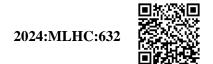




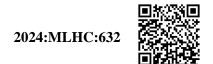
Khalasi, 14160- 26400-27200-28000- nt Chowkid 380(9)- 28800-29700-30600- 5% for 5 year ar, Peon 17580- 31500-32400-33400- 10% for 530(15)- 34000-35400-36500- years 25530/- 37600-38700-39900- 15% for 41100-42300-43600- years 44900-46200-47600- 49000/- (30 years)	s 10 15		
ar, Peon 17580- 31500-32400-33400- 10% for 530(15)- 34000-35400-36500- years 25530/- 37600-38700-39900- 15% for 41100-42300-43600- years 44900-46200-47600-	10		
530(15)- 34000-35400-36500- years 25530/- 37600-38700-39900- 15% for 41100-42300-43600- years 44900-46200-47600-			
25530/- 37600-38700-39900- 15% for 41100-42300-43600- years 44900-46200-47600-	15		
41100-42300-43600- years 44900-46200-47600-	15		
44900-46200-47600-			
40000/ (20 voors)			
49000/- (30 Veals)			
2 Jugali Rs. Rs. 21900-22600- Skilled			
13620- 23300-24000-24700- 435/day x 30	435/day x 30 =		
310(4)- 25400-26200-27000- 13050	13050		
14860- 27800-28600-29500- +Increment	+Increment		
400(9)- 30400-31300-32200- 5% for 5 year	5% for 5 years		
18460- 33200-34200-35200- 10% for	10		
550(15)- 36300-37400-38500- years			
26710 39700-40900-42100- 15% for	15		
43400-44700-46000- years			
47400-48800-50300-			
51800/- (30 years)			
3 Pump Rs. Rs. 22900-23600- Skilled			
Operator 14240- 24300-25000-25800- 435/day x 30	435/day x 30 =		
330(4)- 26600-27400-28200- 13,050	+		
15560- 29000-29900-30800- Increment	Increment		
420(9)- 31700-32700-33700- 5% for 5 year	5% for 5 years		
19340- 34700-35700-36800- 10% for	10		

	570(15)-	37900-39000-40200-	years		
	27890/-	41400-42600-43900-	15%	for	15
		45200-46600-48000-	years		
		49400-50900-52400-			
		54000/- (30 years)			

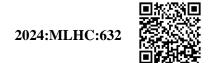
- 5. The learned counsel has further submitted that the members of the Union though appointed as casual employees, the terms and conditions of the Service Rules were made applicable to them and even in matters of transfer the same rules which is in place for regular employees is also made applicable to them.
- 6. In this backdrop, the petitioner/Union has placed a charter of demands before the respondent authorities, the implementation of "equal pay for equal work" prominently figuring in such demands. To the dismay of the members of the petitioner/Union, though the demand of equal pay for equal work is legitimate, the same situation being present in other Government Departments such as Education Department and Meghalaya Urban Development Agency (MUDA) where the pay scale to the temporary employees are at par with those of the regular employees, the same being denied to the members of the petitioner/Union, there is therefore a clear violation of the rights under Article 14 and 16 of the Constitution of India and is contrary to the Directive Principles envisaged under Article 38(1) of the Constitution of India.



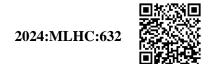
- 7. The learned counsel has also pointed out to this Court that the respondent authority vide Office Order dated 11.06.2020 had appointed twenty of such temporary employees as regular employees with a given scale of pay, thus depriving the other members of the petitioner/Union of being treated equally under such circumstances.
- 8. It is also the submission of the learned counsel that in this case, the authority of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of State of Punjab & Ors. v. Jagjit Singh & Ors., reported in (2017) 1 SCC 148, particularly para 42, 42.1, 42.2, 42.3, 42.5, 43, 44, 44.1, 44.2, 44.3, 44.4, 44.7, 54, 56-61are squarely applicable to the case of the petitioner/Union.
- 9. It is therefore the prayer of the petitioner/Union that the relevant respondent authorities be directed to pay to the members of the Union the minimum pay scale revised from time to time with permissible allowances as is being paid to those workers who are similarly situated regular employees.
- 10. Per contra, Mr. A.S. Pandey, learned counsel for the respondent/MeECL would submit that the first preliminary objection raised herein is that this petition is not maintainable in its present form wherein it is noticed that this petition has been filed on behalf of a number of petitioners albeit being members of the petitioner/Union but with different causes of action where each member would seek relief to specific set of facts and situation and which facts cannot be clubbed together in a single writ petition.



