

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
IN THE HIGH COURT OF UGANDA HOLDEN AT GULU
MISCELLANEOUS APPLICATION No. 140/2023
(ARISING FROM CIVIL APPEAL No. 001/2022)
5 **(ARISING FROM CIVIL SUIT No. 011/2017).**

OBONYO PETER

APPLICANT

Versus

1. **OTTO ALEX ATIK**
2. **ORYANG ALFRED OKIDI**
- 10 3. **AKWAR ALEX**

RESPONDENTS

BEFORE HON. MR. JUSTICE PHILIP W. MWAKA.

Factual Background.

[1]. The Applicant seeks Orders from this Court extending (enlarging) time for filing a Memorandum of Appeal – thereby instituting an Appeal - which is out of the time stipulated for instituting such Appeals and to enable him challenge (Appeal) the Judgment and Orders of His Worship Edward Kabayo Akankwasa, Magistrate Grade I at the Chief Magistrate’s Court of Pader at Pader in Civil Suit No. 011/2017 delivered on the 22nd December, 2021 (Hereinafter the “Appeal”) Orders for hearing and making provision for Costs of the Application.

[2]. The Motion instituting the Application was filed on the 12th July, 2023. This would be One (1) Year and Seven (7) Months after the decision of the Trial Court - bearing in mind that the period within which to institute such an Appeal is Thirty (30) days which would have expired on the 21st day of January, 2022.

[3]. The Application is instituted by way of Notice of Motion under **Sections 79(1)(a), 96 and 98 of the Civil Procedure Act, Cap. 71; Section 33 of the Judicature Act, Cap. 13; and, Order 51 Rules 1 and 6 and Order 52 Rules 1,2 and 3 of the Civil Procedure Rules, SI 71 - 1.** An Affidavit supporting the Application is deponed by the Applicant/ Plaintiff, Obonyo Peter.

The Applicant's Case.

[4]. The Applicant's grounds in the Motion for extension of time within which to file a Memorandum of Appeal in respect of the decision and Judgment of the Trial Magistrate Grade I, Pader, His Worship Akankwasa Edward Kabayo in Civil Suit No. 011/2017 delivered on the 22nd December, 2021 are that whereas he filed Notice of Appeal *Vide* Civil Appeal No. 01/2022 in the matter on the 6th January, 2022 seeking to challenge the decision of the Court in a land matter following which the Deputy Registrar issued a Calling Letter to the Learned Trial Magistrate on 6th April, 2022 which was received at Pader Magistrate's Court on the 13th April, 2022 - the Applicant believed that by lodging the Notice of Appeal he had filed a substantive Appeal on Court Record until he was advised by his Lawyers that an Appeal to the High Court is commenced by a Memorandum of Appeal and not by a Notice of Appeal.

[5]. The Application is supported by the Applicant's Affidavit and he reiterates the foregoing and that he is aggrieved by the decision of the Trial Magistrate in Civil Suit No. 011/2017 and following his filing of the Notice of Appeal he pursued the Certified Copy of the Judgment and Proceedings from Pader Magistrate's Court and the High Court, Gulu which he received on the 22nd May, 2023. He acknowledges that this should have prompted him to immediately file a Memorandum of Appeal. However, being a "lay man" unrepresented by Advocates in the Lower Court he believed that by filing the Notice of Appeal he had already filed a substantive appeal – not realising the requirement to file a Memorandum of Appeal timely to institute the Appeal.

