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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

+ **W.P.(C) 6068/2026, CM APPL. 29862/2026**

RAJIV KUMAR RANA

.....Petitioner

Through: Ms. Smita Maan, Mr. Vishal Maan,
Ms. Hasrat Jaur Sandhu and Mr.
Abhay Gahlot, Advocates.

versus

CONSOLIDATION OFFICER & ANR.

.....Respondents

Through: Mr. Lalitaksh Joshi and Ms. Minu
Kumari, Advocates for R-1, 2.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANJEEV NARULA

ORDER
05.05.2026

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1. The Petitioner's grievance arises out of alleged non-compliance of order dated 30th December, 2002 passed by the Financial Commissioner, Delhi in Case No. 244/2002-CA titled "***Chhattar Singh vs. Consolidation Officer (Narela)***".
2. Considering that the present petition has been instituted after nearly 24 years from the passing of the said order, this Court heard counsel for the Petitioner at some length both to understand the controversy and to ascertain whether any explanation was forthcoming for this extraordinary delay.
3. The case set up by the Petitioner is that during consolidation proceedings relating to Village Shahbad Daulatpur, New Delhi, there existed a deficiency in the *khata* of the Petitioner's predecessor-in-interest, Late



Chhattar Singh. It is stated that a request was made before the Consolidation Officer seeking allotment of the deficient land; however, the same came to be declined on the ground that the consolidation proceedings had already concluded and the record stood consigned to the record room. Aggrieved thereby, Late Sh. Chhattar Singh preferred proceedings before the Financial Commissioner along with two other applicants. The Financial Commissioner allowed the revision petition *vide* order dated 30th December, 2002, and remanded the matter to the Consolidation Officer for reconsideration of the claims.

4. That, however, is where the matter appears to have rested, and it is only now, after nearly twenty-four years, that the Petitioner seeks to revive it through the present petition. The Petitioner alleges that, despite the aforesaid remand order, the Consolidation Officer did not take any steps to reconsider the claim and that the proceedings remained unattended for years together. It is further asserted that repeated representations and applications were submitted by the Petitioner and his predecessor-in-interest seeking implementation of the order dated 30th December, 2002, but that no effective action was ever taken by the authorities.

5. Even if the Petitioner's submissions are accepted at face value, one possible view is that the directions issued by the Financial Commissioner were not given effect to, inasmuch as the remanded proceedings were allegedly not taken up afresh by the Consolidation Officer. At the same time, this Court cannot overlook the extraordinary and unexplained delay in approaching this Court, which is not a matter of a few months or years; it extends beyond two decades.

6. The petition is bereft of any specific pleadings disclosing what



concrete steps, if any, were taken for implementation of the order dated 30th December, 2002 during a substantial period of time. Though the Petitioner has referred to certain representations/applications stated to have been submitted in the years 2022 and 2024, along with a legal notice issued in November, 2024 and an application filed before the Financial Commissioner in July, 2025, there is virtually no material placed on record reflecting any diligent or continuous pursuit of the matter during the intervening period of nearly two decades. The only event referred to in the timeline is that Late Sh. Chhattar Singh expired on 25th February, 2013 and that the present Petitioner claims to be one of his Class-I legal heirs, which does not, by itself, explain the delay. Even thereafter, the present petition has been instituted after a considerable lapse of time, with no satisfactory explanation forthcoming for the inaction in the years immediately following the order of 2002 or the demise of the original litigant.

7. Courts have consistently held that petitions seeking to revive stale claims ought not to be entertained in the exercise of its discretionary jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution of India. The writ remedy is equitable and is intended for prompt redressal; it is governed by the principle that delay defeats equity, and a Petitioner who sleeps over his rights for an inordinate period cannot ordinarily claim extraordinary relief. It is equally well settled that, even in the absence of a prescribed period of limitation, unexplained and prolonged delay, particularly where third-party rights or long-settled records are liable to be unsettled, is by itself a ground to non-suit the Petitioner, irrespective of whether the original order is alleged to be erroneous or even illegal.

8. Entertaining the present petition after nearly twenty-four years would



inevitably disturb consolidation records of considerable antiquity and run contrary to the public interest in finality of such proceedings. In these circumstances, the Petitioner's long and unexplained inaction and acquiescence disentitle him to discretionary relief under Article 226, and this Court finds no justification to reopen what has, by efflux of time and by his own conduct, attained finality.

9. Accordingly, the present petition is barred by delay and laches and is, therefore, dismissed along with all pending applications.

SANJEEV NARULA, J

MAY 5, 2026

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