

## Supreme Court Case Laws - Disciplinary Proceedings

### Topic I - Natural Justice & Fair Procedure in Disciplinary Proceedings

#### 1. A.K. Kraipak Versus Union of India (AIR 1970 SC 150)

**Bench:** K.S. Hegde & A.N. Grover, JJ.

##### **Disciplinary Proceeding - Natural Justice/Bias**

**Provision:** Principles of Natural Justice

**Issue:** Whether administrative actions having civil consequences must conform to principles of natural justice.

**Held:** The Court held that the distinction between administrative and quasi-judicial functions has become thin and principles of natural justice apply wherever an action entails civil consequences. Bias vitiates the decision-making process irrespective of proof of actual prejudice.

#### 2. Union of India Versus Md. Ramzan Khan (AIR 1991 SC 471)

**Bench:** K. Jagannatha Shetty & N.M. Kasliwal, JJ.

##### **Disciplinary Proceeding - Supply of Enquiry Report**

**Provision:** Article 311(2), Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether failure to supply the enquiry officer's report before imposition of penalty violates natural justice.

**Held:** The Court held that non-supply of the enquiry report denies reasonable opportunity of defence and vitiates the punishment order, unless the Disciplinary Authority itself is the Enquiry Officer.

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### Topic II - Assistance of Lawyer / Equality of Arms

#### 3. Board of Trustees of the Port of Bombay Versus Dilip Kumar Raghavendranath Nadkarni (AIR 1983 SC 109)

**Bench:** O. Chinnappa Reddy & A.P. Sen, JJ.

##### **Disciplinary Proceeding - Right to Legal Assistance**

**Provision:** Principles of Natural Justice

**Issue:** Whether denial of legal representation is valid when the Presenting

Officer is legally trained.

**Held:** The Court held that when the employer appoints legally trained Presenting Officers, denial of legal assistance to the delinquent employee violates principles of natural justice and vitiates the enquiry.

**4. J.K. Aggarwal Versus Haryana Seeds Development Corporation Ltd. (AIR 1991 SC 1221)**

**Bench:** M.N. Venkatachaliah & S. Ratnavel Pandian, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Legal Mind of Presenting Officer**

**Provision:** Principles of Natural Justice

**Issue:** Whether refusal of lawyer is justified when the Presenting Officer is administratively experienced and legally trained.

**Held:** The Court held that denial of legal assistance in such circumstances results in denial of reasonable opportunity and violates natural justice.

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**Topic III – Evidence / No-Evidence Rule**

**5. Roop Singh Negi Versus Punjab National Bank (2009) 2 SCC 570**

**Bench:** Markandey Katju & Gyan Sudha Misra, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Proof of Charges / Evidence**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether disciplinary findings can be sustained on unproved documents.

**Held:** The Court held that documents do not prove themselves and must be proved through witnesses. Findings based on unproved documents amount to “no evidence” and are perverse.

**6. Sher Bahadur Versus Union of India (AIR 2002 SC 3030)**

**Bench:** S.N. Variava & H.K. Sema, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Sufficiency of Evidence**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether a bare conclusion that charges are proved without linking evidence is sustainable.

**Held:** The Court held that absence of nexus between evidence and misconduct renders the findings legally unsustainable; however, relief may be moulded depending on facts.

**Topic IV - Criminal Proceedings vis-a-vis Departmental Proceedings**

**7. Delhi Cloth & General Mills Ltd. Versus Kushal Bhan (AIR 1960 SC 806)**

**Bench:** B.P. Sinha, C.J.

**Disciplinary Proceeding - Simultaneous Criminal & Departmental**

**Action**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether disciplinary proceedings must be stayed during pendency of

criminal trial.

**Held:** The Court held that there is no legal bar to simultaneous proceedings

as the objects and standards of proof differ.

