



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 28.10.2020

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE ABDUL QUDDHOSE

W.P. (MD)No.14853 of 2020

WEB COPY

Palanimurugan

... Petitioner

Vs

1.The Assistant Director,
Mines and Minerals Department,
Office of the Collectorate,
Pudukkottai District.

2) The Revenue Divisional Officer,
Arantangi Post and Taluk,
Pudukkottai District.

3) The Tahsildar,
Avudaiyarkoil Post and Taluk,
Pudukkottai District.

4) The Inspector of Police,
Nagudi Police Station,
Pudukkottai District.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a Writ of Mandamus, to direct the respondents to release the petitioner's Tractor bearing Registration No.TN 55 AY 7605.

For Petitioner : Mr.P.Ganapathi Subramanian

For Respondents : Mr.M.Rajarajan
Additional Government Pleader

O R D E R

This writ petition has been filed for a Mandamus to direct the respondents to release the petitioner's Tractor bearing Registration No.TN 55 AY 7605.

2. Heard Mr.P.Ganapathi Subramanian, learned counsel appearing for the petitioner and Mr.M.Rajarajan, learned Additional Government Pleader appearing for the respondents.

3. By consent of both parties, the Writ Petition is taken up for disposal at the admission stage itself.



4. It is the case of the petitioner that he is the owner of the Tractor bearing Registration TN 55 AY 7605. According to him, on 01.10.2020, the fourth respondent has registered a case against the petitioner in Crime No.534 of 2020 for the offence punishable under Section 379 of I.P.C. read with Section 21(1) and 21(2) of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation Act), 1957 alleging that the petitioner has transported river sand illegally in his vehicle. The petitioner's vehicle was seized by the fourth respondent Police on the same date.

5. It is the contention of the petitioner that the vehicle has also not been produced by the fourth respondent Police before the concerned Jurisdictional Court. According to the petitioner, the seized vehicle is now being kept in the open place and due to exposure of sun and rain and the vagaries of nature, the vehicle will lose its value and may, ultimately become a wreck and worthless. In such circumstances, this Writ Petition has been filed seeking for release of the said vehicle.

6. The petitioner has also given a representation on 15.10.2020 to the respondents seeking for release of the said seized vehicle. According to the petitioner, the said representation has not been considered by the respondents till date. As rightly contended by the petitioner, if the vehicle, which was seized by the fourth respondent, is kept in the open place, it will not be useful to anyone in the near future and if it is continued to remain in the open, it has to face the vagaries of nature and ultimately will become a wreck and worthless. However, whether the petitioner has committed the alleged offence or not can be adjudicated only after trial before the Criminal Court. Till such time, the vehicle cannot be kept idle. Therefore, this Court is inclined to grant similar relief to the petitioner subject to fulfillment of the following conditions:-

(i) the petitioner shall execute a bond for a sum of **Rs.25,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Thousand only)** in favour of the second respondent within a period of two weeks from the date of receipt of a copy of this order;

(ii) the petitioner shall not alienate or encumber the vehicle in question till the proceedings are completed;

(iii) the petitioner shall not change the colour and scheme of the vehicle;

(iv) the petitioner shall not use the vehicle for any illegal activities;

(v) before releasing the vehicle, the police authority shall take photographs of the vehicle at the cost of the petitioner;



(vi) the petitioner shall produce all xerox copies of the documents pertaining to the ownership of the seized vehicle to the second respondent; and
(vii) as and when the respondents call for the vehicle for enquiry, the petitioner has to produce the vehicle in question and he shall cooperate with the enquiry to be conducted by the respondents.

7. Upon completion of the above mentioned formalities, the respondents shall release the Tractor bearing Registration TN 55 AY 7605, to the petitioner forthwith and without any delay. If this undertaking given by the petitioner is breached, the petitioner will not be entitled for interim release of the vehicle in the future. As far as confiscation proceedings initiated against the seized vehicle is concerned, the same can go on without any interference.

8. The Writ Petition is disposed of accordingly. However, there shall be no order as to costs.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (CS-II)

// True Copy //

/ /2020

Sub Assistant Registrar(CS)

STS

Note : In view of the present lock down owing to COVID-19 pandemic, a web copy of the order may be utilized for official purposes, but, ensuring that the copy of the order that is presented is the correct copy, shall be the responsibility of the Advocate / litigant concerned.

To

1.The Assistant Director,
Mines and Minerals Department,
Office of the Collectorate,
Pudukkottai District.

2) The Revenue Divisional Officer,
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3) The Tahsildar,
Avudaiyarkoil Post and Taluk,
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4) The Inspector of Police,
Nagudi Police Station,
Pudukkottai District.

Order made in
W.P. (MD)No.14853 of 2020

Dated:
28.10.2020

ARK(CO)
KM (06.11.2020) 4P 5C