

CCI Officer's Charge-Sheet Held Valid by High Court

Where petitioner challenged memorandum of charge for alleged lack of CCI's approval under CCS (CCA) Rules after being charged with tampering statements during DG CCI's investigation, since CCI duly approved draft charge-sheet for major penalty proceedings and further approval was not required after CVC gave no suggestion for changes, memorandum of charge was not void for want of approval under Rule 14(3) and Chairperson's act was an administrative direction, not an assumption of disciplinary power

The High Court held that the charge-sheet issued against a Competition Commission of India (CCI) officer was legally valid. The officer had challenged the disciplinary proceedings on the ground that the mandatory approval of the CCI had not been obtained under the **CCS (CCA) Rules**.

The Court found that:

- The **CCI had already approved the draft charge-sheet** for initiating major penalty proceedings.
- After consultation with the **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)**, no changes were suggested, and therefore **no fresh approval** from the CCI was required.
- The issuance of the memorandum of charge was therefore compliant with **Rule 14(3) of the CCS (CCA) Rules**.
- The **Chairperson's involvement was merely administrative** in nature and did not amount to exercising disciplinary powers independently.

Key Takeaways

- CCI had validly approved initiation of disciplinary proceedings.
- No second approval was required after CVC raised no objections or modifications.
- Charge-sheet was not invalid under Rule 14(3) of the CCS (CCA) Rules.
- Chairperson acted in an administrative capacity, not as the disciplinary authority. Disciplinary proceedings against the officer could continue.

One-Line Crux

A charge-sheet issued to a CCI officer was upheld as valid because the CCI had already approved the disciplinary action, and the Chairperson's role was only administrative, not disciplinary.