

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 09.08.2017

CORAM

THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE M.DURAI SWAMY

W.P.No.21183 of 2017

A.Sathiyaraj

... Petitioner

vs.

1 The Revenue Divisional Officer
Chengalpattu
Kancheepuram District

2 The Inspector of Police
Chengalpattu Town Police Station
Chengalpattu
Kancheepuram District

... Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of The Constitution of India praying to issue a writ of mandamus directing the respondents to release the Earth Moving Equipment JCB bearing Registration No.TN 02 AF 2145 which was seized by the 2nd respondent on 20.12.2016 and thereby consider the representation dated 01.02.2017.

For Petitioner : Mr.G.Punniakoti

For Respondents : Mr.R.Rajeswaran
Special Government Pleader

O R D E R

Mr.R.Rajeswaran, learned Special Government Pleader, takes notice for the respondents. By consent, the main writ petition itself is taken up for disposal at the admission stage itself.

2. The petitioner has filed the above Writ Petition to issue a writ of mandamus, directing the respondents to release the Earth Moving Equipment JCB bearing Registration No.TN 02 AF 2145 which was seized by the 2nd respondent on 20.12.2016 and thereby consider the representation dated 01.02.2017.

3. The learned counsel appearing for the petitioner submitted that in similar circumstances, this Court, by order

dated 27.02.2017 in W.P.No.4805 of 2017, disposed of the said writ petition by imposing some conditions for releasing the vehicle. The relevant portion of the order passed in W.P.No.4805 of 2017 reads as follows:-

"6. Having regard to the fact that the representation dated 24.1.2017 is pending consideration of the 1st respondent, this Court is inclined to dispose of the writ petition with the following direction, since there will not be any purpose in detaining the subject vehicle for a longer period:-

"(i) The petitioner shall deposit a sum of Rs.25,000/- (Rupees twenty five thousand only) in cash with the first respondent.

(ii) The petitioner shall produce documents before the first respondent to establish the ownership of the vehicle in question.

(iii) The petitioner shall file an undertaking that he will produce the vehicle in question before the respondent as and when called for and that he will not alienate the vehicle in question till the proceedings initiated are completed.

(iv) On compliance of the above conditions, the respondent is directed to release the vehicle to the petitioner within two days.

(v) The respondent shall proceed with the enquiry and pass appropriate orders. The petitioner is also directed to appear and co-operate with the enquiry.

(vi) This order for release of vehicle can be availed of by the petitioner if no criminal case is pending. If any criminal case is pending, it is open to the petitioner to approach the jurisdictional Magistrate to get release of the vehicle by filing appropriate application and the same can be considered in accordance with law".

4. It appears that the equipment of the petitioner was seized on 20.12.2016 on account of a charge levelled against him that he was transporting sand without any valid bill or

permission of the Government.

5. The petitioner, on the other hand, claims that the sand was transported by him for his personal use and it was required for agricultural purpose and therefore, it would not come within the purview of Tamil Nadu Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1959. In this regard, the petitioner seeks to place reliance upon Rule 6 of the said Rules.

6. The petitioner further contends that he had submitted a representation dated 01.02.2017 in this regard to the first respondent and since no order has been passed on such representation, he is constrained to file the present writ petition. Further, according to the learned counsel for the petitioner, the equipment is kept in open weather, by which the same is getting damaged.

7. Mr.R.Rajeswaran, learned Special Government Pleader, appearing for the respondents submitted that since the issue involved in the present writ petition is covered by the earlier order passed by this Court, the same order can be passed in this writ petition also.

8. Having regard to the submissions made by the learned counsel on either side and that the representation dated 01.02.2017 is pending consideration before the 1st respondent, this Court is inclined to dispose of the writ petition with the following directions, since there will not be any purpose in detaining the subject vehicle for a longer period:-

"(i) The petitioner shall deposit a sum of Rs.25,000/- (Rupees twenty five thousand only) in cash with the 1st respondent.

(ii) The petitioner shall produce documents before the 1st respondent to establish the ownership of the equipment in question.

(iii) The petitioner shall file an undertaking that he will produce the equipment in question before the 1st respondent as and when called for and that he will not alienate the equipment in question till the proceedings initiated are completed.

(iv) On compliance of the above conditions, the 1st respondent is directed to release the equipment to the petitioner within two days.

(v) The 1st respondent shall proceed with the enquiry and pass appropriate orders. The petitioner is also directed to appear and co-operate with the enquiry.

(vi) This order for release of

equipment can be availed of by the petitioner if no criminal case is pending. If any criminal case is pending, it is open to the petitioner to approach the jurisdictional Magistrate to get release of the equipment by filing appropriate application and the same can be considered in accordance with law".

With the above observations, the Writ Petition is disposed of. No costs.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar(CCC)

//True Copy//

Sub Assistant Registrar

Rj

To

- 1 The Revenue Divisional Officer
Chengalpattu
Kancheepuram District
- 2 The Inspector of Police
Chengalpattu Town Police Station
Chengalpattu
Kancheepuram District

+1cc to Mr.G.Punniyakotti, Advocate SR.No.57226

+1cc to Government Pleader SR.No.57952

W.P.No.21183 of 2017

RR(CO)
GN(11/08/2017)

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