

THE HON'BLE SRI JUSTICE M.SEETHARAMA MURTI

WRIT PETITION No.41730 of 2017

ORDER:

This Writ petition, under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, is filed by the petitioner seeking the following relief:

'...to issue a writ, order or direction and more particularly one in the nature of Writ of Mandamus declaring the acts of the Respondents 2 to 4 in not granting interim custody of the vehicle JCB bearing No.AP03-AZ 4639 to the petitioner is illegal, arbitrary and violative of principles of natural justice and to pass such other order or orders as this Hon'ble Court deems fit and proper in the circumstances of the case.'

2. At the hearing, learned counsel for the petitioner submits that the issue involved in the present writ petition is squarely covered by the orders of this Court, dated 17.11.2017, in W.P.No.38774 of 2017, and requests to release the subject vehicle also on the same lines and in terms of the orders in the afore-stated writ petition.

3. Learned Government Pleader for Home representing the 4th respondent would submit that after the seizure of the vehicle, a case in Crime No.30 of 2017 has been registered by the Station House Officer, Gajulamandyam Police Station, for the offence punishable under Section 379 of IPC and the penal provisions of MMDAR Act, 1957, and the Andhra Pradesh Water, Land and Trees Rules, 2004, and that after the crime has been registered, the seizure of the vehicle is reported to the Court of the learned Magistrate and, therefore, the petitioner has to approach the learned Magistrate by filing an appropriate application for release of the vehicle.

4. Learned counsel for the petitioner would submit that the petitioner would approach either the Court concerned or the competent authority for the release of the subject vehicle by following the procedure established by law.

5. Having regard to the submissions and without expressing any views on the merits of the matter, this Court, at this stage, is satisfied that in the facts and circumstances of the case, the interim custody of the JCB can be given to the petitioner after imposing necessary conditions as release of the seized vehicles by the Magistrates or the authority concerned is a rule and the rejection is an exception. Powers of the Court/competent authority, wherever and whenever exercisable, are to be properly and promptly exercised to see that vehicles are not kept for a long time, that is, for more than fifteen days to one month at the police station or a public office or the Court house, in any case. Keeping any vehicle idle in an open place exposing it to Sun, Rain and inclement/rough Weather without any protection would lead to deterioration of its value and irreparable damage. Instead of allowing a vehicle to lie idle and rot in front of a police station or a public office or in the yard of a Court House, it is apposite to give interim custody of the vehicle to an eligible applicant as such a course helps not only in keeping the vehicle in the same good condition but also inures for the benefit of the ultimate successful party. There are no compelling reasons, in the case on hand, to not to pass an order giving interim custody of the subject vehicles to the petitioner.

6. Having regard to the facts and submissions, this writ petition is disposed of with the following conditions:

“In case, the seizure of the JCB is reported to the Court of the learned Magistrate as per procedure and/or the same is deposited/produced before the Court, the learned Magistrate concerned shall release and give interim custody of the JCB bearing No. AP 03 AZ 4639 to the petitioner, however, on the petitioner furnishing personal bond and third party surety/sureties to the satisfaction of the learned Magistrate concerned and on further undertaking that he will not alienate or transfer the subject JCB in any manner and will maintain it

in the same good and road worthy condition without changing any of its features and major parts and shall produce it along with its vehicular document at a specified place or before a specified authority as and when directed. However, in case the seizure of the tractor is not already reported to the Court concerned as per law and the same is not already produced/deposited before the Court of the competent Magistrate, the competent authority shall release and give interim custody of the JCB to the petitioner however, on the petitioner furnishing personal bond and third party surety/sureties to the satisfaction of the said competent authority and on further giving an undertaking on the same lines as indicated supra. On the petitioner approaching the Court or the competent authority, as the case may be, and making a request, along with a copy of this order, for release of the JCB, the necessary exercise as indicated supra shall be completed within two days from the date of the request of the petitioner.”

There shall be no order as to costs.

Miscellaneous petitions pending, if any, shall stand closed.

15.12.2017

Note:-

Issue CC by 18.12.2017

(B/o)

Vjl

M.SEETHARAMA MURTI, J