- 55 [6]. This was not until he was Advised by Attorneys Messrs. Abore & Co. Advocates and Legal Consultants that an Appeal to the High Court is commenced with a Memorandum of Appeal and not by Notice of Appeal. The date he received the Legal Advice is not stated.
- [7]. The Applicant is therefore out of time for filing the Memorandum of Appeal and pleads that the Appeal has merit and a high probability of success and the Respondents would not be prejudiced by the granting of the Application with the Court being required to administer substantive justice without undue regard to technicalities.
- 60 [8]. The Court observes that in paragraph 10 of his Affidavit the Applicant states that when he followed up on his Appeal he was “informed” that the Appeal basing on his Notice of Appeal is fixed for the 13th September, 2024. The Court notes that the Applicant does not say by whom he was informed and he concludes his Affidavit by stating that whatever is deponed to therein is true and correct to the best of his knowledge and belief and adds (quite unintelligibly) – “and whatever is without the source disclosed”.
- 65 [9]. The Applicant attaches to his Application Annextures, including; - Annexure “A” which is the Complaint and upon perusal appears he prepared it himself – being “Drawn and Filed by Obonyo Peter”, Annexure “B” - the Certified Copy of the Judgment of the Trial Court, Annexure “C” – the Notice of Appeal which upon perusal he appears to have prepared himself being
- 70 “Drawn and Filed by the Appellant”, Annexure “D” - the Letter dated 6th April, 2022 from the High Court requesting the Magistrate Grade I, Pader to provide the Certified Documents together with the Trial Court file received on the 13th April, 2022, Annexure “E” – the Typed and Certified Copy of the Proceedings of the Trial Court which upon perusal indicates that the Applicant (Plaintiff therein) represented himself *Pro Se* as apparently did the Respondents (Defendants therein) and Annexure “F” is the Memorandum
- 75 of Appeal intended to be filed.
- 80

The Respondents' Case.

- 85 [10]. The Respondents filed Affidavits in Reply in opposition to the Application and in so doing filed Affidavits in Reply for each of the Respondents – Otto Alex Atik, Oryang Alfred Okidi and Akwar Alex.
- [11]. The contents of their Affidavits in Reply echo each other and they all state that the Application is bad in Law and is brought as an attempt to derail justice and that at the Judgment on the 22nd December, 2021 the right of Appeal was
90 explained to the Applicant who was present but he chose to sit back and woke up to file the Notice of Appeal on the 6th January, 2022 which in their view shows how unserious and unbothered the Applicant is.
- [12]. The Respondents state that the Applicant did not bother to follow up the calling letter hence the period of One (1) year and Six (6) months in which it
95 took him to obtain the Certified Copies of the Documents and sat back with the intention of frustrating them from enjoying the fruits of the Judgment delivered in their favour by the Trial Court and later adding, quite uncharitably, that the Applicant's laziness should not be entertained by the Court.
- 100 [13]. The Respondents contend that ignorance of the Law is no Defence and that the Applicant cannot simply claim that he is a lay man who did not know that an Appeal is commenced by a Memorandum of Appeal.
- [14]. The Respondents conclude by contending that, in their view, the intended Appeal has no merit, is frivolous and vexatious and full of falsehoods by the
105 Applicant and that since there is no Appeal (Memorandum of Appeal) the matter cannot be fixed based on a Notice of Appeal rendering the Application overtaken by events.
- [15]. There is no Affidavit in Rejoinder filed on the Record of the Court.
- [16]. This is against the background that the suit was determined in favour of the
110 Respondents with the Trial Court having dismissed the entirety of the claims made by the Plaintiff/Applicant.

Representation.

[17]. Counsel, Mr. Patrick Abore, represented the Applicant. The Applicant was present in Court.

115 [18]. Counsel, Mr. Douglas Odyek, holding brief for Counsel, Mr. Egaru Emmanuel of Messrs. Egaru & Co. Advocates, represented the Respondents. The Respondents were absent.

Proceedings of the Court.

[19]. At the proceedings on the 1st November, 2023, based on the representations
120 of both Counsel, the Court scheduled the filing of Written Submissions.

[20]. The Court issued Directions for the Applicant to file and serve his Written Submissions on or before close of business on the 10th November, 2023, the Respondents to file and serve their Written Submissions on or before close of business on the 20th November, 2023 and any Written Submissions in
125 Rejoinder to be filed and served on or before close of business on the 27th November, 2023. The Ruling was initially fixed for delivery on the 23rd January, 2024 at 09:00am and is now due on Monday, 29th January, 2024.

[21]. The Applicant filed his Written Submissions on the 7th November, 2023. Written Submissions in Reply from the Respondents on the Record of the
130 Court belatedly on the 14th December, 2023 and Written Submissions in Rejoinder were filed on the 21st December, 2023.

The Applicant's Submissions.

[22]. The Applicant submits that Civil Suit No. 011/2017 which he instituted at
135 the Chief Magistrate's Court, Pader before the Magistrate Grade I in respect of ownership of land at Kulu Ocwici Village, Akwor Parish, Puranga Sub County, Pader District was dismissed on the 22nd December, 2021 and being aggrieved and dissatisfied filed a Notice of Appeal on the 6th January, 2022.

