

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT PATNA

Civil Writ Jurisdiction Case No.5268 of 2018

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Yuvraj Bhagat, S/o Late Satyadeo Bhagat, Resident of Village- Baijanathpur,
P.S.- Sour Bazar, District- Saharsa.

.... Petitioner

Versus

1. The State of Bihar, through the Secretary, Food & Consumer Protection Department, Government of Bihar, Patna.
2. The Collector, Saharsa.
3. The Block Supply Officer, Sour Bazar, Saharsa.

.... Respondents

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Appearance :

For the Petitioner : Mr. Dhananjaya Nath Tiwari, Advocate.

For the Respondents : Mr. S.Raza Ahmad, AAG-5

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CORAM: HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE VIKASH JAIN

ORAL JUDGMENT

Date: 21-06-2018

The petitioner seeks a direction to release 62 bags (31 quintals of arwa rice) and 232 bags (93 quintals paddy) seized by the Block Supply Officer, Sour Bazar, Saharsa giving rise to Sour Bazar P.S. Case No. 586 of 2017 registered under Section 7 of the Essential Commodities Act..

2. Learned counsel for the petitioner submits that the issue whether the Collector is empowered to direct confiscation, which is a judicial function, has been referred to a larger Bench by order dated 19.09.2016 passed in LPA No. 1647 of 2015. Pending decision by the larger Bench, a Division Bench of this Court in LPA No. 2383 of 2016 has taken the view that the vehicle can be released in the



meantime.

3. Learned counsel for the respondents appears and has been heard.

4. The Division Bench in its order dated 17.04.2017 passed in LPA No. 2383 of 2016 referred to above, has directed as follows –

“Keeping view the aforesaid, we direct for the release of the vehicle (Regn. No.BR-02AA-6312) in accordance to the conditions stipulated in para 5 of the order passed on 21.2.2017 in L.P.A. No. 306 of 2017 and impose a further condition that apart from the security bond a solvent surety shall be furnished by the petitioner to the satisfaction of the competent authority.”

5. In L.P.A. No. 306 of 2017 referred to above, the vehicle in question was directed to be released provisionally on the following terms –

“5. In the meanwhile we order that the vehicle in question (BR 26H-4109) be released provisionally to the satisfaction of the Authorized Officer-cum-Divisional Forest Officer, Rohtas at Sasaram on fulfillment of the following conditions:-

(i) The appellants shall furnish all the necessary papers/documents of ownership and security bonds (which will not include Bank Guarantee) as may be deemed fit and proper by the Divisional Forest Officer-cum-Authorized Officer, Rohtas Forest Division,



Sasaram, District- Rohtas.

(ii) The appellants shall undertake, in writing, that the vehicle, in question, shall neither be alienated nor be transferred in favour of any third party during the pendency of the confiscation proceeding and that the vehicles, in question, shall be produced as and when called upon or required in the confiscation proceeding or otherwise.
List after the decision of L.P.A. No. 1647 of 2015.”

6. In the above view of the matter and considering that the challenge to the Collector’s jurisdiction to pass an order of confiscation is itself pending before a larger Bench of this Court, the present writ petition is disposed of with a direction to release 62 bags (31 quintals of arwa rice) and 232 bags (93 quintals paddy) on the same terms as the aforesaid direction in LPA No. 2383 of 2016. Such release shall abide by the final decision in L.P.A. No. 1647 of 2015.

(Vikash Jain, J)

Md. Ibrarul/BT

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