**8. Kusheshwar Dubey Versus Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. (AIR 1988 SC 2118)**

**Bench:** R.S. Pathak & Sabyasachi Mukharji, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding - Stay Pending Criminal Trial**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether disciplinary proceedings should be stayed when charges are

identical.

**Held:** The Court held that where charges and evidence are identical and

grave, departmental proceedings should ordinarily be stayed to avoid

prejudice.

**9. State of Rajasthan Versus B.K. Meena (1996) 6 SCC 417**

**Bench:** J.S. Verma & N.P. Singh, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding - Distinction from Criminal Trial**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether stay of departmental proceedings is automatic.

**Held:** The Court held that stay is not a rule; it depends on gravity, complexity, and likelihood of prejudice.

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### **Topic V – Punishment & Proportionality**

#### **10. Colour-Chem Ltd. Versus A.L. Alaspurkar (1998) 1 SCC 703**

**Bench:** K. Ramaswamy & G.T. Nanavati, JJ.

#### **Disciplinary Proceeding – Disproportionate Punishment**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether dismissal for minor misconduct is sustainable.

**Held:** The Court held that punishment must be proportionate; dismissal for trivial misconduct is shockingly disproportionate and unsustainable.

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### **Topic VI – Charge-Sheet / Initiation / Approval by Competent Authority**

#### **11. Union of India Versus B.V. Gopinath (2014) 1 SCC 351**

**Bench:** R.M. Lodha, C.J. & Madan B. Lokur, J.

#### **Disciplinary Proceeding – Approval of Charge-Sheet**

**Provision:** Article 311(2), Constitution of India; CCS (CCA) Rules

**Issue:** Whether disciplinary proceedings are vitiated when the charge-sheet is not approved by the competent Disciplinary Authority.

**Held:** The Court held that approval of the charge-sheet by the competent authority is mandatory. Approval of only initiation of proceedings is insufficient. A charge-sheet issued without such approval is void ab initio and all consequential actions are unsustainable.

#### **12. State of Jharkhand & Ors. Versus Rukma Kesh Mishra (Civil Appeal arising out of SLP (C) No. 19223 of 2024, decided on 28-03-2025)**

**Bench:** Dipankar Datta & Manmohan, JJ.

#### **Disciplinary Proceeding – Charge-Sheet Approval / Substance over**

### **Form**

**Provision:** Rule 55, Civil Services Rules, 1930

**Issue:** Whether a charge-sheet is invalid merely because it was issued by a subordinate authority when the competent authority had approved the entire proposal including the draft charge-sheet.

**Held:** The Court held that where the entire proposal, including the draft charge-sheet, was placed before and approved by the competent authority, subsequent issuance by a subordinate does not vitiate the proceedings. The case was distinguished from *B.V. Gopinath*. The dismissal was upheld.

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### **Topic VII – Re-Enquiry / De Novo Inquiry / Limits of Remand**

#### **13. K.R. Deb Versus Collector of Central Excise (AIR 1971 SC 1447)**

**Bench:** J.C. Shah & A.N. Grover, JJ.

#### **Disciplinary Proceeding – De Novo Inquiry**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether a Disciplinary Authority can order a fresh inquiry merely because it disagrees with the inquiry report.

**Held:** The Court held that the Disciplinary Authority may remit the matter for further inquiry to cure defects, but cannot order a fresh inquiry to fill lacunae or because the report is not to its liking.

#### **14. Devendra Pratap Narain Rai Sharma Versus State of U.P. (AIR 1962 SC 1334)**

**Bench:** B.P. Sinha, C.J. & J.R. Mudholkar, J.

#### **Disciplinary Proceeding – Re-Enquiry after Quashing on Technical Grounds**

**Provision:** Articles 310 & 311, Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether a fresh disciplinary proceeding can be initiated after an earlier punishment is quashed on technical grounds.

**Held:** The Court held that where the earlier proceeding is quashed on

technical grounds without examining merits, a fresh inquiry on the same charges is permissible after following due procedure.