- 140 [23]. This was followed by the calling letter requesting the Certified Copy of the Judgment and Proceedings issued which he pursued amidst many delays by the Court in their preparation thereof.
- [24]. Finally, he obtained the Certified documents on the 22nd May, 2023 all the while believing that by filing the Notice of Appeal he had filed a substantive Appeal.
- 145 [25]. The Applicant submits – which date is not contained in his Affidavit – that he retained the services of Messrs. Abore & Co. Advocates on the 6th July, 2023 upon which he was advised that a Notice of Appeal does not commence an Appeal in the High Court but rather a Memorandum of Appeal which he had not filed and of which time within which to file timely had lapsed.
- 150 [26]. Accordingly, the Applicant was advised to file the instant Application.
- [27]. The Applicant cites **Section 79(1)(a) and (b) of the Civil Procedure Act, Cap. 71** which provides that an Appeal must be filed within Thirty (30) days of the date of Decree of the Court, **Section 96** of the Act which provides for enlargement of time subject to the discretion of the Court under **Section 98**
- 155 of the Act and **Order 51 Rule 6 of the Civil Procedure Rules, SI 71 – 1** which similarly provides for enlargement of time.
- [28]. The Applicant submits that the main issue for determination is whether good cause has been shown or sufficient cause for the grant of leave to Appeal out of time and proceeds to cite numerous authorities on enlargement of time and re-iterating the argument that the Applicant is a lay man unfamiliar with
- 160 the procedural and substantive requirements of the Law which led him to fail in filing a Memorandum of Appeal timely thinking that the Notice of Appeal was sufficient to institute his Appeal.
- [29]. The Applicant, *inter alia*, cites **Misc. Application No. 023/2107: Ojara Otto Vs. Okwera Benson wherein the Hon. Justice Stephen Mubiru cites SCCA No. 9/1993: Nicholas Roussous Vs. Gulam Hussein Habib Virani & Others quoting the Supreme Court in holding that –**

“... ignorance of procedure by an unrepresented Defendant may amount to sufficient cause” and further contends that there was no dilatory conduct or indolence on his part and that there are serious matters to be determined by the Court in the Appeal referencing the attached intended Memorandum of Appeal.

[30]. In reference to SCCA No. 12/2014: Mulindwa George William Vs. Kisubika Joseph he contends that once a delay is not accounted for, it does not matter the length of the delay. There must always be an explanation for the period of delay and in so doing asserts that the he has accounted for the period of delay and there was no dilatory conduct.

[31]. The Applicant asserted that there are reasonable grounds of Appeal and prayed that the Court find the grounds stated herein-above amount to sufficient cause for enlargement of time for filing the Memorandum of Appeal and that the Application is allowed without any Order as to costs.

The Respondents’ Submissions.

[32]. The Respondents in their belated Written Submissions submit that the Application was served out of time with the Application having been filed on the 12th July, 2023 and endorsed by the Court on the 7th July, 2023 and served on the 28th November, 2023 which they assert is in violation of **Order 5 Rule 1(2) of the Civil Procedure Rules, SI 71 – 1** which provides for service within Twenty-One (21) days from the date of issue – calculated as Four (4) months overdue. They pray that the Application is dismissed on that ground.

[33]. In regard to the substantive matters raised in the Application, the Respondents cite **Section 79(1) and 79(2) of the Civil Procedure Act, Cap. 71** respectively which provide for institution of Appeal within Thirty (30) days and require that good cause must be shown for an Appeal not instituted within Thirty (30) days and that in computing the period of limitation of filing an Appeal time taken in making the Proceedings is excluded.

- [34]. Referencing the chronology of events and citing authorities, they argue that good cause must be shown to merit enlargement of time. In their view, the Applicant's claim that he is a lay man who was unaware that an Appeal is instituted by a Memorandum of Appeal and delays cited in obtaining Proceedings is false. It supposedly does not relate to the Applicant's ability to follow up on his Appeal since he was availed the Proceedings and Judgment in May, 2023. The Court upon scrutiny observes the date of endorsement as 22nd May, 2023.
- [35]. The Respondents assert the Maxim – Ignorance of the Law is no Defence, to cover up lapses and argue that it does not amount to sufficient cause.
- [36]. In their view, the Appeal does not have merit and there has been no satisfactory explanation. Therefore, the Application should be dismissed with costs.

