

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ORISSA AT CUTTACK

W.P.(C) No. 20625 of 2014

Laxman Barik and another* *Petitioners

Mr. Prabuddha Kumar Pattanaik, Advocate

-versus-

State of Odisha and others* *Opp. Parties

Mr. Dillip Kumar Mishra,

Additional Government Advocate

CORAM:

JUSTICE K.R. MOHAPATRA

ORDER

21.04.2022

Order No.

5. 1. This matter is taken up through hybrid mode.
2. This writ petition has been filed assailing order dated 30th September, 2013 (Annexure-3) passed by the Additional Sub-Collector-Additional Settlement Officer, Bhubaneswar in Appeal Case (Suit) No.2208 of 2013.
3. Learned counsel for the Petitioners submits that in the year 1972 the land in question was settled in favour one Damodar Behera in W.L. Case No.305 of 1969 following due procedure laid down in Odisha Government Land Settlement Act, 1962. Said Damodar Behera for his legal necessity, sold Ac.0.200 decimal out of the leasehold property, i.e., Ac.2.000 decimal in favour of the present Petitioners vide registered sale deed No.4515 dated 10th June, 1981. Accordingly, the Petitioners were in possession over the same paying revenue rent. In the meantime, Additional Tahasildar, Bhubaneswar initiated Resumption Misc. Case No.326 of 2000 against the vendor of the Petitioners. However, the Additional Tahasildar

after making due enquiry dropped the said resumption misc. case vide his order dated 18th September, 2002. Thereafter, the settlement operation started in the village and after proper enquiry draft ROR issued in the name of Petitioners. Subsequently, the Assistant Settlement Officer, Rental Colony, Bhubaneswar initiated *Suo Motu* Rent Case No.6804 of 2013 and without issuing any notice to the Petitioner directed to record the land in the name of General Administration Department, Government of Odisha vide his order dated 15th July, 2013 (Annexure-2). Assailing the same, the Petitioners preferred Settlement Appeal Case No.2208 of 2013. The Additional Sub-Collector-cum-Additional Settlement Officer, Bhubaneswar, without considering the case of the Petitioners from its proper perspective, erroneously relying upon the order of this Court in OJC No.9449 of 1993, confirmed the order of the Assistant Settlement Officer, Bhubaneswar vide his order dated 30th September, 2013 (Annexure-3), which has no application to the case at hand.

4. It is submitted by learned counsel for the Petitioners that the Petitioners were not given reasonable opportunity to put forth their case before the Assistant Settlement Officer. Further, the Settlement authority has no jurisdiction to sit over the lease granted in favour of the vendor of the Petitioner under the provisions of the Odisha Government Land Settlement Act, 1962 in W.L. Case No.305 of 1969 and issue direction for recording of the land in question in favour of General Administration Department. He further submitted that although he had produced materials and relevant records before the

Additional Sub-Collector, Bhubaneswar for consideration, those were not taken into consideration. He instead, passed a cryptic order confirming the order of the Assistant Settlement Officer, Rental Colony, Bhubaneswar without application of judicial mind. It is further submitted that final R.O.R. in respect of mouza- Sampur has not yet been published under Section 12-B of the Odisha Survey and Settlement Act, 1958. (for short 'the Act') Hence, this writ petition has been filed for the aforesaid relief.

5. Mr. Mishra, learned AGA, although does not dispute the legal position, but he submitted that the case of the Petitioners has to be considered on its own merit. In the facts and circumstances of the case, it appears that the Petitioners have not produced materials to establish their right over the land in question. He further submits that it is due to the laches on the part of the Petitioners the impugned order has been passed. He, however, does not dispute that ROR in respect of mouza Sampur has not yet been published.

6. Taking into consideration the submissions of learned counsel for the parties, this Court finds that the Assistant Settlement Officer as well as the Additional Sub-Collector-cum-Additional Settlement Officer, Bhubaneswar while entertaining the Rent case as well as the Settlement Appeal respectively, has not taken into consideration the position of law that the Settlement Authority cannot sit over the lease granted under the provisions of the OGLS Act. In the instant case, there is no material on record to show that the lease granted in favour of Damodar Behera, the vender of the

Petitioner in W.L. Case No.305 of 1969 was ever cancelled. On the other hand, learned counsel for the Petitioners submits that although resumption case was initiated in Misc. Case No.326 of 2000, the Additional Tahasildar, Bhubaneswar after making due enquiry dropped the same vide his order dated 18th September, 2002.

7. In that view of the matter, the ratio decided in ***Smt. Lily Nanda and two others-vs.- State of Odisha and others***, reported in 2018 (I) OLR 559 is squarely applicable to the case at hand. Therefore, the Assistant Settlement Officer as well as the Additional Sub-Collector-cum-Additional Settlement Officer, Bhubaneswar committed error in directing to record the land in Government khata. The Settlement authority while entertaining the matter under Section 22 of the Act cannot scrutinize the validity of the lease pursuant to direction made in OJC No.9449 of 1993. Accordingly, the impugned order dated 30th September, 2013 (Annexure-3) passed by the Additional Sub-Collector, Bhubaneswar in Appeal Case (Suit) No.2208 of 2013 and the order dated 15th July, 2013 (Annexure-2) passed by Assistant Settlement Officer, Rental Colony, Bhubaneswar in *Suo Motu* Rent Case No.6804 of 2013 are set aside and the matter is remitted back to the Assistant Settlement Officer, Rental Colony, Bhubaneswar to adjudicate the matter afresh keeping in mind the ratio in the case of ***Lily Nanda*** (supra) giving opportunity of hearing the parties concerned.

8. Since the matter is of the year 2013, this Court, in order to avoid further delay, this Court directs the Petitioner to appear before the Assistant Settlement Officer, Rental Colony,

Bhubaneswar (now functioning at Major Settlement Office, Jobra, Cuttack) on 18th May, 2022 along with relevant records and certified copy of this order to receive further instruction in the matter.

Issue urgent certified copy of the order on proper application.

(K.R. Mohapatra)
Judge

s.s.satapathy