**15. Anand Narain Shukla Versus State of Madhya Pradesh (AIR 1979 SC 1923)**

**Bench:** V.R. Krishna Iyer & R.S. Pathak, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Fresh Proceedings on Old Charges**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether a second inquiry on the same charges is barred after the first is quashed.

**Held:** The Court held that where the earlier inquiry is set aside due to procedural illegality, a fresh inquiry on the same charges is not barred.

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**Topic VIII – Judicial Review in Disciplinary Matters**

**16. B.C. Chaturvedi Versus Union of India (1995) 6 SCC 749**

**Bench:** A.M. Ahmadi, C.J. & S.P. Bharucha, J.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Scope of Judicial Review**

**Provision:** Article 226, Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether the High Court can re-appreciate evidence or substitute punishment.

**Held:** The Court held that judicial review is confined to examining the decision-making process. Courts cannot re-appreciate evidence or substitute punishment, except in cases of perversity or shockingly disproportionate punishment.

**17. State Bank of India Versus A.G.D. Reddy (2023) 4 PLJR (SC) 89**

**Bench:** M.R. Shah & Krishna Murari, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Burden of Proof / Judicial Review**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether courts can interfere with findings of fact in disciplinary proceedings.

**Held:** The Court held that burden of proof depends on the nature of charge

and explanation. Judicial review does not permit re-appreciation of evidence so long as findings are based on some evidence and the process is lawful.

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### **Topic IX – Effect of Conviction / Acquittal**

#### **18. Shankar Das Versus Union of India (AIR 1985 SC 772)**

**Bench:** O. Chinnappa Reddy & R.S. Pathak, JJ.

#### **Disciplinary Proceeding – Dismissal after Conviction**

**Provision:** Article 311(2), Constitution of India; Probation of Offenders Act

**Issue:** Whether dismissal is justified when an employee is released on probation after conviction.

**Held:** The Court held that while dismissal is permissible on conviction, the power must be exercised fairly. Mechanical dismissal without considering proportionality is arbitrary.

#### **19. Dy. Director of Collegiate Education (Admn.) Versus S. Nagoor Meera (AIR 1995 SC 1362)**

**Bench:** K. Jayachandra Reddy & S.P. Bharucha, JJ.

#### **Disciplinary Proceeding – Action Pending Appeal against Conviction**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether departmental action must await the outcome of criminal appeal.

**Held:** The Court held that disciplinary action need not await disposal of appeal; otherwise, a convicted person would continue in service indefinitely.

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### **Topic X – Double Jeopardy / Parallel Proceedings**

#### **20. S.A. Venkataraman Versus State (AIR 1958 SC 107)**

**Bench:** S.R. Das, C.J.

#### **Disciplinary Proceeding – Article 20(2) / Double Jeopardy**

**Provision:** Article 20(2), Constitution of India

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**Issue:** Whether criminal prosecution after departmental punishment violates double jeopardy.

**Held:** The Court held that Article 20(2) applies only to prosecution and conviction by a court of law. Departmental punishment does not bar criminal prosecution on the same facts.

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### **Topic XI – Supply of Documents / Enquiry Officer's Role**

#### **21. State of Uttar Pradesh Versus Saroj Kumar Sinha (2010) 2 SCC 772**

**Bench:** G.S. Singhvi & Asok Kumar Ganguly, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Enquiry Officer as Adjudicator, not Prosecutor**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether an enquiry is vitiated when the Enquiry Officer acts as the presenting authority and records findings without proof of charges.

**Held:** The Court held that the Enquiry Officer must act as an impartial adjudicator. He cannot assume the role of prosecutor. Findings recorded without examining witnesses and without proving documents are perverse and unsustainable.

