

She sold her kidney to set right land records

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Official allegedly sought bribe of Rs. 8,000 per acre

What does it cost to ensure that the records for a piece of property are up-to-date? A kidney?

The case of 55-year-old Chikkatayamma of Mandya district, who allegedly sold her kidney, exemplifies this.

Her case, which has now been taken up by Upalokayukta Subash B. Adi, illustrates the murky world of red-tape and corruption. The non-literate woman of Kalasiddanahundi in Srirangapatna taluk allegedly sold her kidney to bribe a Revenue official to set right land records.

‘Worst case I have seen’

Mr. Adi, who has asked the Deputy Commissioner of Mandya, M.N. Ajay Nagabhushan, to investigate the case, said: “It is the worst incident reported in the history of corruption that I have seen.”

Dr. Nagabhushan has been asked to appear before the Lokayukta with all documents by January 23.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Ms. Chikkatayamma said the trouble began as the family tried to transfer land rights after the death of her father, Chikkanamade Gowda, to her mother and sister.

Of the 18 acres of land, three acres had been transferred to some unrelated person and records pertaining to the remaining land were “completely messed up”.

It was then that a Revenue official demanded Rs. 8,000 per acre to set the records straight.

In 2013, when she was working as a domestic help in Bengaluru, on someone’s advice, she sold one kidney for Rs. 80,000 and used the money to pay the bribe and meet court expenses.

“Despite spending the money, I haven’t got the title deed,” said a sobbing Ms. Chikkatayamma.

She claimed to know nothing about the hospital in Bengaluru which harvested her kidney.

“I am not literate. I could not read the name of the hospital,” she said. The issue came to light when the Lokayukta raided the residence of a Revenue official in Ramanagaram. Ms. Chikkatayamma who saw the report on TV then disclosed that the person in question was the “root cause of all her misery”.

Inquiry ordered

Assistant Commissioner of Pandavapura H.L. Nagaraju said: “The Deputy Commissioner has directed the Revenue Department to conduct an inquiry. Officials have visited Kalasiddanahundi and are gathering information.”