

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED:08.09.2016

CORAM

The Honourable MR. JUSTICE N.KIRUBAKARAN

W.P.Nos.29807 to 29817, 30105 to 30115 and
31344 to 31347 of 2016
and W.M.P.Nos.25809 to 25819,
26074 to 26084 and 27207 to 27210 of 2016

Ruby Victor	Petitioner W.P.No.29807 of 2016
Mona Bai	Petitioner W.P.No.29808 of 2016
Gausar Basha	Petitioner W.P.No.29809 of 2016
Ms. Bernath Mary	Petitioner W.P.No.29810 of 2016
Ramadoss	Petitioner W.P.No.29811 of 2016
Ms. Vinothini	Petitioner W.P.No.29812 of 2016
Shanthi Manogar	Petitioner W.P.No.29813 of 2016
P. Rajendra Kumar	Petitioner W.P.No.29814 of 2016
Roselin	Petitioner W.P.No.29815 of 2016
Ranga Nayaki Ammal	Petitioner W.P.No.29816 of 2016
Alphonse @ Arokiyasamy	Petitioner W.P.No.29817 of 2016
Ms. Nasrath	Petitioner W.P.No.30105 of 2016
S.Y. Syed Kasim	Petitioner W.P.No.30106 of 2016
Mrs. Rani Kandasamy	Petitioner W.P.No.30107 of 2016
Mohan	Petitioner W.P.No.30108 of 2016
B. Muneer Ahmed	Petitioner W.P.No.30109 of 2016
Lalitha Margarate	Petitioner W.P.No.30110 of 2016
Ms. Mary Louis	Petitioner W.P.No.30111 of 2016
Kasthuri	Petitioner W.P.No.30112 of 2016
Amjath Shareef	Petitioner W.P.No.30113 of 2016
B. B.Arokiyaraj	Petitioner W.P.No.30114 of 2016
Richard	Petitioner W.P.No.30115 of 2016
K.B. Raju	Petitioner W.P.No.31344 of 2016
Suseela	Petitioner W.P.No.31345 of 2016
S. Soundararajan	Petitioner W.P.No.31346 of 2016
E. Nanjundan	Petitioner W.P.No.31346 of 2016

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Vs

The Commissioner
Udhagamandalam Municipality
Udhagamandalam
The Nilgiris

[Respondent in all WPs.]

Writ Petition Nos.29807, 29811, 29815, 29817, 31344, 31345, 31346 and 31347 of 2016 filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for the issuance of a writ of certiorari to call for the entire records relating to the

respondents impugned notice dated 28.06.2016(in WP.Nos.29807, 29811, 29815, 29817, 31344, 31345 and 31347 of 2016 and dated 27.6.2016 (in WP.No.31346 of 2016) in Na.Ka.No.3397/2005/A9 and quash the same.

W.P.Nos.29807, 29809, 29810, 29812, 29813, 29814, 29816, 30105 to 30115 are filed under Article 226 of constitution of India praying to issue Writ of Mandamus forbearing the respondent from evicting the petitioner from his/her residential premises bearing Door NO.5, Baby Hall, Kandal, Udhagamandalam, Door No.118, Upper Bazaar, Udhagamandalam, Door No.49, Mel Kanadiyar St., Baby Hall, Kandal, Udhagamandalam, Door No.159/99, R.K. Puram, Udhagamandalam, Door No.66/144, Willow Bund, Udhagamandalam, Door No.2, Baby Hall, Udhagamandalam, Door NO.13/15, E.B. Line, Udhagamandalam, The Nilgiris, Door NO.42/92, Peytons Road, Udhagamandalam, Door No.7/9, E.B. Line, Udhagamandalam, Door NO.156, R.K. Puram, Udhagamandalam, Door.NO.47, Mel Kandiyar, St., Kandal, Udhagamandalam, Door No.5/7, E.B. Line, Udhagamandalam, Door, No.4/6, E.B. Line Udhagamandalam, bearing at peytons Road, Udhagamandalam, Door NO.69/147, Barber line, Udhagamandalam, Door No.70/148, Willow Bund, Udhagamandalam, Door No.67/145, willow Bund, Udhagamandalam, Door NO.9/9, Baby Hall, Udhagamandalam, The Niligirs respectively without following due process of law