#### **22. Union of India Versus Mohd. Ramzan Khan (AIR 1991 SC 471)**

**Bench:** K. Jagannatha Shetty & N.M. Kasliwal, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Non-Supply of Enquiry Report**

**Provision:** Article 311(2), Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether failure to supply the enquiry report before imposition of punishment violates natural justice.

**Held:** The Court held that non-supply of the enquiry report deprives the delinquent of a reasonable opportunity of defence and vitiates the punishment order.

#### **23. Managing Director, ECIL Versus B. Karunakar (1993) 4 SCC 727**

**Bench:** J.S. Verma, J. (Constitution Bench)

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Consequence of Non-Supply of Enquiry**

## **Report**

**Provision:** Article 311(2), Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether punishment must automatically be set aside for non-supply of enquiry report.

**Held:** The Court held that non-supply of the enquiry report is a violation of natural justice; however, relief depends on proof of prejudice. The matter may be remanded from the stage of supply of the report.

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## **Topic XII – Evidence / Standard of Proof**

### **24. Union of India Versus H.C. Goel (AIR 1964 SC 364)**

**Bench:** K.N. Wanchoo, J.

#### **Disciplinary Proceeding – No Evidence Rule**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether a finding of guilt can be sustained when there is no evidence to support the charge.

**Held:** The Court held that where a finding is based on no evidence, it is perverse and open to judicial interference.

### **25. State of Andhra Pradesh Versus S. Sree Rama Rao (AIR 1963 SC 1723)**

**Bench:** K.N. Wanchoo, J.

#### **Disciplinary Proceeding – Limits of Court's Interference**

**Provision:** Article 226, Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether the High Court can re-appreciate evidence in disciplinary matters.

**Held:** The Court held that the High Court cannot sit in appeal over disciplinary findings and cannot re-appreciate evidence unless findings are perverse or based on no evidence.

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## **Topic XIII – Proportionality of Punishment**



**26. Ranjit Thakur Versus Union of India (1987) 4 SCC 611**

**Bench:** V.R. Krishna Iyer & Sabyasachi Mukharji, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Doctrine of Proportionality**

**Provision:** Article 14, Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether punishment grossly disproportionate to misconduct is sustainable.

**Held:** The Court held that punishment must be commensurate with the gravity of misconduct. A shockingly disproportionate punishment is arbitrary and violates Article 14.

**27. Coimbatore District Central Cooperative Bank Versus Employees Association (2007) 4 SCC 669**

**Bench:** Y.K. Sabharwal, C.J. & C.K. Thakker, J.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Leniency vs Discipline**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether misplaced sympathy can justify interference with punishment.

**Held:** The Court held that courts must avoid misplaced sympathy. Interference is justified only when punishment shocks the conscience.

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**Topic XIV – Delay in Disciplinary Proceedings**

**28. State of Andhra Pradesh Versus N. Radhakishan (1998) 4 SCC 154**

**Bench:** K.T. Thomas & D.P. Wadhwa, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Inordinate Delay**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether prolonged delay in disciplinary proceedings vitiates punishment.

**Held:** The Court held that unexplained and inordinate delay causes prejudice and may vitiate the proceedings, depending on facts and seriousness of charges.

**29. P.V. Mahadevan Versus Managing Director, T.N. Housing Board  
(2005) 6 SCC 636**

**Bench:** N. Santosh Hegde & S.B. Sinha, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Mental Agony due to Delay**

**Provision:** Article 21, Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether disciplinary proceedings can be quashed solely on the ground of prolonged delay.

**Held:** The Court held that prolonged and unexplained delay causes mental agony and prejudice and may justify quashing of proceedings, especially where charges are not grave.

**Prem Nath Bali Versus Registrar, High Court of Delhi & Anr. (Civil Appeal No. 958 of 2010)**

**Bench:** Ranjan Gogoi & N.V. Ramana, JJ., decided on 16-12-2015

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Inordinate Delay / Mandatory Timeline**

**Provision:** Article 21, Constitution of India; Service jurisprudence principle

**Issue:** Whether prolonged and unexplained delay in conclusion of disciplinary proceedings violates principles of fairness and warrants judicial intervention.

