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WP No. 31334 of 2



IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 07-08-2026

CORAM

THE HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE P.T. ASHA

WP No. 31334 of 2026

and

WMP No. 34430 of 2026

R.Sureshkumar
Forest Range office(Rtd)
State Forest Research Institute (SFRI)
Kolapakkam
chennai-638 602

..Petitioner(s)

Vs

1. The State of Tamilnadu
Rep by its Principal secretary to Government
Environment, climate change
and forest Department
St.George Fort
Secretariat
chennai-600 090
2. The Principal chief conservator of forests
Head of Forest force
Guindy,
Velachery
Main Road
Guindy
chennai-600032
3. The Deputy director
Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR)
Udhagamandalam
The Nilgiris District
4. The Deputy conservator of forests
Research SFRI
State Forest Research Institute Division
Kolapakkam
chennai-600 127



..Respondent(s)

Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of Constitution of India, to issue a Writ of Certiorarified Mandamus, calling for the records of impugned proceedings issued by the 2nd respondent dated 31.12.2025 in Na.Ka.No.7250/2025/Pa3 which has been served to the petitioner on 30.3.2026 with date 26.2.2026 by the 4th respondent and to quash the same and consequently direct the respondents to pay the additional payment and allowances for the service rendered by the petitioner as Additional charge of Relocation Range, Mudumalai Tiger Reserve from 1.11.2016 to 29.8.2020 along with interest for the belated payment.

For Petitioner(s): M/s.M.R.Jothimanian
For Respondent(s): Mr.Ilamvaluthi for R1 to R4
Special Government Pleader

ORDER

This petition has been filed challenging the impugned proceedings of the 2nd respondent dated 31.12.2025, seeking to quash the same and consequently direct the respondents to pay the additional payment and allowances for the service rendered by the petitioner as Additional charge of Relocation Range, Mudumalai Tiger Reserve from 1.11.2016 to 29.8.2020 along with interest for the belated payment.

2.It is the case of the petitioner that he has been working as a Forests Guard, Forester and Forest Range Officer for more than 29 years, without any blemish or adverse remarks in his service record. He attained the age of superannuation on 28.02.2025 and was thereafter permitted to retire from



service vide order dated 25.02.2025 passed by the 2nd respondent. While the petitioner was working as Forest Range Officer, Forest Range, Mudumalai Tiger Reserve Division, in the year 2016, a scheme for the Relocation and Rehabilitation of Inhabitants residing within the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) Core Area was undertaken by the Revenue Department. The petitioner was deputed to the Relocation and Resettlement Scheme as an additional charge to coordinate with the District Administration. His duties included monitoring the implementation of the scheme in coordination with the Revenue Officials and the local people, pursuant to the order dated 31.10.2016 issued by the 3rd respondent, directing him to submit a report.

2.1.Pursuant to the said proceedings, the petitioner was entrusted with the additional charge of Forest Range Officer for the Relocation and Resettlement Scheme on 31.10.2016 and submitted his report to the 3rd respondent vide proceedings dated 03.11.2016. He worked as Forest Range Officer, Relocation Range, under the control of the 3rd respondent from 31.10.2016 to 29.08.2020. Subsequently, due to administrative reasons, he was transferred from Nilakkottai Forest Range to Udhagamandalam Range, Mudumalai Tiger Reserve Division. Consequently, he was relieved from the additional charge of the Relocation Range by the 3rd respondent vide proceedings dated 28.08.2020. Therefore, the petitioner is entitled to receive additional pay and allowances for holding the additional charge in accordance with Rule 49 of the Fundamental Rules applicable to the Government of Tamil Nadu.



2.2.The petitioner held the additional charge of the Relocation Range, Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, from 31.10.2016 to 29.08.2020. However, the additional pay and allowances payable for the said additional charge were not paid to him. Therefore, the petitioner submitted several representations dated 18.09.2020, 08.02.2021, 23.11.2021 and 22.03.2022, requesting the authorities to settle and disburse the additional pay and allowances due to him for the period from 31.10.2016 to 29.08.2020. The additional pay and allowances payable under Rule 49 of the Fundamental Rules applicable to the Government of Tamil Nadu ought to have been sanctioned and paid by the 3rd respondent for the period from 31.10.2016 to 29.08.2020. However, the same was denied by the 3rd respondent vide the impugned order dated 31.12.2025, stating that a criminal case is pending against the petitioner and therefore, he is not entitled to receive the said additional pay and allowances.