For Petitioners : Mr.L.Mouli (in all WPs)

For Respondent : Mr.P.Srinivas (in WPs.
WP.Nos.29807 to 29817,
30105 to 30115/16

Mr.T.M. Pappiah, Spl. G.P. for
Mr.P. Srinivas (in WPs.31344 to
31447/16

COMMON ORDER

The writ petitions have been filed challenging the respective impugned notices.

2. Heard the learned counsels on either side and perused the materials available on record.

3.1 The petitioners are in occupation of the buildings which are under the control of the respondent Municipality. The petitioners ancestors were employed by British regime and they were allotted quarters calling as model building in Udhagamandalam. After the death of their father or grand father, the petitioners are residing in the premises in question, even though they are not the employees of the Municipality.

3.2 Earlier, the Municipality, tried to enhance the rent, which was challenged by the Udhagai Nagaratchi Kudiruppugalil Kudiruppor Nala Sangam in W.P.No.3397 of 2004, wherein, an interim order was passed. Challenging the same, the said Sangam, preferred an appeal in W.A.No.1406 of 2004 and this Court, by Judgment dated 20.10.2008, while disposing of both the writ appeal and the writ petition, gave a direction to the Commissioner to conduct an enquiry and if the buildings are not occupied by the tenants, liberty was given to take action to vacate those persons from the premises. Subsequently, on 02.02.2016, an order was passed by the Commissioner, directing the occupants to vacate the premises, which was challenged by the said Sangam in W.P.No.16880 of 2016 and this Court, by order dated 29.04.2016, set aside the said order dated 02.02.2016 and directed the respondent to pass a speaking order. Consequently, the present impugned orders have been issued directing the respective petitioners to vacate the premises in question. Challenging the same, the petitioners are before this Court.

4. The learned counsel for the petitioners would submit that the premises in question is the public premises and hence the Tamil Nadu Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1975 (hereinafter referred to as "the Act") is applicable. According to the learned counsels, as per Section 4 of the said Act, a notice has to be issued to the occupants and only after getting a reply from the occupants, eviction order has to be passed under Section 5 of the Act. But, as far as the cases on hand are concerned, no notice whatsoever has been issued. Hence, the impugned orders are liable to be set aside.

5. On the other hand, learned counsel appearing on behalf of the respondent Municipality would submit that only pursuant to the orders passed by this Court, the present impugned orders have been passed. The learned counsel would further submit that in any event, the impugned orders may be directed to be treated as show cause notices issued under Section 4 of the Act and the respondent Municipality would follow the provisions of the Act.

6. A perusal of the records would show that the premises under the occupation of the petitioners are public premises, which are under the control of the respondent Municipality. The respondent Municipality require the buildings for allotment of the same to their employees, as the petitioners are not their employees. Therefore, the present impugned orders have been passed. In any event, since it is public premises, the provisions of the Act have to be followed. As rightly pointed out by the learned counsel for the petitioners, a show cause notice is mandatory under Section 4 of the Act before passing an order under Section 5 of the Act. At this juncture, it is relevant to extract below Section 4 of the Act.

"4. Issue of notice to show cause against order of eviction:- If the estate officer is of the opinion that any persons are in unauthorised occupation of any public premises and that they should be evicted, the estate officer shall issue, in the manner hereinafter provided a notice in writing calling upon all persons concerned to show cause why an order of eviction should not be made.

(2) The notice shall -

(a) specify the grounds on which the order of eviction is proposed to be made; and

(b) require all persons concerned that is to say, all persons who are, or may be, occupation of, or claim interest in, the public premises, to show cause, if any against the proposed order on or before such date as is specified in the notice, being a date not earlier than ten days from the date of issue thereof.

(3) The estate officer shall cause the notice to be served by having it affixed on the outer door or some other conspicuous part of the public premises and in such other manner as may be prescribed, whereupon the notice shall be deemed to have been duly given to all persons concerned.

