

BEFORE TELANGANA REAL ESTATE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

[Under the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016]

Complaint No. 197 of 2025

Dated: 30th December 2025

Quorum:

Dr. N. Satyanarayana, IAS (Retd.), Hon'ble Chairperson

Sri K. Srinivasa Rao, Hon'ble Member

Sri Laxmi Narayana Jannu, Hon'ble Member

Suru Srinivasa Rao

*R/o Flat No. 1302, G Block,
Rainbow Vista Rock Garden,
Green Hills Road, Moosapet,
Hyderabad-500018.*

...Complainant

Versus

M/s. Vasavi Realtor LLP,

*Rep by its Designated Partner, Vijay Kumar Yerram & Kandey Ramesh,
Vasavi Corporate,
H.No.8-2-703/7/1 and 8-2-703/7/1/A,
4th Floor, Vasavi Corporate Building, Amrutha Valley Apartments,
Road No. 12, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, Telangana - 500034*

...Respondent

The present matter filed by the Complainant herein came up for hearing before this Authority in presence of Complainant and the Respondent; upon pursuing the material on record and on hearing arguments of both the parties and having stood over for consideration till this day, the following order is passed:

ORDER

2. The present Complaint has been filed by the Complainant under Section 31 of the Real Estate (Regulation & Development) Act, 2016 (hereinafter referred to as the “Act”) read with Rule 34(1) of the Telangana Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Rules, 2017 (hereinafter referred to as the “Rules”) seeking appropriate relief(s) against the Respondents.

A. The brief facts of the case, as stated by the Complainant, are as follows:

3. It was submitted that the Complainant had purchased a flat in the project “Vasavi Lakecity” in October 2020 from one Sri J.V. Chowdary. It was stated that Sri J.V. Chowdary’s entitlement to the said flat arose from a Registered Deed of Assignment cum Development

Agreement Cum-General Power of Attorney, executed on 14th June 2019 with Srisairam Projects Ltd and Vasavi Realtors LLP (hereinafter referred to as the Respondent).

4. It was stated that the purchase was made based on representations in advertisements and on the website of the Respondent, which portrayed the project as a well-planned and timely development. The transaction was entered into with the expectation that the Respondent would deliver the flat within the timeframe stipulated in the Development Agreement.

5. It was further submitted that pursuant to Clause 11.1 of the said Development Agreement, possession was to be delivered within thirty-six months, with a grace period of six months, from the date of obtaining revised permissions. As the project received RERA approval in March 2020, the committed date for the completion and delivery of the flat was established as September 2023.

6. It was submitted that the Complainant, relying on the reputation of the Respondent, had made one hundred percent payment for the flat to the landowner, Sri J.V. Chowdary, and subsequently had the flat registered in their name under the belief that the project was progressing on schedule.

7. It was contended that despite the committed timeframe of September 2023, the project had faced unjustified delays and, as of February 2025, remained incomplete. It was alleged that the Respondent had continuously postponed the handover date, providing vague reasons and false assurances without communicating a clear timeline for completion.

8. It was further submitted that as of January 2025, the project was only sixty to seventy percent completed, and no significant work had been carried out since that time. Key components such as interior furnishing, common amenities, and supporting infrastructure remained unfinished. It was alleged that despite multiple follow-ups, the Respondent had failed to provide a clear roadmap or completion schedule.

9. It was submitted that the continued delay in handing over possession constituted a serious violation of the provisions of the RERA Act. It was contended that the Respondent had failed to fulfill its contractual obligations as per the Development Agreement, thereby breaching RERA guidelines and causing the Complainant significant financial strain, mental stress, and emotional distress. The complaint was filed to seek urgent intervention, financial compensation, and strict action against the Respondent.

B. Reliefs Sought

10. Accordingly, the Complainant sought the following reliefs:

- i. To direct the Respondent to forthwith complete all pending construction and hand over possession of the subject flat to the Complainant at the earliest, within a fixed and enforceable timeframe to be determined by this Honourable Authority, failing which to impose strict penalties upon the Respondent.
- ii. To direct the Respondent to pay interest on the total amounts paid by the Complainant, calculated from the promised date of possession in September 2023 until the actual date of handover, at the rate prescribed under Section 18 of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016.
- iii. To direct the Respondent to pay adequate compensation to the Complainant for the severe mental distress, financial strain, and disruption to personal and professional life caused by the Respondent's negligence, false promises, and the inordinate delay in the completion of the project.

C. Counter filed by the Respondent

11. It was submitted by the Respondent that the complaint was not maintainable either in law or on facts and was liable to be dismissed. The Respondent contended that the Complainant had failed to follow the remedies available under the Agreement for Sale for the resolution of disputes before approaching this Hon'ble Authority. It was further submitted that no prior legal notice was issued before the filing of the complaint, which rendered the application defective.

