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5

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ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER:

The Hindu

ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE : 06/08/2020

Dispute over years of govt. service keeps retirement benefits away

T.H. 6/8/20

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BENGALURU

A section of government officials who have retired post 2012 have been at loggerheads with the government over qualifying for full pension benefits. For those who have not put in 30 years of service have not been receiving full pension despite rulings from courts, including the Supreme Court.

The matter came to a head again recently with the PWD in June this year denying full pension benefits to four employees despite the September 2019 KAT award which they say

is in their favour. Over the years, as many as 2,000 employees have been denied full pension over the contention of service years.

The issue pertains to Rule 247 A of the Karnataka Civil Services Rules (KCSR) of July, 1978, that entailed full pension benefits to those who have not completed full service of 30 years. While 33 years of service in government was considered for full pension earlier, it was brought down to 30 years in 2019.

This has particularly affected stipendiary graduates, daily wage workers

and many others who would be absorbed in the department after certain years of work. Their work done prior to absorption is not counted at the end of total service. While up to eight years of additional service could be added to this period earlier, in 2012, it was reduced to two years. "Net result has been apart from reduced pension, including family pension, this category of government employees have been losing out while the death-cum-retirement grant is fixed and leave is encashed," a retired PWD official said.

The KAT had pointed out in its order in 2019 that the matter had been settled by the tribunal, Karnataka High Court, and the Supreme Court in the past, and observed that the government does not have the Constitutional right to discriminate among employees by changing law or issuing notification from time to time.

KAT had ordered extension of benefit of qualifying service of eight years under Rule 247-A of KCSR rules. The PWD employees ask how they could lose out on benefit despite such a direction.