

Shriram General Vs Kumari Bai And Ors

Court: Chhattisgarh High Court

Date of Decision: Feb. 2, 2018

Acts Referred: Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 " Section 166, 173

Hon'ble Judges: P. Sam Koshy, J

Bench: Single Bench

Advocate: Sachin Singh Rajput

Final Decision: Dismissed

Judgement

P. Sam Koshy, J

1. The present is an appeal under Section 173 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, filed by the appellant-insurance company.

2. Challenge in the present appeal is to the award dated 4.10.2016 passed by the First Additional Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, Sakti, District

Janjgir-Champa, in Claim Case No. 16/2016.

3. Vide the impugned award, the learned Tribunal, in a death case, under Section 166 of the Motor Vehicles Act, has awarded a compensation of

Rs.3,52,000/- in favour of respondents no. 1 to 5-claimants with interest thereon at the rate of 6% per annum from the date of presentation of the

claim application. The liability for payment of compensation has been fastened upon the appellant-insurance company indemnifying the respondents

no. 5 & 6 i.e. the driver and owner respectively of the offending vehicle i.e. a Pickup Van, bearing registration no. CG13-UE- 2414.

4. Learned counsel for the appellant-insurance company assailing the award submits that the deceased in the instant case was not travelling as a

coolie on the offending vehicle but was travelling as a gratuitous passenger and that the policy which was issued indemnifying the owner did not cover

the risk of a gratuitous passenger. Therefore, the liability for payment of compensation ought to have been shifted upon the owner of the offending

vehicle instead of the appellant-insurance company. He further submits that even otherwise if there is a risk covering the coolie, the nature of work of

a coolie is to load and unload the goods to be transported on the vehicle and not permitting the coolie to travel in the vehicle.

5. However, perusal of record available with the case would show that the appellant-insurance company has got their witness examined before the

Tribunal, namely, Ramesh Sinha (NAW-1), who in his evidence has categorically accepted the fact that Exhibit D-1, i.e., the insurance policy, also

reflects of covering the risk of the driver and the coolie of the vehicle insured.

6. Undisputed claim of the claimants in the instant case was that the deceased was working as a coolie. This aspect has not been disproved by the

appellant-insurance company.

7. Under the given circumstances, this Court does not find any strong case made out by the appellant-insurance company calling for interference with

the impugned award.

8. The appeal of appellant-insurance company thus being devoid of merits the same deserves to be and is accordingly dismissed.