12. It was submitted that the project, "Lake City-East," was developed lawfully after the Respondent obtained rights from the landowners under registered documents, covering a total land area of 34,704.37 sq. yds. The requisite permissions for land conversion and for the construction of multi-storied residential apartments were obtained on 07.02.2020. The project, consisting of multiple towers and a clubhouse, was duly registered with this Authority vide Registration No. P02500001821 dated 20.03.2020.

13. It was further submitted that the Complainant was allotted apartment No. E. 2801 on the 8th Floor of Tower 2, admeasuring 2195 sq. ft., and an undivided share of 55.50 sq. of land under the Agreement of Sale. The total sale consideration was Rs. 32,92,500/-.

14. It was submitted that as per Clause 7 of the Agreement, the Respondent was obligated to hand over possession of the apartment on or before 31.08.2024, with a grace period of six months. The said clause explicitly stated that the period of completion would stand extended

in the event of force majeure conditions, during which the allottee was not entitled to claim any compensation for the delay.

15. It was contended that the Complainant had not approached this Hon'ble Authority with clean hands but with an ulterior motive for unlawful gain, and that there had been a material suppression of facts. While the existence of the Agreement of Sale was not in dispute, the Respondent averred that the Complainant made false claims despite being aware of the contractual terms and circumstances.

16. The Respondent stated that the project timelines were severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which was a force majeure event recognized under law. It was submitted that following the declaration of a public health emergency in January 2020, a nationwide lockdown was imposed in India from March 2020. This event led to a mass migration of the labour force, which was critical to the construction industry in Hyderabad, thereby causing a significant and unavoidable delay in the project work. All allottees were kept informed of these developments.

17. The Respondent further relied on the orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in **Suo Motu Writ Petition (C) No. 3 of 2020**, whereby the period from 15.03.2020 to 28.02.2022 was excluded for the purposes of computing limitation across all statutes. It was contended that this legally recognized the extraordinary circumstances and justified the extension of timelines for project completion.

18. In addition to the pandemic, the Respondent submitted that the project was delayed by other unforeseen factors. It was stated that the project site contained rocky terrain which, due to its location in a residential vicinity, could not be excavated using explosives. The consequent need for manual rock-breaking compounded the construction delays. Furthermore, the project was adversely impacted by third-party disputes, including several legal proceedings filed against the project, such as RERA Case No. 190/2020, W.P. No. 2694/2021, and W.P. No. 26301/2024, which hindered its smooth progress. These challenges were communicated to the customers in periodic meetings.

19. It was contended that any clerical or typographical errors in the Agreement of Sale, such as an incorrect possession date mentioned in one instance, could not be exploited to create liability, especially when the magnitude of the project made such a timeline practically impossible. The Respondent asserted that the project was over 90% complete and in the final finishing stages. An extension for the project registration had been granted by this Authority

up to 07.02.2026, and the Respondent gave an undertaking to deliver the apartments within this extended period.

20. With regard to the claims for interest and compensation, the Respondent submitted that such reliefs were not maintainable in view of the force majeure conditions. It was argued that the circumstances clearly fell within the definition provided under Section 6 of the Act. The Respondent maintained that the delay was not due to any deliberate act or default on its part, and therefore, the Complainant had not established any legal basis for claiming compensation for mental agony or financial loss.

21. The Respondent concluded that the complaint was preposterous and without foundation. It was prayed that the complaint be dismissed and the Respondent be allowed to complete the project and deliver possession to all allottees as per the extended timeline.

D. Rejoinder filed by the Complainant

22. It was submitted in response to the preliminary objection on maintainability, that the said objection was not only vague but legally unfounded. The complaint had been filed under Section 31 of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016, which provided an explicit statutory right to any aggrieved allottee to seek relief. It was stated that the respondent had signed a legally binding agreement of sale, which stipulated a committed possession date of 31st August 2023. As the flat remained undelivered, the complaint was well within legal bounds.

23. The contention that the Complainant had not availed methods provided in the agreement was described as wholly misconceived and devoid of any merit. It was submitted that the statutory jurisdiction of RERA was not ousted by any arbitration or alternative clause contained in a private agreement. It was further stated that the Complainant had made repeated attempts to communicate with the Respondent, but these efforts were met with consistent avoidance tactics and an endless loop of blame-shifting between internal teams, which effectively stonewalled the Complainant.

24. The objection regarding the non-issuance of a legal notice was submitted as being without merit, as there was no such legal mandate under RERA to issue a prior notice.