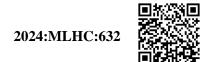
- 11. To clarify this position, the learned counsel has led this Court to para 5 of the petition where an averment has been made that the members, meaning many members of the petitioner/Union were appointed in the sanctioned posts which was also available in the regular cadre, the nature and responsibility of the work of both posts being the same. A comprehensive table listing the name of the posts held by the members of the Union and also the posts in the regular cadre has also been shown therein. However, the facts concerning each post is different and cannot be clubbed together in one single writ petition, the individual members of the petitioner/Union has distinct of a cause action against the respondent/MeECL.
- 12. It is the further submission of the learned counsel that it is incumbent upon the petitioner/Union or for that matter the individual employees involved, that for making out a case of parity between two posts there must be a "wholesome/wholesale identity between the holders of two posts" for which the respective person is required to demonstrate the source of entry, the qualifications possessed, the manner of recruitment etc. which is lacking in this petition as only an omnibus statement has been given by the petitioner/Union. On this singular issue where there is clubbing of multiple causes of action into one single writ petition, the same would render this instant petition to be not maintainable. In support of this contention, the learned counsel has cited the case of Binod Kumar & Ors. v. State of Jharkhand through the Chief Secretary, Govt. of Jharkhand & Ors., 2022 SCC Online Jhar 107, para



- 16, P. Radhakrishna Naidu & Ors. v. Government of Andhra Pradesh & Ors., (1977) 1 SCC 561, para 14 and also the case of Mota Singh & Ors. v. State of Haryna & Ors., 1980 (Supp) SCC 600, para 2 and 3.
- 13. Another limb of argument advanced by the learned counsel is that the petitioner/Union in preferring this petition has failed to present the correct factual matrix of the case of the members of the petitioner/Union, who were appointed beyond the number of sanctioned posts on need basis, example of such posts being the post of Electrician, Meter Reader cum Bill Clerk and Jugali whose mode of appointment was on the basis of a contract agreement, the pay of which are being fixed on the basis of the notification issued by the Labour Department, Government of Meghalaya in line with the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 depending on their skill and ability. In fact, in addition to the said payment the corporation has also extended a number of facilities which includes the following:
 - "a. Enhancement/Increment in the Salary w.e.f. 2018, based on the experience/tenure of service of the Casual employee in MeECL and its subsidiaries as below:
 - i. The percentage of enhancement of wages of the employee whose tenure of service is above 5 years but below 10 years is fixed at 5% of the total amount of monthly wages.
 - ii. The percentage of enhancement of wages of the employee whose tenure of service is above 10 years but below 15 years is fixed at 10% of the total amount of monthly wages.
 - iii. The percentage of enhancement of wages of the employee whose tenure of service is above 15 years but below 20 years is fixed at 15% of the total amount of monthly wages.