(4) Where the estate officer knows or has reason to believe that any person is, in occupation of the public premises, then, without prejudice to the provisions of sub-section (3), he shall cause a copy of the notice to be served on every such person by post or by delivering or tendering it to that person or in such other manner as may be prescribed". सत्यमेव जयते

Taking into consideration the earlier round of litigation and various attempts made by the Municipality to vacate the petitioners and similarly placed persons, it is appropriate to treat the impugned orders as notices issued under Section 4 of the Act. Further, as per Section 4(2) (b) of the Act, 10 days is granted for giving a reply.

7. Therefore, this Court directs the petitioners as well as the respondent Municipality to treat the impugned orders issued to the respective petitioners as notices issued under Section 4 of the Act and the petitioners are directed to give a reply within 10 days from today. On such reply being received by the respondent from the petitioners, the respondent is directed to consider the same and pass orders under Section 5 of the Act within a period of six weeks thereafter. Till such an order is passed under Section 5 of

the Act by the respondent, the petitioners' possession shall not be disturbed.

The writ petitions are disposed of accordingly. No costs. Connected miscellaneous petitions are closed.

Sd/-
Assistant Registrar(CS VI)

//True Copy//

Sub Assistant Registrar

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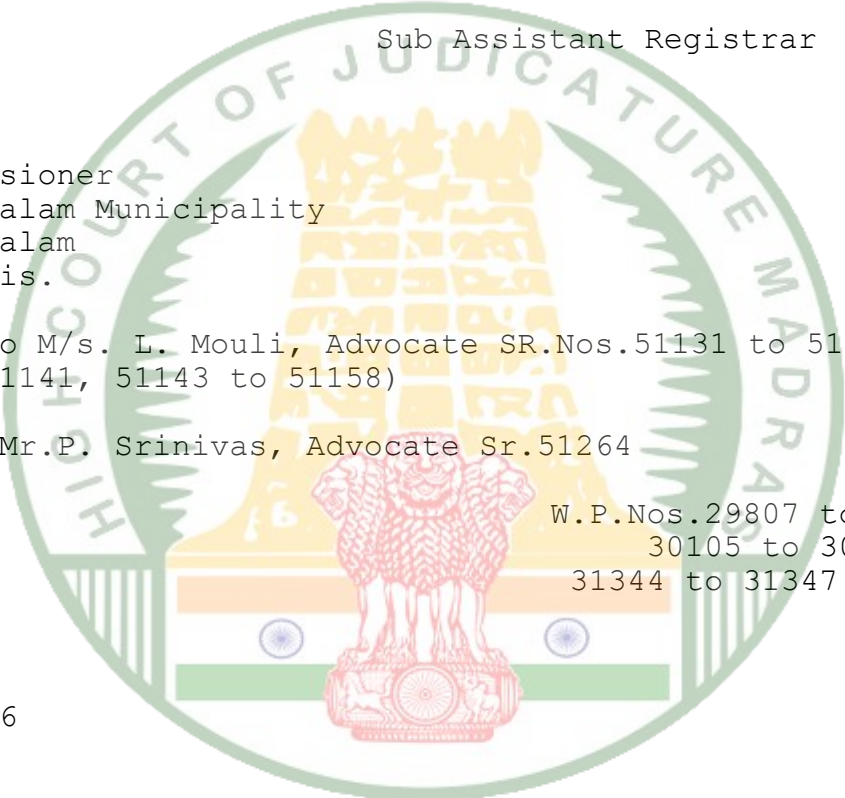
To
The Commissioner
Udhagamandalam Municipality
Udhagamandalam
The Nilgiris.

+ 26 ccs to M/s. L. Mouli, Advocate SR.Nos.51131 to 51135,
51137 to 51141, 51143 to 51158)

+ 1 cc to Mr.P. Srinivas, Advocate Sr.51264

W.P.Nos.29807 to 29817,
30105 to 30115 and
31344 to 31347 of 2016

RV(CO)
Eu 23.09.16



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