25. It was stated that the Respondent's development rights were not in dispute; the issue lay in the Respondent's failure to deliver possession on time as per contractual obligations.

Similarly, it was acknowledged that approvals were obtained, but it was argued that having permission did not discharge the legal responsibility of timely execution and handover.

26. It was submitted that while the project was registered with RERA, the Respondent had grossly failed to abide by the obligations that accompanied such registration, particularly those relating to timely possession and transparency. The Respondent's conduct post-registration showed a blatant disregard for the regulations, and their reply demonstrated a shocking lack of respect towards the Hon'ble Authority.

27. It was submitted that as per the RERA framework, the Agreement of Sale was the only binding document, which included the crucial possession commitment of 31st August 2023. The Complainant had duly paid the entire sum of ₹32,92,500/- towards the total consideration and was not in any default. The Complainant, having complied fully, stood entitled to all legal remedies under Section 18(1) and 19(4) of the RERA Act.

28. The Respondent's reliance on a RERA extension was described as legally flawed and misleading. It was submitted that the possession date as agreed between the parties, 31st August 2023, must prevail for assessing delay, irrespective of any regulatory extensions, as per Section 19(2) of the RERA Act. The Respondent's conduct, in now citing a delivery date of February 2026, rendered the contract meaningless.

29. The Complainant fully acknowledged the payment of ₹32,92,500/-. However, it was submitted that the Respondent's attempt to divert the discussion toward specifications was unrelated to the core issue of delay in possession, especially after receiving 100% of the total sale consideration.

30. It was submitted that the Respondent had selectively cited clauses from the Agreement to justify their delay while ignoring their binding obligation. The Respondent had far exceeded even the six-month grace period. The repeated reference to *force majeure* was described as legally untenable and factually inapplicable, as the Agreement of Sale was executed on 22nd February 2021, well after the nation had emerged from full lockdown. It was argued that *force majeure* clauses could not override statutory protections afforded to allottees under Section 18(1) of the RERA Act.

31. The Respondent's selective quoting of Clause 7.2 was stated to be entirely misplaced, as the condition precedent of obtaining an occupancy certificate (OC) had not been met. It was submitted that Clause 9, which dealt with promoter defaults, must now be actively enforced as the Respondent had unambiguously breached the possession timeline.

32. The Complainant categorically denied the baseless and defamatory allegations of acting with an "ulterior motive." It was submitted that the Complainant had made full disclosure of all material facts, including the Agreement for Sale and proof of payments, whereas the Respondent had repeatedly failed to meet their own promised timelines.

33. While the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was acknowledged, it was submitted that the Respondent's reliance on it was misleading, as the Agreement for Sale was executed on 22nd February 2021, with full knowledge of the ongoing pandemic. The delay from 2023 to 2025 could not be blamed on the pandemic and was nothing more than a convenient scapegoat.

34. It was submitted that the legal provisions and extensions cited by the Respondent related solely to statutory periods of limitation for filing legal proceedings and had no applicability whatsoever to the contractual obligations of a real estate developer under the RERA Act.

35. The attempt to attribute the delay to labour migration was stated as not being applicable to the facts, as the Complainant's unit in Tower 2 had been structurally completed more than 18 months prior. The delay post-structural completion reflected a lack of intent and mismanagement on the part of the builder. It was also stated that there was no documentary evidence to support the claim that allottees were formally informed of such delays.

36. The Respondent's statement regarding "various additional factors" was described as vague, evasive, and devoid of any factual backing. It was submitted that the claim that "customers were intimated from time to time" was simply untrue in the Complainant's case.

37. The response by the Respondent, terming the committed possession date in a formally executed Agreement of Sale as a product of "clerical and typographical mistakes," was described as both self-incriminating and legally indefensible. It was submitted that this was a dishonest afterthought and reflected a complete abdication of responsibility.

38. It was submitted that while certain legal disputes may have arisen, the mere existence of litigation involving third parties could not be used as a blanket justification for delay. It was the legal responsibility of the promoter under Section 11(3)(a) of the RERA Act to ensure the project was free of encumbrances.

39. The Complainant challenged the Respondent to produce any formal written communication that proactively disclosed delays. It was submitted that the pattern of repeatedly outlining and then dishonouring revised timelines reflected a calculated approach to deflect

pressure, and to now question the reasonableness of pursuing a claim under RERA was deeply unjust.

40. The Complainant submitted that the claim for interest was a non-negotiable and unconditional statutory right under Section 18(1) of the Act once the builder failed to deliver possession by the agreed date. The reliance on *force majeure* due to COVID-19 was wholly misplaced.