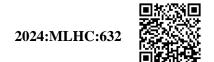


- b. Furthermore, additional benefits have also been extended for the welfare of the Employees which are as mentioned below:Provident Fund coverage as per the Terms and Conditions defined under the EPF Act, 1952
 - i. Casual Leave
 - ii. Earned Leave
 - iii. Maternity Leave
 - iv. Payment of overtime to the casual/contract employee."
- 14. The learned counsel has again submitted that when it comes to drawing parity between two posts for the purpose of determination of equal pay for equal work, the same would require a detail analysis which only an administrative exercise can achieve wherein various factors like the nature of appointment, qualifications, quality of work, quantity of work, responsibility and accountability attached to such work has to be determined which is not possible to be brought out in a writ petition. To buttress this contention the case of Union of India v. Indian Navy Civilian Design Officers Association & Anr., 2023 SCC Online SC 173, para 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and the case of State of Madhya Pradesh. v. R.D. Sharma & Anr., (2022) 13 SCC 320, para 17 was cited by the learned counsel.
- 15. The learned counsel has reiterated that the petitioner/Union has not been able to present concrete evidence and cogent materials to show that all the 31 posts indicated in this petition are equal to any post held by the regular employees. In view of the presence of disputed questions of facts determination of which is best left to the Executive, a writ court exercising its extraordinary jurisdiction under Article 226 of the

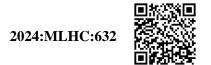


Constitution of India would not adjudicate on such disputed questions of facts. The case of Subhas Jain v. Rajeshwari Shivam & Ors., (2021) 20 SCC 454, para 25 and State of Punjab v. Jagjit Singh(supra), para 9, 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 10, 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 42, 42.1, 42.5, 42.6, 42.8, 42.14 and 42.15 have been referred to in this regard.

- 16. In reply to the contention of the petitioner/Union that the authorities concerned has occasioned discrimination in appointment inasmuch as 20 contractual employees were in due course regularized in their respective post disregarding the other similarly situated contractual employees, the learned counsel has submitted that the said 20 contractual employees whose posts have been regularised are the land owners or relatives of the land owners who have donated their land situated at Umtru, Brynihat, Ri Bhoi District for construction of new Umtru Hydel Project. This has been done at the strength of office memorandum No.PER(AR).49/2012/67 dated 30.08.2017 issued by the Personnel & Admv.Reforms(B) Department, Government of Meghalaya which provides for regular appointment to be confirmed to such personnel.
- 17. Upon hearing the argument advanced by the respective learned counsels for the parties and on perusal of the pleadings on record, this Court is made to understand that the dispute is essentially centered on the allegation of the petitioner/Union that its members are being discriminated as far as their just dues are concerned, particularly in the area of equal pay for equal work.

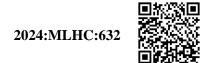


- 18. There is no dispute by the respondent authorities with regard to the status of the members of the petitioner/Union as far as their employment is concerned. In fact, the respondents would assert that the said members of the petitioner/Union are the contractual employees of the respondent/MeECL, appointed on a need basis for a period of one year with fixed pay paid in line with the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 and with certain additional financial facilities as has been elaborated at para 13 hereinabove.
- 19. The respondent/MeECL would however contend that the claim for equal pay for equal work would exist only when there is a wholesome/wholesale identity between the holders of two posts as was held in the case of Steel Authority of India Limited & Ors. v. Dibyendu Bhattacharya, (2011) 11 SCC 122 and further that even if the designation of the job is same, difference in educational or technical qualifications as was observed in the case of State of Haryana & Ors. v. Jasmer Singh & Ors., (1996) 11 SCC 77 has also to be taken into account. Reliance was also placed in the case of Indian Navy Civilian Design Officers Association (supra), particularly para 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 to say that the concept of equal pay for equal work cannot be applied to unequal or distinct classes and as such, daily workers cannot be equated with regular workers.
- 20. The said respondent has further emphasized the point that equation of posts and determination of pay scales is the primary function of the



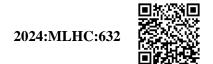
Executive and not of the Judiciary, such function requiring consideration of a host of factors such as qualifications, the method of recruitment and the nature of the duties and courts would generally not enter upon the task of job evaluation which is generally left to the expert bodies like the pay commission etc. These propositions are present in the case of Delhi Transport Corporation Security Staff Union (Regd.) v. Delhi Transport Corporation & Anr., (2018) 16 SCC 619 as well as in the case of R.D. Sharma (supra) relied upon by the respondent/MeECL to bring home the point that this instant petition has been preferred in a case where no writ is maintainable and no fundamental or legal rights of the members of the petitioner/Union have been violated.

