

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 20-12-2019

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE S.M.SUBRAMANIAM

A.S.Nos.309 to 313, 315, 316, 406, 407, 408 of 2016
& 1004 of 2019
and

C.M.P.Nos.6501 to 6505, 6507 to 6509, 9812 to 9815 of 2016
& 27677 of 2019

The Chairman
Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited,
Neyveli. ..Appellant/3rd Respondent in all Appeal Suits

vs.

Saradham ..1st Respondent/Claimant in A.S.No.309/2016
Poongothai ..1st Respondent/Claimant in A.S.No.310/2016
Nallathambi ..1st Respondent/Claimant in A.S.No.311/2016
Poongothai ..1st Respondent/Claimant in A.S.No.312/2016
Periyasamy ..1st Respondent/Claimant in A.S.No.313/2016
Valarmathi ..1st Respondent/Claimant in A.S.No.315/2016
Ramamirtham ..1st Respondent/Claimant in A.S.No.316/2016
Marimuthu ..1st Respondent/Claimant in A.S.No.406/2016
Kannaiya Naidu ..1st Respondent/Claimant in A.S.No.407/2016
Bhuvaneswari ..1st Respondent/Claimant in A.S.No.408/2016
Annakili ..1st Respondent/Claimant in A.S.No.1004/2019

2.The Special Tahsildar(Land Acquisition)
Jayamkondam Lignite Power Project,
Jayamkondam. ..2nd Respondent/1st Respondent in all
Appeal Suits

3.The Executive Director,
Tamil Nadu Industrial Development
Corporation(TIDCO)
Egmore, Chennai - 600 008

..3rd Respondent/2nd Respondent in all Appeal Suits

Appeals filed under Section 54 of the Land Acquisition Act 1894, aggrieved by the Judgments and Decrees passed in L.A.O.P.Nos. 2925, 3298, 3324, 3327, 3366, 726, 222, 678, 739, 745 & 1329/2008 respectively on the file of the Special Court No.1, Jayamkondam dated 31.01.2013.

For Appellant : Mr.N.Nithianandam
[in all A.S]

For Respondents:For R2 - Mr.J.Bala Gopal
Special Government Pleader (AS)
[in all A.S]

C O M M O N J U D G M E N T

The issues involved in the First Appeals are one and the same and hence, they are disposed of by this common order. These First Appeals are filed to set aside the judgment and decree passed by the Special Court, Jayamkondam in the following L.A.O.Ps:

L.A.O.P.Nos	Dated	Special Court No.	IN A.S.Nos
L.A.O.P.No.2925/2008	31.01.2013	I	A.S.No.309/2016
L.A.O.P.No.3298/2008	31.01.2013	I	A.S.No.310/2016
L.A.O.P.No.3324/2008	31.03.2013	I	A.S.No.311/2016
L.A.O.P.No.3327/2008	31.01.2013	I	A.S.No.312/2016
L.A.O.P.No.3366/2008	31.01.2013	I	A.S.No.313/2016
L.A.O.P.No.726/2008	21.03.2013	I	A.S.No.315/2016
L.A.O.P.No.222/2008	28.03.2014	II	A.S.No.316/2016
L.A.O.P.No.678/2008	29.01.2013	I	A.S.No.406/2016
L.A.O.P.No.739/2008	29.01.2013	I	A.S.No.407/2016
L.A.O.P.No.745/2008	29.01.2013	I	A.S.No.408/2016
L.A.O.P.No.1329/2008	29.01.2013	I	A.S.No.1004/2019

2. The learned counsel appearing on behalf of the appellant, at the first instance, brought to the notice of this Court that the similar issues in respect of the same acquisition proceedings were concluded and the Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court passed a judgment on 27.08.2015 in A.S.Nos.233 to 239 of 2013 & etc., batch and the relevant paragraphs of the judgment of the Hon'ble Division Bench in Paragraphs 18 to 23 are extracted hereunder:

"18.As rightly contended by the learned counsel for the appellant, the lands were not acquired for the benefit of the appellant at the beginning. The Notifications under Section 4(1) of the Act, whatsoever, were not issued, showing the appellant as the requisitioning body. The original Notifications were issued only for the purpose of implementing the power project at the behest of TIDCO. As a matter of fact, TIDCO associated itself with a company by name McNally Bharath Engineering Company Limited and four other German companies as equity partners. This partnership gave birth to a new company called Jayamkondam Lignite Power Corporation Limited. If at all, any one could be called the requisitioning body, it could either be TIDCO or at least Jayamkondam Lignite Power Corporation Limited. NLC was nowhere in the picture from the year 1993 till the year 2004. NLC came into picture to rescue the State of Tamil Nadu, the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board as well as TIDCO, which got caught into a project that became a non-starter. But they have now become the victim.