41. The Respondent's statement regarding compensation was stated to reflect complete insensitivity to the real and severe consequences faced by the Complainant, which were clearly laid out in Form M. Specific real-life impacts were cited, including daily travel burdens for family members and the unplanned financial strain of renting an additional flat.

42. The Complainant strongly objected to the Respondent's claim that delivery was now scheduled for February 2026 and that the Complainant had defaulted on payments. It was asserted that the Complainant had never agreed to any extension and was not in any payment default, having paid over 83% of the total consideration. It was submitted that the Respondent's "unconditional undertaking" did not waive their legal liability to pay interest for the period of delay already accrued.

43. The response regarding the Complainant agreeing to the delay was described as another attempt to deflect responsibility using afterthought excuses. It was stated that the Complainant never agreed to excuse the delay. The new claim about rocky terrain reflected a lack of due diligence and was an internal project risk, not *force majeure*.

44. The Respondent's statement that the Complainant was not entitled to any relief was described as a sweeping and baseless denial of liability. It was submitted that the Respondent's generic claim that the delay was "beyond their control" had been repeatedly refuted. The Complainant had been patient and fulfilled all financial obligations, and the relief sought was legally justified.

45. Finally, it was submitted that the Respondent's claim that the complaint was "preposterous" was baseless and contrary to the record. The Respondent's generic "undertaking" and claims of a "good name" could not cure the default already committed. Accordingly, the Complainant respectfully prayed that the Hon'ble Authority grant interest for the delayed period under Section 18(1) and pass any other appropriate directions.

E. Points for Consideration:

35. Upon a careful perusal of the record and the submissions advanced by both parties, oral as well as written, this Authority is of the view that the following issues arise for determination in the present complaint:

1. Whether the present complaint is maintainable before this Authority?
2. Whether the Complainants are entitled to the reliefs as prayed for?

F. Observations of the Authority:**Point 1:**

36. This Authority has carefully examined the preliminary objection raised by the Respondent with regard to the maintainability of the present Complaint.

37. At the outset, it is noted that although both parties have made reference to and sought to rely upon a purported Agreement of Sale, the said Agreement has not been placed on record before this Authority. In the absence of the said document, this Authority is unable to examine, rely upon, or render any observation on the specific contractual clauses relied upon by the Respondent to question the maintainability of the Complaint.

38. Be that as it may, it is an undisputed and admitted position that a registered Sale Deed has been executed in favour of the Complainant and that the subject flat stands allotted to the Complainant by the Respondent. The Respondent has neither denied nor disputed the allotment of the subject unit to the Complainant. There is also no dispute with respect to the identity of the unit or the existence of a promoter-allottee relationship between the parties. The project in question is a registered project under the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016, and therefore squarely falls within the jurisdiction of this Authority.

39. The core grievance raised in the present Complaint pertains to the delay in handing over possession of the allotted unit and the failure of the Respondent to complete construction and deliver possession in accordance with the statutory and contractual obligations. Such a grievance clearly falls within the statutory framework of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016. Section 18 of the said Act expressly provides that where an allottee does not intend to withdraw from the project, the promoter shall be liable to pay interest for every month of delay till the handing over of possession, at such rate as may be prescribed.

40. In the present case, the allotment of the unit is admitted, the Sale Deed has been executed, and the project is a registered project before this Authority. The relief sought by the Complainant, namely, completion of the project and handing over of possession along with statutory interest for delay, squarely falls within the ambit of Section 18 of the RE(R&D) Act, 2016.

41. In view of the above, this Authority finds no merit in the objection raised by the Respondent regarding maintainability. The Complainant cannot be compelled to first pursue an amicable settlement or contractual remedies when the grievance raised is statutory in nature and falls directly within the jurisdiction conferred upon this Authority under the RE(R&D) Act.

42. Accordingly, the objection as to maintainability raised by the Respondent is hereby rejected.

Point 2:

43. The Complainant has sought relief on the ground that there has been an inordinate delay in handing over possession of the subject flat, despite timely payments of 100% of the total sale consideration, causing significant financial and emotional distress.

44. It is the case of the Complainant that the Sale Deed for the subject property was executed on 31.10.2020, pursuant to the Complainant having purchased the property from the landowner. The landowner, one Shri J.V. Chowdary, had earlier entered into a Registered Deed of Assignment-cum-Development Agreement-cum-General Power of Attorney dated 14.06.2019 with the Respondent herein. The Complainant has relied upon this Development Agreement and has contended that, in terms of Clause 11.1 thereof, the builder-developer had undertaken to complete the project within 36 months, with a further grace period of six months from the date of obtaining revised permissions. However, the Complainant cannot be bound by the terms of the said Development Agreement, as he was not a party to that contract. Further, the Complainant has not produced before this Authority any copy of the Agreement of Sale executed between the parties. In the absence of such Agreement of Sale produced before this Authority stipulating the date of delivery of possession, the valid basis for determining the possession date is the date of execution of the Sale Deed. It is also noted that the Respondent has not denied the existence of an Agreement of Sale nor its obligation to deliver possession within the agreed timeline. Indeed, in the Respondent's submissions, the Respondent has referred to 31.08.2023 as the date on or before which possession was to be delivered.

