

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JHARKHAND AT RANCHI

L.P.A. No. 75 of 2025

(with I.A. No. 15213 of 2025)

1. The State of Jharkhand.
 2. The Secretary, Department of Revenue & Land Reforms, Govt. of Jharkhand, P.O.- Dhurwa, P.S.- Jagarnathpur, District Ranchi.
 3. The Deputy Commissioner, Chatra, P.O., P.S. & District – Chatra.
 4. The Additional Collector, Chatra, P.O., P.S. & District – Chatra.
 5. The Sub Divisional Officer, Chatra, P.O., P.S. & District – Chatra.
 6. The Land Reforms Deputy Collector, Chatra, P.O., P.S. & District – Chatra.
 7. The Circle Officer, Chatra, P.O., P.S. & District – Chatra
- ... Respondents/Appellants

Versus

Rejendra Prasad Sahu @ Rajendra Prasad Shaundik, son of Late Shyam Lal Sahu, Resident of Village – Pratappur, P.O. & P.S.- Pratappur, District – Chatra (Jharkhand).

... Writ petitioner/Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE RAJESH SHANKAR

For the Appellants: Mr Ashutosh Anand, Addl. A.G.-III
Mr Sahbaj Akhtar, A.C. to A.A.G.-III
For the Respondent: Mr Ayush Aditya, Advocate

06/Dated: 30.07.2026

1. Heard learned counsel for the parties.
2. This appeal was mentioned on behalf of the State, principally to seek interim relief, based on the statement that the amount of Rs. 5,25,000/- directed by the impugned order would be deposited in this Court within a week from today. Urgency was expressed because the respondent (original petitioner) had moved the learned Single Judge for initiating action under the Contempt of Courts

Act and possibly the Officers were reluctant to either comply with the Court's order or appear before the Court. This has become almost a matter of routine when it comes to appeals instituted by the Government.

3. The appeal is directed against the learned Single Judge's order dated 27.06.2024 disposing of W.P. (C) No. 2628 of 2011. Learned Single Judge, after concluding that the respondents-State and its Officers, in a high-handed manner, demolished the petitioner's shop, directed the respondents to pay the petitioner compensation of Rs. 5,00,000/- towards cost of construction and further Rs. 25,000/- by way of compensation for mental pain and agony. Directions were issued to comply with this direction within six weeks. However, despite expiry of over two years, and after forcing the respondent to file a Contempt petition, the State has stubbornly refused to comply with such direction.
4. In the appeal, Mr Ashutosh Anand submits that the State has filed an IA, No. 10527 of 2026 to produce on record old documents which show that the land which the respondent claims as his own and on which there was the shop which came to be demolished was in fact acquired by the State in 1914.
5. The respondent, aggrieved by highhanded demolition/bulldozing of his building premises situated on his land within Plot No. 296, Khata No. 36 at Chatra, instituted W.P. (C) No. 2628 of 2011,

sometime in the year 2011. This petition was ultimately disposed of on 27.06.2024.

6. For 13 long years and despite full opportunities, the State could trace no document whatsoever to claim ownership and produce the same before the learned Single Judge. It is only after the impugned order was made, and that too after a Contempt petition was filed for non-compliance, that some documents are sought to be produced, claiming that the same relate to the property in question; therefore, there was nothing highhanded or illegal about the State's action.
7. Though no case whatsoever is made out for allowing the production of such documents at the belated stage, only to satisfy our conscience, we looked into the documents. From the documents, it is not at all clear whether they relate to the property in question. Such documents do not explain the several transactions that have taken place between 1914 and the date on which the petitioner purchased the property by a registered sale-deed dated 05.01.1973 and had his name mutated in the records maintained by the Government itself.
8. This attempt to virtually smuggle documents at this stage is most unfortunate and, in fact, compounds the sheer high-handed action of the State in this matter. The learned Single Judge, in the impugned order, had quite correctly at paragraph 37 observed that

it would be open to the State to fix the liability on the erring officials and to recover the amount of Rs. 5,25,000/- from the Officers.

9. This appeal appears to have been engineered by such Officers who apprehend recoveries from them, should the responsibility ultimately be fixed upon them. Otherwise, there is no explanation whatsoever why, during the period between 2011 when the respondent was forced to file the writ petition and till the filing of the IA, the documents, if at all relevant, were never discovered and produced. There is no explanation as to how mutation was permitted based upon the 1973 sale-deed, and no action was taken by the State, if indeed it is serious in its claim of ownership of the property in question, for all these years.
10. This appeal is an abuse of the judicial process and a poor attempt by the officials who apprehend that responsibility would be fixed upon them and they would be made liable for the compensation and the cost awarded by the learned Single Judge in the impugned order.
11. We endorse the finding of the learned Single Judge that this was nothing but a high-handed action of the State in demolishing and bulldozing the respondent's building premises without any authority of law and by abusing the governmental powers. Though we feel that the construction cost and the compensation amount

awarded are too low, we are satisfied that the impugned order warrants no interference at the behest of the State. Accordingly, we dismiss the appeal and the IA No. 10527 of 2026 filed therein, without any order for costs.

12. Since, at the beginning, the appellants stated that the amount of Rs. 5,25,000/- would be deposited in this Court within one week from today, we direct the appellant to deposit the same within a week from today. The Deputy Commissioner of Chatra will be personally responsible for depositing this amount within the timeline now indicated. Once deposited with notice to the learned counsel for the respondent, the respondent shall be entitled to withdraw the same by providing his identity and bank details so that the Registry can transfer this amount into the respondent's bank account.
13. This appeal and the IA for production of documents therein are dismissed, without any order for costs.
14. Other IAs pending in this appeal will not survive and are disposed of.

(M. S. Sonak, C.J.)

(Rajesh Shankar, J.)

July 30, 2026

N.A.F.R.

Manoj/Sharda/Cp.2

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