

News

Even while the business cites Kannada translation as the reason for the appeal's delay, the Supreme Court rejects Infosys' plea.



"Infosys claims that translating documents from Kannada to English takes a long time. "Dismissed," said the Court.

A challenge by Infosys Limited contesting the increased compensation granted to the family of a landowner whose Mysuru property was purchased for the company's campus expansion was denied by the Supreme Court on Tuesday. [B Raju v. Infosys Limited]

A bench consisting of Justices Dipankar Datta and Manmohan declined to excuse the more than 160-day wait for the appeal to be filed. The delay was explained by Infosys, which said that translating documents from Kannada to English required time.

"Infosys claims that translating documents from Kannada to English takes a long time. Dismissed," Justice Datta said, first dismissing the application.

In his appearance on behalf of Infosys, Senior Advocate **Atmaram** Nadkarni asked the Bench to accept the plea on limitation and promised to provide a new affidavit in favor of the application for condonation. However, the Bench declined to take this request into account.

The Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) purchased 1.05 acres of property in Mysuru in 2005 as part of a larger 18.04-acre purchase for the development of Infosys' Mysuru campus, which is when the conflict began.

The compensation was initially set at ₹4.85 lakh per acre by the special land acquisition officer. Disappointed, the relatives of the landowner requested a reference under Section 18 of the 1894 Land Acquisition Act.

The Mysuru reference court significantly increased the compensation in January 2020, setting it at ₹220 per square foot, in addition to statutory perks like interest and solatium.

The Karnataka High Court heard a challenge to the award from Infosys. The business contended that the reference court had erroneously depended on small-plot transactions and auction sale deeds, which were ineligible to be used as comparable methods for assessing vast agricultural swaths.

Additionally, it said that at the time of the preliminary notification, there was no trustworthy proof that the site had non-agricultural potential. It was argued that photographs and satellite photos could not support such augmentation.

However, the landowners contended that the purchased land was adjacent to the Infosys campus and situated in a fast industrializing region that was home to numerous manufacturing and software firms. They emphasized that the reference court had set a

lesser rate of ₹220 only because they were unable to pay court fees for a cross-objection seeking further increase, and they cited sale documents of residential plots finalized in 2005 that showed prices ranging from ₹430 to ₹499 per square foot.

A Division Bench consisting of Justices Sreenivas Harish Kumar and Umesh **M. Adiga** denied Infosys' appeal on October 22, 2024. The High Court ruled that, even after deducting expenses, the available sale examples supported a price of more than ₹220 per square foot and observed that, considering the land's proximity to Infosys' current operations, it was obvious that it had industrial potential.

The filing delay had exceeded 160 days by the time Infosys filed a case with the Supreme Court.