210 **The Applicant's Submissions in Rejoinder.**

- [37]. In rejoinder, the Applicant refers – from the Bar - to a period of re-organization and transition at the High Court, Gulu to Kitgum Circuit stating that service of Hearing Notice was effected by affixation to the Court Notice Board whereupon they obtained the Motion and served the Respondents.
- 215 [38]. Substantively, they re-iterate their earlier submissions and outline their intended grounds of Appeal in the Memorandum of Appeal attached which they assert has merit and re-iterate their earlier prayer that the Application is allowed without an Order as to costs.

Issues for Consideration.

- 220 [39]. The Issue for consideration to be addressed by the Court is - **Whether the Applicant has provided sufficient cause to warrant the Court Judiciously exercising its Inherent Powers to enlarge time to enable the Applicant file a Memorandum of Appeal.**

Considerations of the Court.

225 [40]. Order 43 Rule 1 of the Civil Procedure Rules SI 71 – 1 provides –

“Form of Appeal.

Every Appeal to the High Court shall be preferred in the form of a Memorandum signed by the Appellant or his or her Advocate and presented to the Court or to such Office as it shall appoint for that purpose ...”

230

[41]. Section 79(1)(a) of the Civil Procedure Act, Cap. 71 provides –

“Limitation for Appeals

(1) Except as otherwise specifically provided in any other Law, every Appeal shall be entered –

235

(a) Within Thirty days of the date of the Decree or Order of the Court”

[42]. It is not disputed that the Memorandum of Appeal was filed out of the prescribed time. Instead, the Applicant submits that the lapse was due to his ignorance of procedural and substantive Law related to instituting Appeals in the High Court by way of Memorandum of Appeal and he was of what he described as the “lay man” view that a Notice of Appeal would suffice in instituting an Appeal.

240

[43]. The Applicant’s core argument is therefore that he was not aware of the procedural and substantial provisions regarding the filing of Appeals and therefore did not timely follow up the filing of the Notice of Appeal with filing the Memorandum of Appeal upon receiving the Certified Copy of the Proceedings of the Trial Court.

245

[44]. The essence of the Application is a challenge to the maxim that ignorance of the Law is no defence or “*Ignorantia Juris*”. Here, however, the Applicant uses it as a sword to assert his claim and not as a shield as is commonly done.

250

[45]. Instinctively, this is not an attractive argument. Should a lack of procedural knowledge in Law be elevated to constitute sufficient cause? Shall ignorance of the Law now be a ground upon which litigants may now apply for enlargement of time and other discretionary remedies? Would this not result in any person asserting ignorance of the Law to trigger time barred litigation? Doesn't this in and of itself give license for abuse of Court process?

[46]. Inevitably, the question which arises is whether ignorance of the Law (“*Ignorantia Juris*”) constitutes sufficient cause for the Court to Judiciously invoke its discretion to enlarge time for filing the Memorandum of Appeal.

[47]. The Courts have consistently held that sufficient cause or sufficient reason, as the case may be, refers to a legal determination that there exists sufficient grounds to support a case or a decision and it is a recurring requirement in numerous substantive and procedural Statutes and Regulations for justification of the triggering of the Court’s judicious exercise of its discretion.

[48]. The Court must be satisfied as to the reasons or explanation provided and the sufficiency of the grounds should relate to an inadvertency, inability, failure or bonafides to take a proactive, necessary or mandatory measure or steps to further one’s case timely which would exonerate the litigant from the presumption or assertion of dilatory conduct, indolence, negligence or inaction which in the first place led to the negative outcome which the litigant now seeks to have remedied.

See: Black’s Law Dictionary 8th Edition, Supreme Court Civil Appeal No. 8/1998: Banco Arabe Espanol Vs. Bank of Uganda, Supreme Court Civil Appeal No. 9/1993: Nicholas Roussos Vs. Ghulam Hussein Habib Virani.

[49]. The Court is cognisant of the line of cases which hold that the Court’s inherent powers to judiciously exercise its discretion – including to reinstate a dismissed suit - is circumscribed by the requirement of sufficient cause.

