

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 14.08.2020

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE N.ANAND VENKATESH

W.P.No.10567 of 2020

Bernadette alias Anitha Raman,
W/o.R.Seetharaman.

... Petitioner

Vs.

1.Sub Registrar,
Registration Department,
Office of the Sub Registrar, Goodaloor,
Old Court Road, Goodalur, Bazaar,
Nilgiris District, Goodaloor - 643 212.
2.The District Registrar,
Registration Department,
Ooty, Nilgiris District.
3.The Inspector General of Registration,
Registration Department,
Santhome High Road, Mylapore, Chennai - 4.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of Constitution of India, seeking Writ of Mandamus, directing the 1st respondent to register the document of judgment and decree dated 13.04.2018 passed in the partition suit in O.S.No.38 of 2017 on the file of the District Judge, Nilgiris, at Udhagamandalam, which was submitted by the petitioner before the 1st respondent for registration on 13.11.2018 and return the same to the petitioner.

For Petitioner : Mr.R.Amizhdhu

For Respondent : Mr.T.M.Pappiah
Special Government Pleader

O R D E R

This Writ Petition has been filed for issuance of writ of mandamus directing the first respondent to register the document presented by the petitioner pursuant to the judgment and decree passed in O.S.No.38 of 2017, dated 13.04.2018.

2. The case of the petitioner is that a judgment and decree was passed in a partition suit in O.S.No.38 of 2017 by

the District Court, Nilgiris. The petitioner wanted to register the document on the basis of the said judgment and decree and hence it was submitted before the 1st respondent on 13.11.2018. According to the petitioner, though the judgment and decree was presented before four months, the 1st respondent kept the documents pending without registering the same till date. The petitioner has made a representation to the first respondent, and the same did not evoke any response and hence the petitioner was left with no other alternative except to file the present writ petition before this Court seeking appropriate directions.

3. Heard Mr.R.Amizhdhu, learned counsel appearing on behalf of the petitioner and Mr.T.M.Pappiah, learned Special Government Pleader, appearing on behalf of the respondents.

4. The issue involved in the present writ petition is squarely covered by the earlier order passed by this Court in W.P.No.9686 of 2020, dated 24.07.2020. The relevant portions of the order is extracted hereunder:

"5. The issue that is involved in the present writ petition is squarely covered by the Division Bench judgment in S.Sarvothaman Vs.Sub Registrar in W.A.No.336 of 2019 dated 07.02.2019. The relevant portions in the judgment is extracted hereunder:

"13. As pointed out by us earlier, we need to first address the legal issue, which arises for consideration as to whether at all the law of limitation as prescribed under Section 23 of the Act would apply to a court decree.

14. This question is no longer res integra and this Court has consistently held that the law of limitation will not apply when a court decree is presented for registration. Earliest of the decisions, which has been followed consistently by a Division Bench of this Court is in the case of A.K. Gnanasankar Vs Joint-II Sub-Registrar, Cuddalore-2 [reported in 2007 (2) TCJ 68]. In the said decision, this Court held that the limitation prescribed for presenting a document does not apply to a decree, as it is a permanent record of the court and to register the same, no limitation is prescribed.

15. This decision was followed by one of us (TSSJ) in W.P.No.9352 of 2015 dated 31.3.2015 [B.Vijayan Vs. District Registrar & another].

Subsequently, a similar view had been taken by this Court in W.P.No.8247 of 2016 dated 07.3.2016 [G.Mudiyarasan & another Vs. Inspector General of Registration], which once again relied upon the decision in the case of A.K.Gnanasankar. Further, in the case of Arun Kumar Vs. Inspector General of Registration [W.P.No.16569 of 2016 dated 06.6.2016], this Court directed registration of a judgment and decree passed by the Principal District Munsif Court, Salem by condoning the delay on an application filed by the person presenting the document and in that decision, this Court referred to the decision in the case of Rasammal Vs. Pauline Edwin & others [reported in 2011 (2) MLJ 57] wherein the Court considered the scope of Section 25 of the Act.

16. Again, in the case of P.A.Duraisamy Vs. Registrar, Registration Department, Coimbatore & another [W.P.No.2824 of 2013 dated 26.10.2016], an identical view had been taken following the decision in the case of A.K.Gnanasankar. A similar view was taken in the case of Lakshmi Vs. Sub-Registrar, Valapady, Salem District [reported in 2017 (1) LW 721] wherein it was pointed out that the Proviso to Section 23 of the Act states that a copy of the decree may be presented within four months from the date, on which, the decree or order was made or where it is appealable, within four months from the day, on which, it becomes final, that the limitation prescribed under Section 23 of the Act should be read with in consonance with Section 25 of the Act and that since they were only directory in nature, the check slip issued by the respondent therein was held to be bad in law.

17. In the case of A1362 Meenakshi Cooperative Building Society Ltd. Vs. District Registrar & Others [WP (MD) No.5108 of 2018 dated 12.4.2018], this Court followed the decision in the case of A.K. Gnanasankar and directed registration of the court decree. In yet another decision in the case of Dr.Sulochana Vs. Inspector General of Registration [reported in 2017 (2) CWC 489], this Court held that registration is only a part of procedural law and that though the Statute is fiscal, the doctrine of purposive and reasonable

interpretation has application. This Court took note of the decision of the Karnataka High Court in the case of Anjinamma Vs. Puttahariyappa [reported in AIR 2003 Karnataka 24].

