

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY

CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION

CONTEMPT PETITION NO. 235 OF 2026

IN

WRIT PETITION NO. 4931 OF 2023

The Deccan Paper Mills Co Ltd .. Petitioner

V/S.

Harshad Ramesh Ghule .. Respondent

Ms. Meena H. Doshi, for the Petitioner.

Mr. R. S. Pawar, AGP for the Respondent/State.

Mr. Abhijit P. Kulkarni, for Respondent No. 2 – PMC.

CORAM : MANISH PITALE &
SHREERAM V. SHIRSAT, JJ.

DATE : 21ST APRIL 2026.

PC:

1. The petitioner has filed the present contempt petition alleging willful disobedience on the part of the respondents regarding the specific directions issued by this Court in the order dated 06/02/2025 passed in Writ Petition No. 4931 of 2023. In paragraph 8 of the said order, this Court had directed as follows:

“8. Accordingly, we now direct the second Respondent to declare the Award qua the Petitioner’s acquired property as expeditiously as possible and in any event within two months from the date of uploading of this order. Necessary notice of the making of this Award must be communicated

to the Petitioner. With this direction, the relief claimed in prayer Clause (a) of the Petition stands substantially worked out.”

2. It is absolutely clear from the above quoted portion of the said order that the respondent Special Land Acquisition Officer was expected to declare the award in any event within two months from the date of the said order. The material on record shows that till date, the award has not been declared, although a period of one year has elapsed. The copies of documents placed on record show certain communications exchanged between the petitioner and the respondent Special Land Acquisition Officer, wherein certain queries have been made with regard to entries in the 7/12 extracts. We are of the opinion that even if there were some difficulties, the respondent Special Land Acquisition Officer ought to have approached this Court for extension of time to comply with the said direction. Instead, the said officer has proceeded to merely exchange communications with the petitioner, showing no intention to abide by the specific direction contained in the above quoted portion of the order dated 06/02/2025.

3. The learned AGP is present in Court and so is the learned counsel who represents the Pune Municipal Corporation. We are informed that the Municipal Corporation has deposited the amount towards compensation with a small amount pertaining to interest to be deposited and we are assured that the said aspect can also be immediately taken care of. But, we

are concerned about the direction issued by this Court to the Special Land Acquisition Officer being complied with. The learned AGP submits that if a short adjournment is granted, appropriate instructions will be taken and a specific statement will be made on behalf of the Special Land Acquisition Officer. We expect a prompt response in the matter.

4. List for further consideration in the same category of “fresh matters” on 29th April 2026.

(SHREERAM V. SHIRSAT, J.)

(MANISH PITALE, J.)