21. On consideration of the proposition propounded by the respondent/MeECL as above, where stress is laid on the aspect of equation of posts and determination of pay scales thereof, which requires proper classification best left to be done by an expert body or committee, this Court is made aware that the case of the petitioner/Union is not for equation of posts or determination of pay scale connected thereto, but that there already exist same category of posts, for example, the post of Cleaner or Mali, some manned by employees who have been recruited through the regular process and some by employees appointed on contractual basis for a period of one year, the same being renewed from time to time. What is evident is that there are now two classes of employees, one regular and another temporary, performing the same nature of work by the same designation and drawing two different sets of

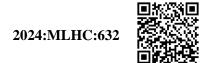


pay scales as is evident from the chart drawn up by the petitioner/Union at para 6 of this petition. The authorities cited by the respondent/MeECL are therefore found to be not relevant to the case in hand.

- 22. The respondent/MeECL has also further contended that this petition filed in a representative capacity is not maintainable inasmuch as it is evident that the members of the petitioner/Union have separate causes of action with each members having a distinct cause of action against the action of the respondent. Again, in matters of demand of equal pay for equal work, it is required to demonstrate the source of entry, the qualifications possessed and the manner of recruitment etc. of each individual as against their counterparts holding the same post who are regular employees. The case of Binod Kumar (supra) and that of P. Radhakrishna Naidu (supra) as well of that of Mota Singh (supra) was also relied upon by the respondent in this regard.
- 23. The reliance of the respondent/MeECL on the case of Binod Kumar (supra), P. Radhakrishna Naidu (supra) and Mota Singh (supra) wherein it is noticed that in each of these cases, a joint petition was filed by several petitioners seeking common relief but pursuing their individual interest and therefore, such petitioners were called upon to pursue their respective individual case or even if allowed to join together, to pay the required court fees as individuals, cannot be equated with the case in hand as in this case, a recognized registered Union has taken up the common cause of all its members as regard the demand of equal pay for equal work.



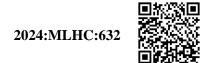
- 24. Therefore, the objection of the respondent/MeECL as regard the maintainability of this petition on the ground that it could not have been filed by the petitioner/Union on behalf of its members collectively as separate cause of action exists pertaining to individual claims against respective posts occupied by the said members cannot be accepted by this Court inasmuch as the petitioner/Union through its General Secretary, duly authorised by the resolution, annexed as Annexure-A/3 is representing its members who are all contractual employees of the respondent/MeECL. They all have a common cause, that is, a demand for grant of equal pay for equal work. The basis of the grievance of the members of the petitioner/Union is the alleged unequal treatment to them in the matter of service vis-à-vis their counterparts in the same organisation who are regular employees. On this score, this Court is of the considered opinion that this petition is maintainable.
- 25. The case of the petitioner/Union could best be understood on the authority relied upon in this regard, that is, the case of Jagjit Singh (supra) and the relevant paras cited, which are self-explanatory on perusal of the same and thus are required to be reproduced herein as:
 - "42. All the judgments noticed in paras 7 to 24 hereinabove, pertain to employees engaged on regular basis, who were claiming higher wages, under the principle of "equal pay for equal work". The claim raised by such employees was premised on the ground, that the duties and responsibilities rendered by them were against the same post for which a higher pay scale was being allowed in other government departments. Or alternatively, their duties and responsibilities were the same as of other posts with different



designations, but they were placed in a lower scale. Having been painstakingly taken through the parameters laid down by this Court, wherein the principle of "equal pay for equal work" was invoked and considered, it would be just and appropriate to delineate the parameters laid down by this Court. In recording the said parameters, we have also adverted to some other judgments pertaining to temporary employees (also dealt with, in the instant judgment), wherein also, this Court had the occasion to express the legal position with reference to the principle of "equal pay for equal work". Our consideration, has led us to the following deductions:-

42.3. The principle of "equal pay for equal work", applies to cases of unequal scales of pay, based on no classification or irrational classification, Randhir Singh v. Union of India, (1982) 1 SCC 618. For equal pay, the employees concerned with whom equation is sought, should be performing work, which besides being functionally equal, should be of the same quality and sensitivity, Federation of All India Customs and Central Excise Stenographers v. Union of India (1988) 3 SCC 91, Mewa Ram Kanojia v. All India Institute of Medical Sciences, (1989) 2 SCC 235, Grih Kalyan Kendra Workers' Union of India, (1991) 1 SCC 619 and the S.C. Chandra v. State of Jharkhand (2007) 8 SCC 279.