18. The Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of Shreenath Vs. Rajesh [reported in 1998 (4) SCC 543], held that in interpreting any procedural law, when more than one interpretation is possible, the one, which curtails the procedure without eluding justice, is to be adopted, that the procedural law is always subservient to and is in aid of justice and that any interpretation, which eludes or frustrates the recipient of justice, is not to be followed.

19. A Full Bench of the Andhra Pradesh High Court in the case of Padala Satyanarayana Murthy Vs. Padala Gangamma [reported in AIR 1959 AP 626] answered a reference as to whether Section 77 of the Indian Registration Act bars a suit on the basis of an unregistered Will, when the Sub-Registrar refused to admit it for registration. It was held that Section 17 of the Act enumerates the documents, which require registration and the effect of failure to observe it is stated in Section 47 and that under Section 18(c) of the Act, the registration of a Will is purely optional and that being so, the Full Bench expressed that they did not think that the consequences contemplated by Section 49 would flow from not having recourse to Section 77 of the Act. It was further held that a party cannot be compelled to get document registered if such an obligation is not cast by the provisions of the Registration Act, that the necessity for registration arises only in regard to document set out in Section 17, that no penalty can attach to the omission to get a document registered when it is excepted by Section 17 and that therefore, the Full Bench felt that Section 77 can have relation only to instrument falling within the ambit of Section 17.

20. The decision in the case of Padala Satyanarayana Murthy was followed by the Allahabad High Court in the decision in the case of Rama Pati Tiwari Vs. District Registrar,

Allahabad [reported in AIR 2009 Allahabad 102].

21. By applying the decision in the case of Padala Satyanarayana Murthy to the facts of the case, the only conclusion that could be arrived at is that a court decree is not compulsorily registerable and that the option lies with the party. In such circumstances, the law laid down by this Court clearly states that the limitation prescribed under the Act would not stand attracted."

6. The above judgment will squarely apply to the facts of the present case. This Court in no uncertain terms has held that the law of limitation prescribed under Section 23 and 25 of the Act will not apply to a Court decree, since it is not compulsory registrable.

7. In view of the settled position of law, this Court has no hesitation to interfere with the impugned letter issued by the second respondent and accordingly the same is quashed. The second respondent is directed to register the final decree submitted by the petitioner, if it is otherwise in order.

5. In view of the same, this writ petition is allowed as prayed for. No costs.

Sd/-
Assistant Registrar

// True Copy//

Sub Assistant Registrar

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To

1. Sub Registrar,
Registration Department,
Office of the Sub Registrar, Goodaloor,
Old Court Road, Goodalur, Bazaar,
Nilgiris District, Goodaloor - 643 212.

2. The District Registrar,
Registration Department,
Ooty, Nilgiris District.

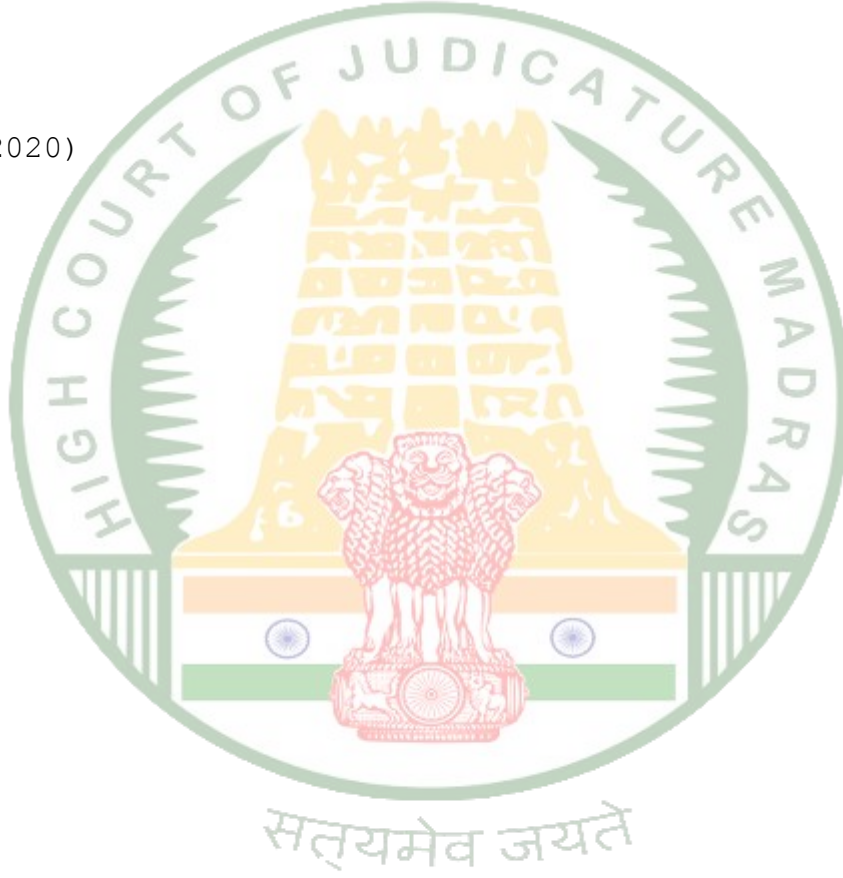
3.The Inspector General of Registration,
Registration Department,
Santhome High Road, Mylapore, Chennai - 4.

+1cc to M/s.R.Amizhthu, Advocate, Sr.No.26878

+1cc to Government Pleader, Sr.No.27030

W.P.No.10567 of 2020

LN(CO)
GS(07/09/2020)



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