

GONZALO PUYAT & SONS, INC., PETITIONER, VS. PEDRO LABAYO, HON. JUDGES OF THE COURT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS JOSE S. BAUTISTA, ARSENIO I. MARTINEZ, BALTAZAR M. VILLANUEVA, EMILIAN...

G.R. No. L-22215. January 30, 1968

Ponente: SANCHEZ, J.

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SANCHEZ, J.:

Sole issue is the jurisdiction of the Court of Industrial Relations (CIR) over a claim for -

1. Reinstatement, with back wages for unjustified dismissal, or, in the alternative, separation pay; and
2. Compensation for overtime work performed on regular days and Sundays.

This jurisdictional problem has its roots in the following: On May 16, 1963, Pedro Labayo lodged in CIR a complaint against petitioner Gonzalo Puyat & Sons, Inc.[1] Labayo there averred that since 1938, he had been a foreman in petitioner's furniture manufacturing business, until March 19, 1963 when he was not allowed, without just cause, to work further. He characterized his dismissal as illegal - "without the benefit of a previous notice nor the payment of the equivalent separation pay." He prayed for reinstatement with back wages incident thereto, or, in the alternative, separation pay; unpaid overtime services for "not less than two to three hours a day for two working days in a month" during his entire period of employment; unpaid Sunday work for "not less than two Sundays in a month's time, also during his entire period of employment; and attorneys' fees.

Petitioner met Labayo's complaint with a motion to dismiss. Ground: Lack of jurisdiction. On August 1, 1963, CIR Judge Baltazar M. Villanueva denied the motion. Reconsideration was rejected by CIR's en banc resolution of November 19, 1963. The matter was then elevated by petitioner to this Court on certiorari and prohibition.

This question is not new. By well-entrenched jurisprudence, CIR has jurisdiction over a claim for overtime pay for work performed on regular days and Sundays - which arises under the Eight-Hour Labor Law - when claimant seeks reinstatement or the reestablishment of employer-employee relationship.[2] The recitals of the complaint herein come under this precept. CIR is with jurisdiction.

Along with the overtime pay claim, CIR, too, has authority to act over the laborer's other demands, namely, for back wages due to unjustified dismissal and separation pay. For, with the reinstatement prayer, they all arise out of, or are in connection with, his employment.[3] Accordingly, said laborer need not seek separate relief - for back wages and separation pay - from a regular court of justice. We have declared that:[4] "[t]o draw a tenuous jurisdictional line is to undermine stability in labor litigations. A piecemeal resort to one court and another gives rise to multiplicity of suits. To force the employees to shuttle from one court to another to secure full redress is a situation gravely prejudicial. The time to be lost, effort wasted, anxiety augmented, additional expense incurred - these are considerations which weigh heavily against split jurisdiction."

Thus, did we say, as we do here, that it is more in keeping with the orderly administration of justice that all causes of action herein be cognizable and heard by only one court: the Court of Industrial Relations.[5]

We find no argument potent enough to make us depart from the views heretofore expressed. We hold that CIR has jurisdiction over the complaint here under consideration.

For the reasons given, the petition herein for certiorari and prohibition is hereby dismissed.

Costs against petitioner.

SO ORDERED.

Concepcion, C.J., Reyes, J.B.L., Dizon, Makalintal, Bengzon, J.P., Zaldivar, Castro, Angeles, and Fernando, JJ., concur.

[1] CIR Case No. 1827-V, entitled "Pedro Labayo, Petitioner, vs. Gonzalo Puyat & Sons, Inc., Respondent."

[2] Campos vs. Manila Railroad Co., L-17905, May 25, 1962; National Shipyards and Steel Corporations vs. Court of Industrial Relations, L-21675, May 23, 1967. See also: Philippine Engineers' Syndicate, Inc. vs. Bautista, L-16440, February 29, 1964; Moncada Bijon Factory vs. Court of Industrial Relations, L-16037, April 29, 1964; Serrano vs. Serrano, L-19562, May 23, 1964; Mercado vs. Elizalde & Company, L-13962, December 23, 1964; Red V Coconut Products, Ltd. vs. Court of Industrial Relations, L-21348, June 30, 1966.

[3] PRISCO vs. CIR, L-13806, May 23, 1960.

[4] Bay View Hotel, Inc. vs. Manila Hotel Workers' Union-PTGWO, L-21803, December 17, 1966; Rheem of the Philippines, Inc. vs. Ferrer, L-22979, January 27, 1967.

[5] Bay View Hotel, Inc. vs. Manila Hotel Workers' Union-PTGWO, *supra*, citing Gomez vs. North Camarines Lumber Co., Inc., L-11945, August 18, 1958; Rheem of the Philippines, Inc. vs. Ferrer, *supra*.

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