**Held:** The Court held that disciplinary proceedings must be conducted and concluded within a reasonable time, as undue delay causes serious prejudice, mental agony, and violates fairness in service jurisprudence. It was laid down as a rule of guidance that departmental inquiries should ordinarily be concluded within one year, and in exceptional cases within eighteen months, with reasons to be recorded for any deviation. Courts were directed to exercise control to prevent disciplinary proceedings from becoming instruments of harassment. The delayed disciplinary action in the case was interfered with on the ground of inordinate and unexplained delay.

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**Topic XV – Relief, Reinstatement & Back Wages**

**30. Deepali Gundu Surwase Versus Kranti Junior Adhyapak Mahavidyalaya (2013) 10 SCC 324**

**Bench:** P. Sathasivam & Ranjan Gogoi, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Back Wages after Illegal Termination**

**Provision:** Article 226, Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether reinstatement ordinarily carries back wages.

**Held:** The Court held that reinstatement with continuity of service and back wages is the normal rule when termination is illegal, subject to limited exceptions.

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**Topic XVI – Probationers / Temporary Employees**

**31. State of Punjab Versus Sukh Raj Bahadur (AIR 1968 SC 1089)**

**Bench:** M. Hidayatullah, C.J.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Termination vs. Punishment**

**Provision:** Article 311(2), Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether termination of a temporary employee amounts to punitive dismissal attracting Article 311(2).

**Held:** The Court held that termination simpliciter is permissible; however, if the order is founded on allegations of misconduct or casts a stigma, it is punitive and cannot be sustained without compliance with Article 311(2).

**32. Samsher Singh Versus State of Punjab (1974) 2 SCC 831**

**Bench:** A.N. Ray, C.J. (Constitution Bench)

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Stigma / Substance over Form**

**Provision:** Article 311(2), Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether form of the order or substance determines its punitive nature.

**Held:** The Court held that substance prevails over form. If termination is based on misconduct or founded on an inquiry, it is punitive and attracts Article 311(2), regardless of how it is worded.

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## **Topic XVII – Compulsory Retirement**

### **33. Union of India Versus Col. J.N. Sinha (AIR 1971 SC 40)**

**Bench:** J.C. Shah & A.N. Grover, JJ.

#### **Service Matter – Compulsory Retirement**

**Provision:** Fundamental Rules; Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether compulsory retirement amounts to punishment.

**Held:** The Court held that compulsory retirement is not a punishment and does not attract Article 311(2) so long as it is passed in public interest and without stigma.

### **34. Baikuntha Nath Das Versus Chief District Medical Officer (1992) 2 SCC 299**

**Bench:** K. Ramaswamy & J.S. Verma, JJ.

#### **Service Matter – Judicial Review of Compulsory Retirement**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Scope of judicial review over orders of compulsory retirement.

**Held:** The Court laid down guiding principles: compulsory retirement must be based on material on record, passed in public interest, free from mala fides or arbitrariness; judicial review is limited.

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## **Topic XVIII – Uniformed Services / Discipline**

### **35. Union of India Versus Parma Nanda (1989) 2 SCC 177**

**Bench:** R.S. Pathak, C.J. & E.S. Venkataramiah, J.

#### **Disciplinary Proceeding – Punishment in Uniformed Services**

**Provision:** Article 14, Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether courts can interfere with punishment in disciplined forces.

**Held:** The Court held that courts should be slow to interfere with punishment in disciplined services unless it is shockingly disproportionate or arbitrary.

**36. Union of India Versus P. Gunasekaran (2015) 2 SCC 610**

**Bench:** J. Chelameswar & R.F. Nariman, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Limits of Judicial Review**

**Provision:** Article 226, Constitution of India

**Issue:** What are the permissible grounds for judicial interference in disciplinary matters.

**Held:** The Court exhaustively enumerated the limits of judicial review, holding that courts cannot re-appreciate evidence or interfere with findings unless there is perversity, violation of rules, or denial of natural justice.

