

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 06.09.2017

CORAM

THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE M.DURAI SWAMY

W.P.No.23961 of 2017

A.Balakrishnan

... Petitioner

v.

The Sub Collector/Revenue Divisional Officer
Kanchipuram Revenue Divisional Office
Kanchipuram District

... Respondent

Petition filed under Article 226 of The Constitution of India praying to issue a writ of mandamus directing the respondent to release the Ashok Leyland Lorry (Multi Axle Goods Vehicle) bearing Registration No.TN-73-C-6224 seized by the Assistant Director of Mines and Minerals, Kanchipuram District on 17.07.2017 to the petitioner.

For Petitioner : Mr.B.Gopala Krishnan

For Respondent : Mr.R.Rajeswaran
Special Government Pleader

O R D E R

Mr.R.Rajeswaran, learned Special Government Pleader, takes notice for the respondent. 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 respondent to release the Ashok Leyland Lorry (Multi Axle Goods Vehicle) bearing Registration No.TN-73-C-6224 seized by the Assistant Director of Mines and Minerals, Kanchipuram District on 17.07.2017 to the petitioner.

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 vehicle of the petitioner was seized on 27.07.2017 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 his driver for his personal use of house construction 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 02.08.2017 in this regard to the 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 vehicle is kept in open weather, by which the same is getting damaged.

7. Mr.R.Rajeswaran, learned Special Government Pleader, appearing for the respondent 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 02.08.2017 is pending consideration before the 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 respondent.

(ii) The petitioner shall produce documents before the 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".

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

Sd/-
Asst.Registrar (CS V)

/true copy/

Sub Asst. Registrar

Rj

To

The Sub Collector/Revenue Divisional Officer
Kanchipuram Revenue Divisional Office
Kanchipuram District

+1cc to Mr.B.Gopalakrishnan, Advocate Sr. 64603

W.P.No.23961 of 2017

AR(V)
VR(08/09/2017)

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