

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JHARKHAND AT RANCHI

W.P.(C) No. 2659 of 2019

Poonam Prasad Petitioner
 Versus
 Steel Authority of India Ltd., through its Chairman, New Delhi & Others
 Respondents

With

W.P.(C) No. 1337 of 2018

Inderjeet Kaur Wadhwa Petitioner
 Versus
 Steel Authority of India Ltd., through its Chairman, New Delhi & Others
 Respondents

With

W.P.(C) No. 1429 of 2018

Prabhu Saran Rajya Petitioner
 Versus
 Steel Authority of India Ltd., through its Chairman, New Delhi & Others
 Respondents

With

W.P.(C) No. 2513 of 2018

Shanti Devi Petitioner
 Versus
 Steel Authority of India Ltd., through its Chairman, New Delhi & Others
 Respondents

With

W.P.(C) No. 2769 of 2018

Suresh Jha Petitioner
 Versus
 Steel Authority of India Ltd., through its Chairman, New Delhi & Others
 Respondents

CORAM**HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE RAJESH SHANKAR**

For the Petitioners: Mr. Rajendra Krishna
 Mr. Rahul Lamba
 [In W.P.(C) No. 1429/2018]
 Mr. Kumar Harsh
 [In W.P.(C) Nos. 2659/2019, 1337/2018,
 2513/2018 & 2769/2018]
 For the SAIL: Mr. Gaurav Abhishek

04/09.09.2021 These cases are taken up through Video Conferencing.

I.A. No. 4457/2021 [W.P.(C) No. 1429/2018]

The present interlocutory application has been filed for issuance of direction upon the respondent-SAIL not to take any coercive step against the petitioner for disconnecting his electricity and water supply on the ground of non-payment of outstanding estate dues as indicated in the letter dated 10.06.2021 (Annexure-IA/9 to the present interlocutory application), during pendency of the said writ petition.

Mr. Rajendra Krishna, learned counsel for the petitioner, submits that till the year 2020, the respondents were raising demand of Rs.414/- & Rs.165/- per annum on account of service charges and lease rent respectively. However, since March 2021, the service charges as well as the lease rent have been enhanced to Rs.1,47,600/- & Rs.73,800/- per annum respectively. So far as electricity charges, sanitary charges and water charges are concerned, the petitioner is not disputing the same. It is further submitted that the impugned demand of Rs.4,10,221.55 raised by the respondent-SAIL vide letter dated 10.06.2021 includes Rs.1,47,600.00+GST & Rs.73,800.00+GST (total Rs.2,61,252/-) towards service charges and lease rent respectively. The rest of the impugned demand includes electricity charges, water charges and sanitary charges, which the petitioner has already paid and assures to pay the same regularly. The petitioner has raised objection to the exorbitant enhancement of annual service charges and lease rent made by the respondents. It is further submitted that vide letter dated 10.06.2021 issued under the signature of the Assistant Manager, TA-Revenue, Bokaro Steel Plant, the petitioner has been directed to immediately pay Rs.4,10,221.55 towards the aforesaid charges, failing which the electricity, water and other services supplied to the petitioner's premises would be disconnected.

Mr. Gaurav Abhishek, learned counsel for the respondent-SAIL, submits that the said enhancement on account of service charges and lease rent has been made by the Management of the Steel Authority of India Limited as per the uniform policy decision and as such there is no arbitrariness in the same.

Having heard learned counsel for the parties and keeping in view that the issue raised in the present writ petition with regard to multifold increase in the demand made by the respondents for renewal of the lease of the concerned plots is pending consideration, if the petitioner makes payment of 30% of Rs.2,61,252/- (the total demand raised on account of annual service charges and lease rent) i.e. a lump-sum amount of Rs.78,000/- within two weeks from today and shall go on making payment of other charges i.e. electricity charges, sanitary charges and water charges on monthly basis, no coercive action shall be taken against the petitioner in relation to the impugned demand raised vide letter dated 10.06.2021.

The present interlocutory application stands disposed of.

W.P.(C) Nos. 2659/2019, 1337/2018, 1429/2018, 2513/2018 & 2769/2018

It appears that no counter affidavit has been filed in W.P.(C) Nos. 1337/2018, 2513/2018 & 2769/2018 by the respondent-SAIL.

Mr. Gaurav Abhishek, learned counsel appearing on behalf of the respondent-SAIL, prays for four weeks' more time by way of last indulgence to file counter affidavits in the aforesaid writ petitions.

In view of the said prayer, put up these cases after four weeks under the heading 'For Admission'.