Nevertheless, in the absence of any such Agreement of Sale being placed on record, this Authority is constrained to consider only the date of execution of the Sale Deed i.e. 31.10.2020 as the date of delivery of possession for the purpose of computation of interest payable by the Respondent to the Complainant herein.

45. It is pertinent to note that the Respondent has failed to hand over possession even as of February 2025. Further, although the project was registered with TG RERA up to February 2025 and later extended until 07.02.2026, the project remains incomplete, with construction progress stalled at approximately 65-70% as per the Complainant's submission, with key aspects such as interior finishing, common amenities, and supporting infrastructure remaining unfinished. The Complainant submits that the Respondent has issued multiple revised handover schedules without providing valid justification or a clear roadmap for completion.

46. The Complainant further submits that despite assurances made, including a promise to pay compensation for delay as per RERA guidelines, no such compensation has been provided. The Respondent, conversely, attributes the delay to the Covid-19 pandemic, claiming force majeure, citing the nationwide lockdown beginning March 2020, the impact on migrant labour, and consequential delays. The Respondent further cites rocky terrain at the site, third-party disputes, and typographical errors in the possession date as additional justifications.

(i) Whether the Covid-19 pandemic can be taken as a valid shield by the Respondent in the present case?

47. This Authority finds no merit in such a contention. The Sale Deed was executed on 31.10.2020 which was well after the onset and initial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Having consciously undertaken contractual commitments as per their own submissions, with full knowledge of the prevailing circumstances, the Respondent cannot now, with retrospective justification, rely on Covid-19 as a defense to escape its contractual and statutory obligations. Such conduct clearly amounts to holding out false assurances with mala fide intent.

48. It is a settled principle that once a promoter has chosen to register a project and enter into binding contractual commitments with allottees, he does so with full knowledge of the risks, constraints, and challenges of the market. At the time of entering into the Agreement of Sale with the present Complainant as has been submitted by the Complainant, the Respondent was already aware of the Covid-related disruptions, as well as the Government notifications granting moratoriums for project completion timelines. Despite this knowledge, the

Respondent chose to provide a specific assurance of delivery by August 2023 as per the averments made by the parties herein.

49. This Authority aligns with the observations of the Hon'ble Bombay High Court in *Neelkamal Realtors Suburban Pvt. Ltd. &Anr. vs. Union of India &Ors. [2017 SCC OnLine Bom 9302]*, wherein at para 119 it was categorically observed:

"While the proposal is submitted, the Promoter is supposed to be conscious of the consequences of getting the project registered under RERA. Having sufficient experience in the open market, the Promoter is expected to have a fair assessment of the time required for completing the project...".

50. The above dictum fortifies the principle that the promoter, being structurally at an advantageous position with respect to project information and market realities, is under a statutory duty to provide realistic timelines. The framework of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 reinforces this obligation by mandating timely completion and possession within the period stipulated in the Agreement of Sale. However, in the absence of the Agreement of Sale, the date of execution of the Sale Deed shall be considered as the date of possession.

51. Therefore, the plea of Covid-19 as a force majeure defence in the present case is wholly untenable. The Respondent cannot now seek to retrospectively attribute delays to the pandemic. Accordingly, this Authority holds that the reliance on Covid-19 as a shield stands rejected.

(ii) Extension of Registration

52. The Respondent has further contended that, since extensions have been granted by this Authority, the project timeline now stands extended up to February 2026, and therefore possession shall be delivered by then. The Complainants, however, have questioned the validity and effect of such extensions.

53. At the outset, it must be clarified that under the scheme of the RE(R&D) Act:

"An Act to establish the Real Estate Regulatory Authority for regulation and promotion of the real estate sector and to ensure sale of plot, apartment or building, as the case may be, or sale of real estate project, in an efficient and transparent manner and to protect the interest of consumers in the real estate

sector and to establish an adjudicating mechanism for speedy dispute redressal and also to establish the Appellate Tribunal to hear appeals from the decisions, directions or orders of the Real Estate Regulatory Authority and the adjudicating officer and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.”