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**Topic XIX – Post-Retirement Proceedings / Pension**

**37. State of Bihar Versus Mohd. Idris Ansari (1995 Supp (3) SCC 56)**

**Bench:** K. Ramaswamy & N.P. Singh, JJ.

**Post-Retirement Disciplinary Proceeding – Pension Cut**

**Provision:** Pension Rules

**Issue:** Whether pension can be withheld without proof of grave misconduct.

**Held:** The Court held that pension is a statutory right and can be withheld only in accordance with pension rules upon proof of grave misconduct or pecuniary loss.

**38. State of Jharkhand Versus Jitendra Kumar Srivastava (2013) 12 SCC 210**

**Bench:** R.M. Lodha & J. Chelameswar, JJ.

**Post-Retirement Disciplinary Proceeding – Property Right**

**Provision:** Article 300A, Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether pension can be withheld without statutory authority.

**Held:** The Court held that pension is property under Article 300A and cannot be withheld without authority of law. Executive instructions cannot override statutory pension rules.

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**Topic XX - Moulding Relief / Compensation in Lieu of Reinstatement**

**39. Uttar Pradesh State Brassware Corporation Ltd. Versus Uday Narain**

**Pandey (2006) 1 SCC 479**

**Bench:** Y.K. Sabharwal, C.J. & S.B. Sinha, JJ.

**Service Matter - Back Wages Not Automatic**

**Provision:** Article 226, Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether reinstatement automatically entitles an employee to back wages.

**Held:** The Court held that back wages are not automatic and depend on facts such as length of service, nature of misconduct, and gainful employment.

**40. Satyender Kumar Singh Versus Union of India (2023) 9 SCC 191**

**Bench:** M.R. Shah & Krishna Murari, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding - Compensation Instead of Reinstatement**

**Provision:** Article 226, Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether compensation can be awarded instead of reinstatement.

**Held:** The Court held that where reinstatement is impracticable due to lapse of time or superannuation, compensation may be granted to balance equities.

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**Topic XXI - Resignation / Abandonment of Service**

**41. Moti Ram Versus Param Dev & Anr. (1993) 2 SCC 725**

**Bench:** K. Ramaswamy & N.P. Singh, JJ.

**Service Matter - Resignation / Acceptance**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether resignation becomes effective merely on submission or only upon acceptance by the competent authority.

**Held:** The Court held that resignation is not complete until it is accepted by the competent authority. An employee has a right to withdraw resignation before acceptance, unless barred by statutory rules.

**42. G.T. Lad Versus Chemicals & Fibres of India Ltd. (1979) 1 SCC 590**

**Bench:** V.R. Krishna Iyer & A.P. Sen, JJ.

**Service Matter – Abandonment of Service**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether absence from duty by itself amounts to abandonment of service.

**Held:** The Court held that abandonment of service cannot be readily inferred from mere absence. There must be clear intention to abandon, and principles of natural justice must be complied with before severing service.

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**Topic XXII – Deemed Suspension / Effect of Custody**

**43. Union of India Versus Rajiv Kumar (2003) 6 SCC 516**

**Bench:** S. Rajendra Babu & G.P. Mathur, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Deemed Suspension**

**Provision:** Service rules relating to suspension

**Issue:** Whether deemed suspension automatically revives on setting aside of reinstatement order.

**Held:** The Court held that deemed suspension operates strictly in accordance with the rules and does not revive automatically unless conditions prescribed under the rules are satisfied.

