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### **Investigation Key Essence Of Valuation**

As a Land and Building Valuer, I have come across many interesting cases in the past years. Some were tedious, some enlightening, and some so confusing that the whole chain of people involved got puzzled. But none of them were both funny and insightful—except the one I am sharing with my readers today.

This case made me learn that a detailed investigation is necessary for a fair valuation.

So, the “Tale of Two Brothers,” as I prefer to name this case, is actually a Valuation of commercially diverted land belonging to Mr. ‘A,’ who intended to keep this land as collateral for a loan to develop a restaurant on the property. He applied for the loan, and I was allotted the case. I visited the property and met Mr. ‘A,’ who, without stopping, started describing the property as one of the best in town: “As you can see, sir, this is a gem of a plot,





situated right on a four-lane highway and that too very close to the main urban locality. It has ample water, and I wish to open a poolside, pure veg, hygienic restaurant with a meditation center in it”

He was very excited and had big future plans of converting the restaurant into a health club where yoga and other health activities could be carried out.

I took my notes, noted the details, and asked Mr. ‘A’ to carry on with his routine and not to wait for me. After Mr. ‘A’ had long gone, I started my investigation. I was familiar with the location as I also resided nearby and was convinced in my heart that the property was suitable for restaurant-like activities. I enquired about prevailing land rates, compared legal documents, and did all the basic activities that we valuers do to reach a conclusion.

After gathering all the required data, I came back to my office, where I got a call from the banker who was in a hurry, as always, and since the day of visit was Friday, he asked me to hand over the valuation report by Monday. The next morning, when I was on my way to the office, I crossed the same property I had inspected yesterday, and to my surprise, I saw a board reading “UNDER CONSTRUCTION POULTRY FARM” adjacent to the inspected plot. A poultry farm adjacent to any commercial plot adversely affects its value. I enquired with Mr. ‘A,’ and he too was surprised.

Mr. ‘A’ informed me that the adjacent land belonged to his younger brother, and because of sibling rivalry, he had planted the board on his land. I checked the government’s website for any building permission for a poultry farm on the concerned land and found no such permission.

I made enquiries from other landowners having plots near the concerned land, and none of them had any clue about a poultry farm.

As a last resort, I finally called Mr. A’s younger brother:

“Hello sir, I’m a land and building valuer and came across your property at the highway on which a signboard says ‘UNDER CONSTRUCTION POULTRY FARM.’ Are you really constructing a poultry farm there?”

He answered: “Yes, I am about to construct a poultry farm on my village land.” “Then why have you put a signboard on the highway land?” I asked.

After a pause, he answered, “I was checking the visibility of my board. I want to make sure whether it is readable from long distances or not. Since I am happy with my experiment, I will transport the signboard to my village land today.”

I was stunned by his answer and thought, “That one signboard which had shaken the value of all the nearby properties was just a visibility experiment.”

Well, maybe Mr. A’s brother lied and maybe his intentions were ill for Mr. A, but the signboard was removed on the very same day.

This case had a bit of humour in itself, but the lesson it taught was that investigation is an essential part of the Valuation profession. I hope we all will agree on this.