

{ DELAY IN DELIVERING SERVICE }

HSVP chief administrator reprimanded, penalised

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PANCHKULA: Terming it a typical example of bureaucratic notoriety and a reason for citizens to criticise the bureaucracy, the Haryana Right to Service Commission has come down heavily on Haryana Shehri Vikas Pradhikaran (HSVP) chief administrator Ajit Balaji Joshi.

He was also penalised Rs 20,000 for causing 'significant' delay in delivering the service for which the notified time limit is five days, thereby causing harassment and hardship to a woman, who had also sought euthanasia -- a practice of intentionally ending life to relieve pain and suffering.

"This case highlights not only the colossal delay in making decisions pertaining to issues affecting lives of citizens, but also reflects the insensitivity, callousness and arrogance of the officer concerned," the Commission said in its order on Thursday.

The case pertains to the transfer of a plot in Faridabad's Sector 64 to one Megha Gupta in July 2012. In 2019, the woman had filed an application to submit conveyance deed, which was rejected on the grounds that area has been increased from 135 square metres to 148.5. She was asked to deposit over Rs 58,000 on account of

KEY OBSERVATIONS MADE BY COMMISSION

The Commission opined that this should be a case study in the civil services to exhibit the impact of systemic apathy on the lives of the citizens, on whose money the system thrives and survives.

A separate reference will be made to the administrative

reforms department as well as the Haryana Institute of Public Administration in this regard.

Officers are not autocrats, who can make decisions as per their whims and fancies while dealing with public affairs, but are bound by rules and regulations.

increased size and additional Rs 3.91 lakh as interest on the outstanding amount.

Alleging that she was not informed about the increase in land, she approached the HSVP Faridabad administrator to remit the interest and intimate the exact amount of enhanced area to be paid for receiving the conveyance deed.

The matter was decided in her favour in March 2021. However, the estate officer (Faridabad) sent the case to the legal wing of the office of chief administrator, Panchkula, in April for a decision whether to file revision petition or to implement these orders.

Twice -- in December 2021 and April 2022 -- the additional district attorney opined that the case is 'not fit' for revision petition and may be implemented. He also suggested that since the mistake is on part of the HSVP

official, a fact-finding inquiry be marked, so that the loss caused to HSVP may be recovered from the delinquent official.

However, the chief administrator ordered to seek a report from Faridabad administrator to fix the responsibility. Harassed, the woman then sought permission for euthanasia from the Prime Minister. While the woman approached the Commission in May, the administrator conveyed the district attorney (on WhatsApp) to file a revision petition, in violation of Section 17 (8) of the HSVP Act wherein revision petition has to be filed in 90 days.

The officer did not appear, but sent a reply stating that it has been decided to prefer revision petition against the order. He said that since the issue is pending before a quasi-judicial authority, the suo motu notice may be kept in abeyance in the



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interest of justice till the final decision on the issue.

"The reply demonstrates insensitiveness, delay in decision making, arrogance and whimsical style of functioning," the Commission said. The complainant, for no fault of hers, has been awaiting the conveyance deed since April 19, 2019. "Ajit Balaji Joshi has not only disregarded the provisions of the Haryana Right to Service Act, 2014, but also flouted the provisions made in HSVP Act, 1977, and delayed the delivery of notified service by an inexcusable duration of more than a year," the Commission observed. The Commission has also granted Rs 5,000 as compensation to complainant Megha Gupta. The HSVP chief administrator has now been directed to implement the orders of the administrator subject to the decision of the appellate authority within 15 days of these orders.