

The Special Tehsildar, Land ... vs K.V. Ayisumma on 23 July, 1996

Equivalent citations: JT 1996 (7), 204 1996 SCALE (5)548, AIR 1996 SUPREME COURT 2750, 1996 (10) SCC 634, 1996 AIR SCW 3445, (1996) 7 JT 204 (SC), 1996 (7) JT 204, (1996) 2 GUJ LH 667, (1997) 2 LANDLR 549, (1996) 3 RRR 583, (1996) LACC 560, (1999) 24 ALLCRIR 910, (1996) 3 CURCC 200, (1996) 2 KER LT 582

Author: K. Ramaswamy

Bench: K. Ramaswamy

PETITIONER:

THE SPECIAL TEHSILDAR, LAND ACQUISITION, KERALA

Vs.

RESPONDENT:

K.V. AYISUMMA

DATE OF JUDGMENT: 23/07/1996

BENCH:

RAMASWAMY, K.

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RAMASWAMY, K.

G.B. PATTANAIK (J)

CITATION:

JT 1996 (7) 204 1996 SCALE (5)548

ACT:

HEADNOTE:

JUDGMENT:

O R D E R This appeal by special leave arise from the order of the High Court of Kerala dated July 27, 1992 made in CRP No.695/92. The admitted facts are that in an acquisition of the land for public purpose, the reference Court by its award and decree dated March 31, 1989 had enhanced the compensation. The appellant had filed an application on July 29, 1991 to review the award and

decree. There was a delay in filing the application. The learned subordinate judge had condoned the delay. Against the said order of condoning the delay, the respondent has gone in revision to the High Court. The High Court in the impugned order set aside the order of the Subordinate Judge. Thus, this appeal by special leave.

It is now settled law that when the delay was occasioned at the behest of the Government, it would be very difficult to explain the day today delay. The transaction of the business of the Government being done leisurely by officers who had no or evince no personal interest at different levels. No one takes personal responsibility in processing the matters expeditiously. As a fact at several stages they take their own time to reach a decision. Even in spite of pointing at the delay, they do not take expeditious action for ultimate decision in filing the appeal. This case is one of such instances. It is true that Section 5 of the Limitation Act envisages explanation of the delay to the satisfaction of the Court and in matters of Limitation Act made no distinction between the State and the citizen. Nonetheless, adoption of strict standard of proof leads to grave miscarriage of public justice. It would result in public mischief by skilful management of delay in the process of filing the appeal. The approach of the Court would be pragmatic but not pedantic. Under those circumstances, the Subordinate Judge has rightly adopted correct approach and had condoned the delay without insisting upon explaining every day's delay in filing the review application in the light of the law laid down by this Court. The High Court was not right in setting aside the order. Delay was rightly condoned.

The appeal is accordingly allowed. The case is remitted to the reference Court for disposal of the review petition in accordance with law. No costs.