280 See: Supreme Court Civil Appeal No. 8/1998: Banco Arabe Espanol Vs. Bank of Uganda, Supreme Court Constitutional Application No. 1/2006: John Sanyu Katuramu & Others Vs. The Attorney General.

This Court has previously determined the requirement for sufficient cause. See this Court's Decision on Sufficient Cause in Misc. Application No. 044/2021 arising from High Court Civil Suit (Gulu) No. 05/2021: Atoo Grace Vs. Onen Anthony & Rubangakene Wilson.

285 [50]. It is trite that the burden of proof under the *Evidence Act, Cap. 6* is placed on the Applicant who has the duty to demonstrate sufficient cause by providing a factual explanation for the delay or delinquency before an Application is allowed with each case being determined on its own
290 circumstances. It therefore cannot simply be left to the Court to impute sufficient cause for reinstatement of any matter without a factual or otherwise legal basis.

[51]. In this Application, presently before the Court, the issue is whether sufficient cause has been demonstrated to the Court to warrant enlargement of time
295 within which to file Memorandum of Appeal - or for that matter to otherwise appropriately judiciously exercise its discretion, as earlier indicated, as raised by the Applicant who relies on ignorance of procedural and substantive Law as his grounds.

[52]. A review of authorities indicates that the “lay man” and “ignorance of the
300 Law” argument is not without precedent and has in fact in some circumstances been successfully argued to constitute sufficient cause.

[53]. Already cited is Misc. Application No. 23/2017: Ojara Otto Vs. Okwera Benson (High Court, Gulu – Hon. Justice Stephen Mubiru), citing SCCA No. 9/1993: Nicholas Rossous Vs. Gulam Hussein Habib Virani
305 Et Al for the proposition that ignorance of procedure by unrepresented litigants may amount to sufficient cause. This would therefore be a validation of ignorance of the Law constituting sufficient cause.

- [54]. In **Misc. Application No. 681/2020: Sentamu Moses and 4 Others Vs. Kenanansi Jackline**, in which the “laymen” argument arose, the Hon. Justice Boniface Wamala citing **SCCA No. 14/2001: Captain Phillip Ongom Vs. Catherine Nyerowoota**, Odoki CJ – summarized sufficient cause to include, *inter alia*, “ignorance of filing procedure by the Defendants”. The Application was granted upon the Court finding sufficient cause.
- [55]. Referenced, on the other hand, was **HCCA No. 21/2010: Byansi Elias & Another Vs. Kiryomujungu** where the Court was quoted to hold that the ground of being laymen ignorant of Court procedures could not amount to sufficient cause to compel a Trial Court to set aside an Ex Parte Judgment.
- [56]. In **Criminal Application No. 22/2017: Waiswa Jamada & 3 Others Vs. Uganda** the Court of Appeal citing **SCCA No. 09/1993: Nicholas Roussous Vs. Gulam Hussein Habib Virani & Anor** considered that Ignorance of procedure by an unrepresented Defendant may amount to sufficient cause.
- [57]. **See: Zirabamuzaale Vs. Correct: 1962 (EA) & Otanga Vs. Nabunjo: (1965) EA 384.**
- [58]. Based on the facts showing that the Applicant represented himself in the Trial Court *Pro Se* and the precedents cited herein-above, the “lay man”, “unrepresented litigant” argument is accepted herein. The Court therefore finds that it has been provided with sufficient cause by way of a credible explanation to exonerate the Applicant for not filing the Memorandum of Appeal timely. The Superior Courts may revisit this ground as they see fit.
- [59]. In regards to alleged dilatory conduct, the Court is of the considered view that the time between when the Applicant obtained the Certified Judgment and Proceedings which upon scrutiny he endorsed on both as the 22nd May, 2023 and filing this Application on the 12th July, 2023 is not unreasonable being unrepresented as has been earlier established.
- [60]. The grounds of Appeal would merit consideration.