54. The paramount objective is twofold: protection of consumer interest, and ensuring completion of projects in an efficient manner. Denial of extension during the Covid-19 disruption would have resulted in projects being stalled, to the grave prejudice of allottees. It was in this context that this Authority, balancing the equities, granted extensions in line with the moratoriums issued by Telangana RERA:

1. 15.03.2020 to 14.09.2020 (Circular No.14 dated 13.05.2020),
2. 15.09.2020 to 15.03.2021 (Order No.15 dated 29.09.2020),
3. 15.03.2021 to 14.09.2021 (Order No.16 dated 01.06.2021).

55. Accordingly, an aggregate 18 months' extension was applied across projects to safeguard larger consumer interest. However, it is equally well settled that such regulatory extensions cannot dilute the contractual rights of individual allottees under their respective Agreements of Sale, nor can they displace the statutory rights flowing from Section 18 of the RE(R&D) Act, 2016.

56. In the present matter, it is evident that the Respondent has unilaterally revised possession timelines to February 2026 due to the extension taken without consultation or consent of the Complainants. Such unilateral revisions are impermissible. The Hon'ble Bombay High Court in *Neelkamal Realtors Suburban Pvt. Ltd. vs. Union of India & Ors. [2017 SCC OnLine Bom 9302]*, while upholding the constitutional validity of RERA, categorically observed:

Para 119 “The RERA does not contemplate rewriting of contract between the flat purchaser and the promoter.”

Para 256 of this Judgment further clarifies that “by giving opportunity to the promoter to prescribe fresh timeline under Section 4(2)(l)(C), he is not absolved of the liability under the agreement for sale”

57. The above dicta makes it abundantly clear that any extension granted by the Authority, or revised timelines uploaded on the TG RERA project registration portal, do not ipso facto alter or bind the allottees' contractual rights. Since the Agreement for Sale is not produced

before this Authority, the date of execution of Sale Deed shall be considered as the date of possession, and unilateral extensions by the promoter cannot be foisted upon allottees to their detriment.

58. Accordingly, this Authority holds that the revised possession dates mentioned by the Respondent, whether while seeking extensions before the Authority or as updated on the registration portal, cannot be treated as binding on the Complainants.

iii) Relief under Section 18 of the RE(R&D) Act:

59. It has been observed by this Authority that the total sale consideration is for an amount of Rs. 32,92,500/- (Rupees Thirty Two Lakh Ninety Two Thousand Five Hundred Only). That, as per the Sale deed the Complainant has duly paid the entire sale consideration amount as has been acknowledged in the executed Sale Deed as well. Further, as has already been established, the scheduled property should have been delivered by the date of execution of the Sale Deed i.e. 31.10.2020. Admittedly, possession has not been delivered.

60. The Respondent's contention that 90% work is complete and that the Complainants have paid only a portion of the consideration is wholly unsustainable. The Complainants have already paid 100% of the agreed consideration as per their averments. Despite receiving such substantial sums, the Respondent has failed to honour its contractual obligations. It is manifest that the Respondent gave false assurances, being fully conscious of the market situation, yet assuring dates of completion that it had no capacity to honour. More than one year has elapsed beyond the stipulated date, yet the project is neither complete nor possession handed over. The Respondent further seeks to shift the burden on the complainant by contending that the balance amount is unpaid. This plea is untenable. The law does not permit a defaulter to take advantage of its own breach.

61. As held by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Kusheshwar Prasad Singh v. State of Bihar [Civil Appeal No. 7357 of 2000]***:

"It is settled principle of law that a man cannot be permitted to take undue and unfair advantage of his own wrong to gain favourable interpretation of law. It is sound principle that he, who prevents a thing from being done shall not avail himself of the

non-performance he has occasioned. To put it differently, "a wrongdoer ought not to be permitted to make a profit out of his own wrong"

62. In this context, it is pertinent to note that the while the allottees are indeed bound to adhere to the agreed payment plan, such obligation arises only when the promoter simultaneously fulfils its reciprocal obligation of executing construction in line with the assured progress. In the absence of such progress, the Respondent cannot insist upon further payments as a condition to claim relief.

63. Section 18 of the RE(R&D) Act is categorical and unconditional. It does not make the grant of interest contingent upon the quantum of sale consideration paid, nor does it provide any defence to a defaulting promoter. Once delay in handing over possession is established, an allottee who elects to remain in the project is entitled to interest for every month of delay, irrespective of whether part or whole of the consideration has been paid, provided that the payments already made are in accordance with the Agreement of sale.