44.3. In Bhagwan Dass case, (1987) 4 SCC 634 this Court recorded that in a claim for equal wages, the duration for which an employee would remain (or had remained) engaged, would not make any difference. So also, the manner of selection and appointment would make no difference. And therefore, whether the selection was made on the basis of open competition or was limited to a cluster of villages, was considered inconsequential, insofar as the applicability of the principle is concerned. And likewise, whether the appointment was for a fixed limited duration (six months, or one year), or for an unlimited duration, was also considered inconsequential, insofar as the applicability of the principle of "equal pay for equal work" is concerned. It was held that the claim for equal wages would be sustainable, where an

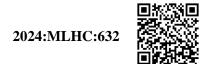


employee is required to discharge similar duties and responsibilities as regular employees, and the employee concerned possesses the qualifications prescribed for the post. In the above case, this Court rejected the contention advanced on behalf of the Government, that the plea of equal wages by the employees in question, was not sustainable because the employees concerned were engaged in a temporary scheme, and against posts which were sanctioned on a year-to-year basis.

44.4. In Daily Rated Casual Labour case, (1988) 1 SCC 122 this Court held, that under the principle flowing from Article 38(2) of the Constitution, the Government could not deny a temporary employee, at least the minimum wage being paid to an employee in the corresponding regular cadre, alongwith dearness allowance and additional dearness allowance, as well as, all the other benefits which were being extended to casual workers. It was also held, that the classification of workers (as unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled), doing the same work, into different categories for payment of wages at different rates, was not tenable. It was also held, that such an act of an employer would amount to exploitation. And further that the same would be arbitrary and discriminatory, and therefore, violative of Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution.

44.5. In State of Punjab v. Devinder Singh, (1998) 9 SCC 595 this Court held that daily wagers were entitled to be placed in the minimum of the pay scale of regular employees working against the same post. The above direction was issued after accepting that the employees concerned were doing the same work as regular incumbents holding the same post by applying the principle of "equal pay for equal work".

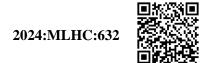
44.6. In State of Karnataka case, (2006) 4 SCC 1, a Constitution Bench of this Court, set aside the judgment of the High Court, and directed that daily wagers be paid salary equal to the lowest grade of salary and allowances being paid to regular employees. Importantly, in this case, this Court made a very important



distinction between pay parity and regularisation. It was held that the concept of equality would not be applicable to issues of absorption/regularisation. But, the concept was held as applicable, and was indeed applied, to the issue of pay parity – if the work component was the same. The judgment rendered by the High Court was modified by this Court, and the daily-wage employees concerned were directed to be paid wages equal to the salary at the lowest grade of the cadre concerned.

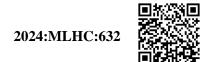
58. In our considered view, it is fallacious to determine artificial parameters to deny fruits of labour. An employee engaged for the same work cannot be paid less than another who performs the same duties and responsibilities. Certainly not, in a welfare state. Such an action besides being demeaning, strikes at the very foundation of human dignity. Anyone, who is compelled to work at a lesser wage does not do so voluntarily. He does so to provide food and shelter to his family, at the cost of his self-respect and dignity, at the cost of his self-worth, and at the cost of his integrity. For he knows that his dependents would suffer immensely, if he does not accept the lesser wage. Any act of paying less wages as compared to others similarly situate constitutes an act of exploitative enslavement, emerging out of a domineering position. Undoubtedly, the action is oppressive, suppressive and coercive, as it compels involuntary subjugation.