**44. Ajay Kumar Choudhary Versus Union of India (2015) 7 SCC 291**

**Bench:** Ranjan Gogoi & N.V. Ramana, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Prolonged Suspension**

**Provision:** Article 21, Constitution of India

**Issue:** Whether prolonged suspension pending inquiry is justified.

**Held:** The Court held that suspension beyond a reasonable period is oppressive and violative of human dignity. Charge-sheet should ordinarily be served within three months; otherwise, continued suspension must be justified by recorded reasons.

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**Topic XXIII – Effect of Acquittal / Honourable Acquittal**

**45. Deputy Inspector General of Police Versus S. Samuthiram (2013) 1 SCC 598**

**Bench:** P. Sathasivam & J. Chelameswar, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Acquittal in Criminal Case**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether acquittal in criminal case automatically nullifies departmental punishment.

**Held:** The Court held that acquittal does not automatically bar departmental action. Only an honourable acquittal on merits may have a bearing, depending on facts.

**46. Inspector General of Police Versus S. Samuthiram (2014) 1 SCC 598**

**Bench:** P. Sathasivam & Ranjan Gogoi, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Honourable Acquittal**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** What constitutes honourable acquittal in service law.

**Held:** The Court clarified that acquittal based on benefit of doubt or technical grounds does not amount to honourable acquittal so as to nullify departmental proceedings.

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**Topic XXIV – Simultaneous Proceedings / Effect of Exoneration**

**47. Capt. M. Paul Anthony Versus Bharat Gold Mines Ltd. (1999) 3 SCC 679**

**Bench:** S. Saghir Ahmad & S.P. Bharucha, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Identical Charges**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether departmental proceedings can continue when criminal charges and evidence are identical.

**Held:** The Court held that where charges, evidence, and witnesses are

identical, and the criminal court acquits honourably, continuation of disciplinary proceedings is unjustified.

**48. State Bank of India Versus Neelam Nag (2016) 9 SCC 491**

**Bench:** T.S. Thakur, C.J. & R. Banumathi, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Acquittal not Conclusive**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether acquittal mandates reinstatement.

**Held:** The Court held that acquittal does not automatically lead to reinstatement; the nature of acquittal and service rules govern the outcome.

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**Topic XXV – Procedural Lapses / Irregularities**

**49. Union of India Versus Sardar Bahadur (1972) 4 SCC 618**

**Bench:** A.N. Grover & K.S. Hegde, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Procedural Irregularity vs Illegality**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether every procedural lapse vitiates disciplinary proceedings.

**Held:** The Court held that only procedural lapses causing prejudice to the delinquent vitiate proceedings; not every irregularity is fatal.

**50. State of Haryana Versus Rattan Singh (1977) 2 SCC 491**

**Bench:** V.R. Krishna Iyer & R.S. Pathak, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Standard of Evidence**

**Provision:** Service jurisprudence principles

**Issue:** Whether strict rules of evidence apply in departmental inquiries.

**Held:** The Court held that strict rules of evidence do not apply, but findings must be based on some legal evidence having probative value.

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**Topic XXVI - Statutory Classification of Penalties / Composite Punishment Impermissible**

**51. Union of India & Anr. Versus B.C. Parashar (2006) 3 SCC 167**

**Bench:** Y.K. Sabharwal & C.K. Thakker, JJ.

**Disciplinary Proceeding – Penalty Structure / Composite Punishment Impermissible**

**Provision:** Central Civil Services (Classification, Control & Appeal) Rules, 1965 (pari materia to Rule 14 & Rule 16, Bihar Government Servants (CCA) Rules, 2005)

**Issue:** Whether the Disciplinary Authority can impose a composite punishment by combining a major penalty and a minor penalty in a single disciplinary order.

**Held:** The Supreme Court held that the CCA Rules classify penalties into distinct and mutually exclusive categories, each governed by a separate statutory procedure. The Disciplinary Authority has no jurisdiction to impose a composite or combined punishment by clubbing major and minor penalties together. Any punishment imposed dehors the statutory classification of penalties is without authority of law and unsustainable.