64. Now, Section 18 of the RE(R&D) Act is categorical:

"(1) If the promoter fails to complete or is unable to give possession of an apartment, plot or building,—

(a) in accordance with the terms of the agreement for sale or, as the case may be, duly completed by the date specified therein; or

(b) due to discontinuance of his business as a developer on account of suspension or revocation of the registration under this Act or for any other reason, he shall be liable on demand to the allottees, in case the allottee wishes to withdraw from the project, without prejudice to any other remedy available, to return the amount received by him in respect of that apartment, plot, building, as the case may be, with interest at such rate as may be prescribed in this behalf including compensation in the manner as provided under this Act:

Provided that where an allottee does not intend to withdraw from the project, he shall be paid, by the promoter, interest for every month of delay, till the handing over of the possession, at such rate as may be prescribed.

(2) The promoter shall compensate the allottees in case of any loss caused to him due to defective title of the land, on which the project is being developed or has been developed, in the manner as provided under this Act, and the claim for compensation

under this subsection shall not be barred by limitation provided under any law for the time being in force.

(3) If the promoter fails to discharge any other obligations imposed on him under this Act or the rules or regulations made thereunder or in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement for sale, he shall be liable to pay such compensation to the allottees, in the manner as provided under this Act."

65. This statutory right of allottee is unqualified and absolute. Attention is drawn to the decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in ***Civil Appeal Nos. 3581-359 of 2022, Civil Appeal Diary No. 9796/2019, M/s Imperia Structures Limited vs. Anil Patni & Others***, wherein it was held:

"In terms of Section 18 of the RERA Act, if a promoter fails to complete or is unable to give possession of an apartment by the date specified in the agreement, the promoter would be liable, on demand, to return the amount received in respect of that apartment if the allottee wishes to withdraw from the project. Such a right of the allottee is 'without prejudice to any other remedy available to him'. This right is unqualified, and if availed, the deposited money must be refunded with interest as prescribed. The proviso to Section 18(1) contemplates that if the allottee does not intend to withdraw from the project, they are entitled to interest for every month of delay until possession is handed over. The allottee may proceed under Section 18(1) or the proviso thereto."

66. Similarly, in Civil Appeal Nos. 6745-6749 of 2021, ***M/s Newtech Promoters and Developers Private Limited vs. State of UP & Others***, the Hon'ble Supreme Court observed:

"Section 18(1) of the Act spells out the consequences if the promoter fails to complete or is unable to give possession of an 9 of 10 apartment, plot, or building in terms of the agreement for sale. The allottee/home buyer holds an unqualified right to seek a refund of the amount with interest as prescribed."

67. Further, as earlier observed, the Hon'ble Bombay High Court in ***Neelkamal Realtors Suburban Pvt. Ltd. v. Union of India [(2017) SCC Online Bom 9302]*** clarified that RERA registration or its extension cannot rewrite the contract between parties. The date assured under the Agreement of Sale, executed with the allottee's consent, should be considered. Thus, the Respondent is bound by Section 11(4)(a) of the RE(R&D) Act. However, in the present

Complaint, no copy of Agreement of Sale has been produced before this Authority and, consequently, no possession date is available on record. In such circumstances, the only valid ascertainable date for determining delivery of possession is the date of execution of the Sale Deed. Once the Sale Deed was executed, the scheduled property should have been handed over to the Complainant. Accordingly, for the purposes of assessing delay and computing the interest payable, the date of execution of the Sale Deed shall be treated as the date on which possession ought to have been delivered.

68. At the same time, if the Complainant has indeed defaulted in adhering to the payment schedule, the Respondent is not without remedy. Sections 19(6) and 19(7) of the Act confer upon the promoter a right to claim interest for delayed payments, as per Rule 15 of the Telangana RE(R&D) Rules, 2017. Nevertheless, such entitlement shall be subject to the Respondent producing cogent and substantive documents demonstrating both the stage-wise progress of construction and the corresponding default, and not merely based on unilateral assertions.

69. In the present case, this Authority finds the Respondent in clear breach of both statutory and contractual obligations. The Complainant is therefore entitled to interest at the prescribed rate for the entire period of delay, i.e., from 31.10.2020 until the actual date of handing over possession. As regards claims of compensation, this Authority notes that jurisdiction for adjudicating compensation lies with the Adjudicating Officer under Section 71 of RE(R&D) Act with Form 'N'. The Complainant is at liberty to pursue such remedy separately.

70. Accordingly, while the Complainant is entitled to relief under Section 18 of the RE(R&D) Act, this entitlement is subject to the reciprocal statutory duty of the Complainant to discharge any outstanding amounts under the payment plan, if not already paid. Compliance on both sides is essential to ensure balance of obligations and timely delivery.

71. This Authority cannot remain oblivious to the larger pattern of violations. It is noted with grave concern that more than fifty complaints have already been received against this very Respondent in respect of the subject project. Such repeated defaults and false assurances strike at the very root of the confidence that homebuyers are entitled to repose under the protective framework of the RE(R&D) Act.