2.3.The pendency of the said criminal case has no nexus whatsoever with the petitioner's entitlement to additional pay and allowances under Rule 49 of the Fundamental Rules. The 3rd respondent has no authority or justification to withhold the additional pay and allowances payable to the petitioner for the additional charge of Relocation Range, Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, particularly when the petitioner had actually discharged the duties attached to the said additional charge during the period from 31.10.2016 to 29.08.2020. Aggrieved by the said impugned order, the present writ petition has been filed.



3. Heard the learned counsel appearing on either side and perused the materials available on record.

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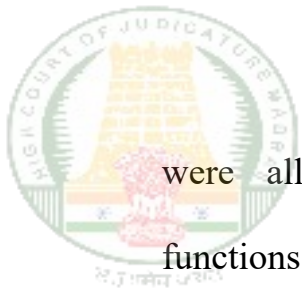
4. The case of the petitioner is that while he was working as a Forest Range Officer, Nilakkottai Forest Range, Mudumalai Tiger Reserve Division, in the year 2018, there was a scheme for the Relocation and Rehabilitation of Inhabitants residing within the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) Core Area undertaken by the Revenue Department. The 3rd respondent was originally Nodal Officer for the scheme. Thereafter, the petitioner was deputed to the Relocation and Resettlement Scheme as additional charge and he has to coordinate with the District Administration. The petitioner was allocated this additional charge on 31.10.2016 by the 3rd respondent and he was directed to submit a report. The petitioner would submit that he had assumed additional charge on 31.10.2016 and also submitted his report to the 3rd respondent vide proceedings dated 03.11.2016. The petitioner had worked in this additional charge from 31.10.2016 till 29.08.2020 under the 3rd respondent. Thereafter, he was transferred to Udhagamandalam Range. It is on account of the fact that he has not been given the pay and allowances for holding the additional charge that he was forced to make a representation.

5. The further case of the petitioner is that while he was carrying out the additional charge, his work was restricted to monitoring the implementation of



the scheme along with the revenue officials and the personnel from the local authority. The petitioner has also given to understand that the entire amounts have been transferred to the Indian Bank, Gudalur Branch and as directed by the District Level Committee, the amounts were also disbursed to the accounts of the beneficiaries. The statement made by the Branch Manager, Indian Bank, Gudalur Branch was that he has directly transferred the accounts to the beneficiaries. Therefore, there was no question that any illegality has been done. While so on 28.07.2020, the 3rd respondent has issued a charge memo. Therefore, based on the complaint that the amounts have not been reached the victims, the petitioner has also submitted his explanation to this charge memo. The same was accepted and the 3rd respondent dropped the disciplinary proceedings against the petitioner by a final order dated 22.10.2024. However, a criminal case is pending against the officials which included the petitioner and on the same set of facts, the second charge memos has been filed. This charge memo has also been challenged by the petitioner in W.P No.33104 of 2025 and the same is pending. The petitioner is a benefiter of the interim order. Though the petitioner attained superannuation on 29.08.2020, he was allowed to retire only on 25.02.2025. The petitioner's additional charges have been withdrawn. Aggrieved by the same, the petitioner is before this Court.

6.A perusal of the records would clearly show that there is no impediment to the petitioner for getting the benefits, since the criminal proceedings that



were alleged are of a much later period than his discharging his additional functions. Therefore, the impugned order on the ground that an FIR is pending against the petitioner cannot be countenanced. Hence the petitioner is entitled to receive additional pay and allowances for holding the additional charge.

7. Accordingly, this writ petition is allowed and the impugned order is quashed. The respondents are directed to pay the additional payment and allowances for the service rendered by the petitioner as Additional charge of Relocation Range, Mudumalai Tiger Reserve from 1.11.2016 to 29.08.2020, within a period of twelve (12) weeks from the date of receipt of a copy of this order. Consequently, connected miscellaneous petition is closed. No costs.

07-08-2026

Index: Yes/No
Speaking/Non-speaking order
Neutral Citation: Yes/No

Uma



To

1. The Principal Secretary to Government
Environment, Climate Change
and Forest Department
St.George Fort
Secretariat
Chennai-600 090
2. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
Head of Forest Force
Guindy, Velachery Main Road
Guindy
Chennai-600032
3. The Deputy Director
Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR)
Udhagamandalam
The Nilgiris District
4. The Deputy Conservator of Forests
Research SFRI
State Forest Research Institute Division
Kolapakkam
Chennai-600 127



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