APHC010461572026

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
AT AMARAVATI
(Special Original Jurisdiction)

THURSDAY, THE 3rd DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2026

PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE VENKATESWARLU NIMMAGADDA

WRIT PETITION NO: 25055 OF 2026

Between:

1. Uggam Ramesh, , S/o Seetha Ramaiah, Aged 34 years, Rio Pedaparimi Village, Thulluru Mandal, Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh

...Petitioner

AND

1. The State of Andhra Pradesh, , Rep. by its, Principal Secretary, Mines and Geology Department, Secretariat Buildings at Velagapudi, Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh-522237.

2. The District Mines and Geology Officer, Guntur District, Guntur-522502.

3. The Station House Officer, Thulium Police Station, Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh-522237.

...Respondents

Petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed therewith, the High Court may be pleased to issue a Writ, Order or Direction more particularly one in the nature of Writ of Mandamus declaring the action of respondents in seizing the Tipper Lorry bearing No. . AP 39 WN 2788 of the petitioner without following any procedure under statutes as illegal, arbitrary and violative of the procedure contemplated under the A.P. Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1966 and provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act,

1957., and the rules made there under apart from being violation of Article 14, 19(1)(g) and 300-A of Constitution of India and consequently direct the respondents to release the vehicles of the petitioner from their custody

IA NO: 1 OF 2026

Petition under Section 151 CPC praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed in support of the petition, the High Court may be pleased direct the 2 nd and 3 rd respondents to grant interim custody the Tipper Lorry bearing No . AP 39 VVN 2788 of the petitioner, pending disposal of the above writ petition

Counsel for the Petitioner: CHETAN PONNURU

Counsel for the Respondents: GP FOR HOME Counsel for the Respondents:GP FOR MINES AND GEOLOGY

The Court made the following order:

THE HON'BLE SRI JUSTICE VENKATESWARLU NIMMAGADDA

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ORDER:-

This writ petition is filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of the India seeking the following reliefs:-

> *"to issue a Writ, Order or Direction more particularly one in the nature of Writ of Mandamus declaring the action of respondents in seizing the Tipper Lorry bearing No.AP 39 WN 2788 of the petitioner without following any procedure under statutes as illegal, arbitrary and violative of the procedure contemplated under the A.P. Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1966 and provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, and the rules made there under apart from being violation of Article 14, 19(1)(g) and 300-A of Constitution of India and consequently direct the respondents to release the vehicle of the petitioner from their custody and pass such other order or orders…."*

2. Heard learned counsel for the petitioner and learned Assistant Government Pleader for Mines and Geology appearing for the respondents.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner submits that the petitioner's vehicle was seized by the 3rd respondent without authority of law and in violation of the provisions of Sub-Rule (3)(iii) of Rule 26 of the Andhra Pradesh Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1966. He further submits that a direction may be given to the respondent authorities to pass appropriate orders for the release of the vehicle, and he relies on the decision of this Court passed in W.P.No.1570 of 2026 dated 20.01.2026.

4. Learned Assistant Government Pleader for Mines and Geology appearing for the respondents did not refute the submission made by the

learned counsel for the petitioner since the issue involved in this writ petition is squarely covered by an earlier decision of this Court.

5. It is appropriate to extract the relevant Sub-Rule (3)(iii) of Rule 26 of the Andhra Pradesh Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1966:-

> *"For the sub-rule 3(iii) of Rule 26 of the Andhra Pradesh Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1966: If the Driver or owner of the vehicle fails to produce a valid transit permit issued by the concerned Assistant Director of Mines and Geology, the officer in charge of the check post or barrier or during the interception of the movement of the vehicle, may require the Driver or the owner of the vehicle to pay five times of the normal Seigniorage fee as penalty in addition to the normal Seigniorage fee along with DMF and MERIT amounts for the quantity not covered under the transit permit."*

6. Further, the Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court in ***Naganath Vs. State of A.P.***[1], interpreted the above quoted Rule and categorically held at Para No.7 as under:

> *"..... On a reading of the above Rule, there is nothing to indicate, the vehicle cannot be released, unless the penalty and 5 seigniorage fee is paid. All that the rule states is that the penalty equal to market value of the mineral seized along with seigniorage fee prevalent at that time can be ordered to be paid at the time of interception of the vehicle, if driver or person-incharge of*

[1] WA No.4 of 2021

the vehicle fails to produce a valid permit. But, nowhere the Rule postulates that the vehicle cannot be released, unless the same is paid."

7. In addition, the Hon'ble Supreme Court, in the case of ***Sunderbhai Ambalal Desai Vs. State of Gurajat***[2], in its expression held that merely keeping vehicle would not serve any fruitful purpose.

8. Considering the submissions made by learned counsel on both sides and keeping in view the earlier orders passed by this Court, this Court is inclined to dispose of the Writ Petition at the stage of admission, with the consent of both parties, with the following directions:

i) The 2nd respondent is directed to pass appropriate orders in terms of Sub-Rule (3)(iii) of Rule 26 of the Andhra Pradesh Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1966 and collect the due seigniorage fee and penalty as per law;

ii) After levy of penalty and on payment of such penalty, the petitioner shall produce the receipt of such payment and ownership documents of the vehicle to the satisfaction of the 3rd respondent.

iii) In such an event, the 3rd respondent is hereby directed to release the seized vehicle of the petitioner i.e., Tipper Lorry bearing No. AP 39 WN 2788.

[2] AIR 2003 SC 638

There shall be no order as to costs.

As a sequel, miscellaneous applications pending, if any, shall also stand closed.

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VENKATESWARLU NIMMAGADDA, J

Date:03.09.2026
NOTE:C.C. by 07.09.2026
(B/o)
BSP/PVS

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THE HON'BLE SRI JUSTICE VENKATESWARLU NIMMAGADDA

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