72. The Statement of Objects and Reasons of the RE(R&D) Act explicitly emphasizes “greater accountability towards consumers and to inject transparency, efficiency, and discipline in the real estate sector”. The conduct of the Respondent herein is in gross derogation of that legislative mandate. If such violations are permitted to persist, the very soul of the Act would stand diluted and the protection promised to allottees rendered illusory.

73. Accordingly, this Authority hereby sternly warns the Respondent promoter that any further default, non-compliance, or failure to deliver possession within the assured statutory timelines or any fresh grievances brought to notice by allottees shall invite invocation of Section 63 of the RE(R&D) Act.

74. This Authority shall not hesitate to take the strictest view in future, for the Act was enacted not as a mere regulatory framework but as a beneficial legislation to protect innocent homebuyers from the very malaise exemplified by the conduct of this Respondent.

75. The Respondent is hereby directed to complete the project and hand over possession to the Complainants within the stipulated period. It is further clarified that if the Complainants have defaulted in making payments as per the agreed schedule, the Respondent shall be entitled under Section 19(6) of the Act to claim interest on such delayed payments, provided that it substantiates such claim with credible documentary evidence of both construction progress and corresponding default.

76. In the event the Complainants have defaulted in making payments as per the agreed schedule, the Respondent shall be entitled, under Section 19(6) of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016, to claim interest on such delayed payments in accordance with Rule 15 of the Telangana Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Rules, 2017. Nevertheless, such entitlement shall be subject to the Respondent producing cogent and substantive documents demonstrating both the stage-wise progress of construction and the corresponding default, and not merely based on unilateral assertions.

77. The Complainants are, in turn, directed to discharge any balance amounts due under the agreed payment schedule, if not already paid. Mutual compliance is essential to ensure timely completion and delivery of the project.

G. Directions of the Authority:

78. In view of the findings and observations recorded hereinabove, this Authority proceeds to issue the following directions:

- a. The preliminary objection raised by the Respondent regarding the maintainability of the Complaint stands rejected. The Complaint is maintainable before this Authority.
- b. The Respondent's reliance on the Covid-19 pandemic as a ground of force majeure is held untenable.
- c. The extension of registration taken by this Respondent cannot dilute the contractual rights of the Complainant. The date of possession shall be the date of execution of the Sale Deed.
- d. The Respondent is held liable for failure to hand over possession of the subject flat by the stipulated date i.e., 31.10.2020.
- e. The Complainants are entitled to interest at the rate of 10.7% per annum (being SBI MCLR + 2% as per Rule 15 of the TG RE(R&D) Rules, 2017), computed on the amounts actually paid by the Complainants, with effect from 01.11.2020 until actual handing over of lawful possession. The exact computation shall be subject to verification of such payments by the Respondent at the stage of effecting payment. The Respondent shall pay the arrears accrued up to the date of this Order within sixty (60) days, and shall thereafter continue to pay the accruing interest on a monthly basis, on or before the 10th day of each succeeding month, until possession is delivered.
- f. Insofar as compensation is concerned, the Complainant is at liberty to pursue appropriate proceedings before the Learned Adjudicating Officer under "Form N".
- g. The Respondent is hereby directed to complete the project forthwith and hand over possession to the Complainants within the statutory timelines.
- h. The Complainants are directed to pay the balance consideration strictly in accordance with the agreed payment schedule. In the event of any default in adhering to such schedule, the Respondent shall be at liberty to claim interest on the delayed amounts, as provided under Rule 15 of the Telangana Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Rules, 2017. However, such claim shall be substantiated by valid documentary evidence demonstrating that the default is aligned with the actual stage-wise progress of construction, and not merely on the basis of unilateral assertions.

79. Having regard to the repeated defaults and the large number of complaints already pending against this Respondent in the same project, this Authority sternly warns the Respondent that any further delay, non-compliance, or grievance brought to notice by allottees shall invite section 63 of the RE(R&D) Act.

80. The Complaint is accordingly allowed in part, in terms of the above directions. Failure to comply with above said directions by the Respondent shall attract penalty in accordance with Section 63 of the RE(R&D) Act, 2016.

81. As a result, the Complaint is disposed of accordingly. No order as to costs.

Sd/-

Sri K. Srinivasa Rao,
Hon'ble Member,
TG RERA

Sd/-

Sri Laxmi Narayana Jannu,
Hon'ble Member,
TG RERA

Sd/-

Dr. N. Satyanarayana, IAS (Retd.),
Hon'ble Chairperson,
TG RERA

