

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH.**

CRWP No.1 of 2019

Date of decision: 01.01.2019

Lal Bahu Rawat

.....Petitioner

Versus

State of Haryana & others

.....Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ARUN KUMAR TYAGI

Present : Mr. Kamal Singh, Advocate for the petitioner.

ARUN KUMAR TYAGI, J (ORAL)

The petitioner has filed this petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for issuance of a writ in the nature of Habeas Corpus directing the respondents No.2 and 3 to get the detenues named in para No.3 of the petition released from illegal custody of respondents No.4 and 5 and their musclemen or produce them in this Court. The petitioner has further prayed for appointment of warrant officer and also for issuance of appropriate order/direction for ensuring return of household belongings of the petitioner and detenues and payment of wages amounting to Rs.7 lakhs by respondents No.4 and 5 till date.

It has been held by this Court in “**Murti versus The State of Punjab and others**”, LPA No. 32 of 2013 decided on 11.01.2013, as under:-

“It may be mentioned here that the allegations of the appellant in the writ petition are that the alleged detenues mentioned in para No.3 of the writ petition who are working as labourers at the brick kiln of respondent Nos.4 & 5 are being kept as bonded labours. There can indeed be no doubt that if a labourer has been detained as bonded labour, it amounts to an offence under Sections 16 & 17 of the Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act, 1976. We, however,

clarify that the aforesaid observation does not mean that the allegations levelled by the appellant have been accepted. Suffice it to observe that under the Act, the District Magistrate is under statutory obligation to hold a fact finding enquiry as and when a complaint alleging violation of the provisions of Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act, 1976 is received. Since the appellant in the instant case has specifically averred that the persons mentioned in para No.3 of the writ petition have been detained as bonded labourers, we allow this appeal and set aside/modify the order dated 9.1.2013 passed by the learned Single Judge to the extent that the petitioner's writ petition is disposed of with a direction to the District Magistrate, Sangrur, to treat this writ petition as a complaint under the 1976 Act and take immediate action in accordance with law, within a period of one week from the date of receiving a certified copy of this order alongwith a copy of the writ petition.”

Accordingly, this Criminal Writ Petition is disposed of with a direction to respondent No.2–District Magistrate-cum-Deputy Commissioner, Yamuna Nagar, Haryana, to treat this petition as a complaint under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 and take immediate action in accordance with law, within a period of one week from the date of receiving a certified copy of this order along with a copy of the writ petition

(ARUN KUMAR TYAGI)
JUDGE

01.01.2019

Vinay

Whether speaking/reasoned : Yes/No

Whether reportable : Yes/No