60. Having traversed the legal parameters with reference to the application of the principle of "equal pay for equal work", in relation to temporary employees (daily-wage employees, ad hoc appointees, employees appointed on casual basis, contractual employees and the like), the sole factor that requires our determination is, whether the employees concerned (before this Court), were rendering similar duties and responsibilities, as were being discharged by regular employees holding same/corresponding posts. This exercise would require the application of the parameters of the principle of "equal pay for equal work" summarised by us in para 42 above. However, insofar as the instant aspect of the matter is concerned, it is not difficult



for us to record the factual position. We say so, because it was fairly acknowledged by the learned counsel representing the State of Punjab, that all the temporary employees in the present bunch of appeals were appointed against posts which were also available in the regular cadre/establishment. It was also accepted that during the course of their employment, the temporary employees concerned were being randomly deputed to discharge duties and responsibilities which at some point in time were assigned to regular employees. Likewise, regular employees substantive posts were also posted to discharge the same work which was assigned to temporary employees from time to time. There is, therefore, no room for any doubt, that the duties and responsibilities discharged by the temporary employees in the present set of appeals were the same as were being discharged by regular employees. It is not the case of the appellants, that the respondent employees did not possess the qualifications prescribed for appointment on regular basis. Furthermore, it is not the case of the State that any of the temporary employees would not be entitled to pay parity on any of the principles summarised by us in para 42 hereinabove. There can be no doubt, that the principle of "equal pay for equal work" would be applicable to all the temporary employees concerned, so as to vest in them the right to claim wages on a par with the minimum of the pay scale of regularly engaged government employees holding the same post."

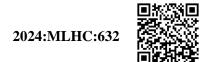
- 26. At this juncture, it may be pointed out that the claim of the petitioner/Union is not for regularisation of its members to the posts they are appointed to, but for payment of the minimum pay scale as is being paid to the employees who are drawing the regular pay scale.
- 27. As to the contention of the petitioner/Union as regard the alleged discrimination as far as regularisation is concerned, particularly the process for regularisation of 20 employees, the explanation offered by the



respondent/MeECL that the said 20 employees were regularised on the bases of an agreement made between the MeECL and the land owners, etc. for appointment of their preferred candidates, the same cannot be faulted since the policy decision of the Government in this regard would cover such decision. The said policy is found in the office memorandum No.PER/(AR).49/2012/67 dated 30.08.2017 (Annexure-R/2 of the affidavit-in-opposition) wherein the following is noted:

"In case where private land owner(s) have donated land free of cost for Government purpose, the land proposed to be donated should be legally handed over through a registered deed to enable the Government to provide appointment to any person(s) as recommended by the land owner(s) in a Grade IV/Grade III posts. Where land is donated by the Nokma/Syiem/Dolloi/Raid/Clan, etc then the Nokma/Syiem/Dolloi/Raid/Clan/Sardar, as the case may be, shall identify the appropriate person or persons, in consultation with the affected families, if any, to whom appointment can be given. The Deputy Commissioner of the concerned District will identify the post in consultation with the District Head of the concerned Department to which the land is being donated. Appointment under this provision will be outside the purview of the DSC."

- 28. As was held at para 61 of the Jagjit Singh case, this Court is also of the view that the members of the petitioner/Union herein are entitled to the minimum pay scale at the lowest grade in the regular pay scale as was made applicable to their counterparts. The said para reads as follows:
 - "61. In view of the position expressed by us in the foregoing paragraph, we have no hesitation in holding that all the temporary employees concerned, in the present bunch of cases would be entitled to draw wages at the minimum of the pay scale (at the



lowest grade, in the regular pay scale), extended to regular employees holding the same post."

- 29. In view of the above, to the extent indicated, the prayer made in this petition is allowed. The relevant respondent authorities in the MeECL are hereby directed to take necessary action to implement the directions given herein, that is, to ensure that the members of the petitioner/Union, whose names can be found at Annexure-A/3 are being paid equal pay for equal work. The same to be completed preferably within a period of 2(two) months from the date of receipt of the certified copy of this judgment and order.
- 30. Petition disposed of. No costs.

Judge