19.The State of Tamil Nadu, by Tamil Nadu Amendment Act 16/97 inserted Section 25A into the Land Acquisition Act, 1894. This Section starts with a non-obstante clause. This Section makes the compensation awarded in excess of the amount awarded by the Collector, payable by the party for whom the acquisition is made. The acquisition in this case was not made for the benefit of NLC. NLC was roped in to save the State Corporation as well as the State of Tamil Nadu. Therefore, in no way, the liability can be fastened upon them.

20.However, bringing our attention to two more amendments made by the State of Tamil Nadu, one to Section 19 and another to Section 20, Mr.M.Vijayan, learned counsel for TIDCO contended that the appellant was dragged into the picture only because of the hopes that they gave and the agreements that they have

entered into from the year 2005 up to the year 2012 when they finally withdrew from the picture. Therefore, he vehemently opposed the stand taken by the appellant that they are not liable to pay any compensation.

21. We have carefully considered the above submissions. Under Section 19(1) of the Act, the State of Tamil Nadu inserted clause (bb), which made it mandatory for the impleadment of the third parties, if the acquisition was not for the Government. Similarly, by the Amendment Act 14/90, clause (d) was inserted under Section 20 to enable the Court to serve notice upon all the parties for the benefit of whom, the acquisition was made. These amendments were necessitated in view of a controversy that was prevailing at that time as to whether the requisitioning body would have a right to be heard in the matter of determination of compensation at all.

22. But the fact that NLC was a necessary party, is different from the question as to whether they have any liability to pay the compensation or not. NLC was not the requisitioning body when the project was contemplated. It was roped in half way through when the joint venture floated by the Government failed and after Reliance Industries Limited backed out, after participating in the international competitive bidding. A person, who came to rescue the Government, cannot be made a victim. Therefore, the first contention of the learned counsel for the appellant deserves to be upheld.

23. In view of our finding that the appellant does not have any liability, the second question as to whether the quantum of compensation was correct or not is not answered by us."

3. In view of the fact that the issues raised in these appeals are no more less integral. The Judgment of the Hon'ble Division Bench is to be followed in respect of these appeals as cited supra. Accordingly, as far as the appellants are concerned, the Judgment and decree passed by the Special Court, Jayamkondam in the following L.A.O.Ps are set aside:

L.A.O.P.Nos	Dated	Special Court No.	IN A.S.Nos
L.A.O.P.No.2925/2008	31.01.2013	I	A.S.No.309/2016
L.A.O.P.No.3298/2008	31.01.2013	I	A.S.No.310/2016
L.A.O.P.No.3324/2008	31.03.2013	I	A.S.No.311/2016

L.A.O.P.Nos	Dated	Special Court No.	IN A.S.Nos
L.A.O.P.No.3327/2008	31.01.2013	I	A.S.No.312/2016
L.A.O.P.No.3366/2008	31.01.2013	I	A.S.No.313/2016
L.A.O.P.No.726/2008	21.03.2013	I	A.S.No.315/2016
L.A.O.P.No.222/2008	28.03.2014	II	A.S.No.316/2016
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L.A.O.P.No.739/2008	29.01.2013	I	A.S.No.407/2016
L.A.O.P.No.745/2008	29.01.2013	I	A.S.No.408/2016
L.A.O.P.No.1329/2008	29.01.2013	I	A.S.No.1004/2019

4. The appellant in these First Appeals is permitted to withdraw the amount, if any deposited, at the time of admission of the First Appeal along with the interest accrued. Consequently, all the First Appeals stand allowed. No costs. The connected miscellaneous petitions are closed.

s/d-
Assistant Registrar

True Copy

Sub-Assistant Registrar

To

1. The Special Judge No.I
Jayamkondam.

2.The Special Tahsildar(Land Acquisition)
Jayamkondam Lignite Power Project,
Jayamkondam.

3.The Section Officer
VR Section, High Court, Madras 104.

+2 Ccs to Mr.N.Nithianandam, Advocate sr 106481 & 106479.

A.S.Nos.309 to 313, 315, 316, 406,
407, 408 of 2016 & 1004 of 2019

CNR(CO)
SP(03/12/2020)