- [61]. The only matter left for the Court to consider before reaching its final determination, is the point of Law raised by the Respondents in their belated Written Submissions filed on the 14th December, 2023 and replied to by the Applicants on the 21st December, 2023. The Respondents cite **Order 5 Rules 1(2) of the Civil Procedure Rules** which requires service of summons within Twenty-One (21) days of issue. Upon consideration of the Record of the Court, the Motion was issued on the 18th July, 2023. Service within Twenty-One (21) days would require that it is served by the 8th August, 2023. Further, no extension was sought within Fifteen (15) days of expiration of the Twenty-One (21) days as permitted by the Rules. This would have given allowance up to the 23rd August, 2023. Still, this was not done. Upon scrutiny of the Motion the endorsements indicate that service was effected on the 1st Respondent and 2nd Respondent on the 28th October, 2023.
- [62]. The Court acknowledges that - separate from the Motion - it ordered service of a Hearing Notice by affixation to the Court Notice Board sometime in October, 2023 with the matter for hearing on the 1st November, 2023.
- [63]. Notwithstanding, upon issuance of the Motion, the Applicant was required to effect service within Twenty-One (21) days. In the event of default, **Order 5 Rule 1(2) of the Rules** provides for extension of Fifteen (15) days. Neither the service of the Motion was effected nor extension sought. This is not contested. The Court is of the considered view that for consistency and based on authorities reviewed the requirement for service to be effected within Twenty-One (21) days is mandatory.
- [64]. Inevitably, the Application is dismissed as required by **Order 5 Rule 1(3) of the Civil Procedure Rules, SI 71 – 1. See: HCMA No. 0827/2006: Yudaya International Ltd Vs. The Attorney General. (Hon. Justice Egonda-Ntende), High Court Civil Suit No. 130/2017: Nankabirwa Eva Walusimbi Vs. Mariam Namugenyi Sozi. (Hon. Justice Alexandra Nkonge Rugadya).**

Determination of the Court.

- 370 [65]. Having carefully given due consideration to the Application by Motion and the grounds therein, the supporting affidavits, the responsive affidavits, the submissions filed and the circumstances and totality of the Application and the responses on the merits, the Court holds that the grounds provided and demonstrated by the Applicant of being a “lay man” and an “unrepresented litigant” otherwise “*Ignorantia Juris*” amount to sufficient cause in the circumstances of this case as guided by the decisions of the Supreme Court cited and applied by other Courts as cited.
- 375 [66]. However, based on the Point of Law Raised by the Respondents in regards to the Applicant’s failure to serve the Motion (Summons) within Twenty-One (21) days or otherwise seek extension to serve timely as required and provided for in **Order 5 Rule 1(2) of the Civil Procedure Rules, SI 71-1** leads to the inevitable dismissal of the suit provided for by **Order 5 Rule 1(3) of the Civil**
- 380 **Procedure Rules, SI 71 -1.**
- [67]. In relation to the substantive finding herein-above, the Court observes that the “lay man”, “unrepresented litigant” and, or “*Ignorantia juris*” arguments successfully presented would not apply to service of the Motion (Summons) upon giving consideration to the fact that - as of the filing of the Motion on
- 385 the 12th July, 2023 when service became due - the Applicant was as of then represented by Counsel with the Motion being drawn and filed by Messrs. Abore Advocates and Legal Consultants. He therefore could not further claim to be a *Pro Se* litigant.
- [68]. To determine otherwise would be inconsistent with the Court’s acceptance of
- 390 “*Ignorantia Juris*” as constituting sufficient cause.
- [69]. In the final event, the Application is and stand dismissed.
- [70]. The Applicant shall meet the costs of the Application.

Orders of the Court.

395 [71]. Accordingly, the Court makes the following Orders: -

1. The Application is dismissed under **Order 5 Rule 1(3) of the Civil Procedure Rules, SI 71 -1.**
2. The Applicant shall meet the costs of this Application.

It is so Ordered.

400

Signed and Dated on the 29th day of January, 2024. (High Court, Gulu – Sitting at Kitgum).



Philip W. Mwaka

405 **Acting Judge of the High Court.**

Delivery and Attendance.

This signed and dated Ruling has been delivered in Open Court on **Monday, 29th day of January, 2024 at 09:00am** and the parties present are recorded.

1. Counsel for the Applicant: - Mr. Patrick Abore.
- 410 2. The Applicant: - Mr. Obonyo Peter.
3. Counsel for the Respondents: - Ms. Anena Lagoro Clare for Mr. Egaru E.
4. The Respondent(s): - Mr. Otto Alex (1st) & Mr. Alfred Oryang (2nd).
5. Court Clerk, present: - Ms. Jennifer Lubik Lanyero.



415 **Philip W. Mwaka**

Acting Judge of the High Court.

29th day of January, 2024.