



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 29.10.2020

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE ABDUL QUDDHOSE

W.P. (MD)No.14869 of 2020
(Through Video Conference)

WEB COPY

Sathishkumar

... Petitioner

Vs

1) The Revenue Divisional Officer,
Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District.

2) The Assistant Director,
Mines and Minerals Department,
Thanjavur.

3) The Inspector of Police,
Papanasam Police Station,
Thanjavur District.
(Crime No.839 of 2020)

... 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 vehicle i.e. TATA ACE Load van bearing registration number TN 63 Q 8442, seized by the 3rd respondent dated 11.08.2020 on the basis of the petitioner's representation dated 14.09.2020.

For Petitioner : Mr.U.Umamaheswaran

For Respondents : Mr.C.Ramesh,
Special 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 vehicle i.e. TATA ACE Load van bearing registration number TN 63 Q 8442, seized by the 3rd respondent dated 11.08.2020 on the basis of the petitioner's representation dated 14.09.2020.

2. Heard Mr.U.Umamaheswaran, learned counsel appearing for the petitioner and Mr.C.Ramesh, learned Special Government Pleader appearing for the respondents.

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



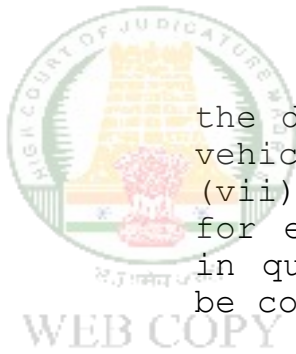
4. It is the case of the petitioner that he is the owner of the TATA ACE Load van bearing registration number TN 63 Q 8442. According to him, on 11.08.2020, the third respondent intercepted the TATA ACE Load van bearing registration number TN 63 Q 8442, and registered a case against the petitioner in Crime No.839 of 2020 for the alleged offences punishable under Sections 379 of I.P.C. and Section 21(4) of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 alleging that the petitioner has transported one unit 'sand' illegally in his vehicle. The petitioner's vehicle was seized by the third respondent Police on the same date.

5. It is the contention of the petitioner that the TATA ACE Load van bearing registration number TN 63 Q 8442 has also not been produced by the third 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 TATA ACE Load van bearing registration number TN 63 Q 8442.

6. The petitioner has also given a representation on 14.09.2020 in person to the respondents seeking for release of the said TATA ACE Load van bearing registration number TN 63 Q 8442. According to the petitioner, the said representation has not been considered by the respondents till date. As rightly contended by the petitioner, if the said vehicle, which was seized by the third 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 first 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 vehicles at the cost of the petitioner;

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the documents pertaining to the ownership of the seized vehicle to the first 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 TATA ACE Load van bearing registration number TN 63 Q 8442 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)

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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 Revenue Divisional Officer,
Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District.
 - 2) The Assistant Director,
Mines and Minerals Department,
Thanjavur.
 - 3) The Inspector of Police,
Papanasam Police Station,
Thanjavur District.
(Crime No.839 of 2020)
- +1 CC to M/s.GP (SR-20820[F] dated 02/11/2020)

Order made in

W.P. (MD)No.14869 of 2020

PM(CO)

AP(09/11/2020) 3P 5C

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