



**Circular No – 022/2026**

Date: 20.04.2026

To  
All Members of The Association

**LANDMARK AWARD OF INDUSTRIAL TRIBUNAL BENGALURU**

**DEMAND FOR INCREASE IN WAGES OF ONE UNIT  
OF AN INDUSTRY WHICH HAD MULTIUNITS REJECTED**

1. **Summary of the Award in ID No. 282/2018 Dated 06.03.2026-** The Industrial Tribunal, Bengaluru (Presiding Officer Sri Jagadishwara M.), upheld the management's contention and rejected the Trade union's charter of demands. The Tribunal noted that all 14 units operate under centralized control with consolidated financial records, making unit-specific concessions unviable. Maintaining parity across the 18,000-worker workforce was deemed necessary to prevent operational instability and financial strain, leading to the dismissal of the claim statement filed by the Trade Union.
2. **Background of the Dispute -** The above dispute concerns M/s. Page Industries Limited, Bengaluru which is engaged in the manufacture of Jockey brand readymade garments, operating 14 manufacturing facilities in Karnataka and employing over 18,000 persons. In one of the units, few of the workmen joined a general Trade union namely Engineering and General workers union and subsequently placed a demand on the management for wage revision. The management contested these demands, maintaining that:

- There are several garment industries in Karnataka. Despite this fact, the management is paying wages higher than the prescribed minimum wages. The wages and other benefits provided are not only substantial but are among the best in the industry.
  - The majority of the workmen of the company are satisfied with the wages and benefits extended by the management.
  - The union, without considering the prevailing service conditions in the establishment, raised an industrial dispute before the Conciliation Officer by submitting a charter of demands.
  - If the request of the union—supported only by a minority of workers—is accepted, it will lead to industrial unrest, as the management would be required to extend the same benefits to all workmen employed across different units.
3. **Reference to the Industrial Tribunal** -The conciliation ended in failure. Consequently, the Government of Karnataka referred the matter for adjudication before the Industrial Tribunal, Bengaluru, with the following terms of reference:
- Whether the union is justified in raising the dispute against the management to fulfil the claims made in the charter of demands.
  - If not, to what relief the workmen are entitled.
4. **Evidence and Submissions** - In support of its demands, the union examined three witnesses and produced 14 documents. The management examined the Head of HR Sri Minor Ganeshan to establish the company's policy for fixing wages and provided details of the benefits extended to employees. Comparative figures regarding wage costs, material costs, and

welfare facilities were placed before the Tribunal. The data showed that total wage costs range between 19% and 46% above minimum wages. The management also presented data comparing wages in similarly situated industries in the region. Furthermore, the Head of Finance Sri Deepanjan testified regarding the company's financial position and the adverse implications that fulfilling these demands would have on all manufacturing units.

5. **Final Award** - The Tribunal's award runs into 75 pages and considers every point raised by both the union and the management. After a complete analysis and evaluation of the submissions, the Tribunal passed the award and rejected the reference.
6. **Relevant Observations** - Some of the relevant observations made by the Tribunal in the award are quoted below:
  - The management has 14 units in Karnataka State with a total workforce of about 18,000. A few workmen of Unit No. 3 became members of the first party Union and placed the Charter of Demands (COD) in this case, claiming an increase in wages and other allowances, and improvement of other service conditions. It is an undisputed fact that there was a total workforce of about 1,500 at Unit No. 3 when the COD was placed by the union. The union has not disclosed, either in the letter on the Charter of Demands, in the claim statement filed in this case, or in the oral evidence, how many workers of the management's Bangalore Unit No. 3 became members of the union. Therefore, there are no reasons to disbelieve the assertion of the second party management that less than 10% of the total workers



of Bangalore Unit No. 3 became members of the first party Union before placing the COD. It was admitted by the union's witness during cross-examination that, except for the members of the first party Union, other workers of the second party establishment have not placed a Charter of Demands. Similarly, in the evidence deposited by WW.3, another witness for the first party Union, he admitted during cross-examination as follows:

"7. It is true that the second party has 14 units in Karnataka State with about 18,000 workmen in total. The COD of this case relates to workmen of Unit No. 3 only. There are about 1,000 to 1,050 workmen in Unit No. 3. Remaining workmen of the other 13 units have not placed a COD to the second party. It is true that the remaining 17,000 workmen of the other 13 units of the second party are happy with the wages and other benefits provided by the second party, and for this reason, they have not placed a COD."

- Thus, the evidence shows that only a few workers of Bengaluru Unit No. 3, who became members of the first party, placed the COD, while the remaining 17,000 workers of the second party establishment are satisfied with the wages and benefits provided and have not placed any demands.
- It is an undisputed fact that the second party establishment has 14 units in Karnataka State with a total workforce of about 18,000, consisting of the same categories of tailor and non-tailor workmen across all units. There were about 1,500 workers in Bangalore Unit No. 3. In all units, the same types of garments are manufactured. The evidence of MWs 1 and 2 establishes that the entire administration of all units, including wage fixation for the entire workforce, is handled by the corporate office; no such power exists at the unit level. The

witnesses for the second party clearly stated that the management maintains consolidated balance sheets for all units and unit-wise records are not available. This statement by MW.2 was not disputed by the first party during cross-examination. Wage costs are also replenished by the corporate office.

- **Therefore, the issues involved in this dispute must be considered in the interest of maintaining parity among the units; any deviation would result in operational instability to maintain cost parity. Given that the second party has 14 units with similar wages for all 18,000 workmen, and centralized administration for wage fixation, accepting the COD in this case would lead to industrial unrest and cause huge financial constraints for the second party. For these reasons, the claim statement filed by the first party Union deserves to be dismissed. Consequently, point No. 1 of the order of reference is answered in the affirmative.**

### **AWARD**

The claim statement of the first party Union is rejected. The second party management has justified its action in not fulfilling the claims made by the Union in the Charter of Demands.”

On behalf of the management the matter was handled by Advocates Mr.K.G. Nagendra Prasad and Mr.C.K.Subramanya with guidance of Sri B.C.Prabhakar.

**For KARNATAKA EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION**  
**Sd/**  
**[B C Prabhakar]**  
**President**