



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 10.11.2020

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE ABDUL QUDDHOSE

W.P. (MD)No.15868 of 2020

WEB COPY

Shakthi Murugan

... Petitioner

Vs

1.The Additional Superintendent of Police,
(Prohibition Enforcement Wing),
Ramanathapuram District,
Ramanathapuram.

2.The Inspector of Police,
Uthirakosamangai Police Station,
Ramanathapuram District.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a Writ of Mandamus, directing the respondents forthwith to release the petitioner's two wheeler bearing Registration No.TN-65-AF-0993 (TVS SCOOTY ZEST BSIV) which seized by the second respondent in connection with crime No.73 of 2020 by considering petitioner's representation dated on 28.10.2020 within the time.

For Petitioner : Mr.D.Balamurugapandi

For Respondents : Mr.C.Ramar
Additional Government Pleader

ORDER

(This Petition was heard through Video Conferencing)

This writ petition has been filed for a Mandamus seeking for a direction to direct the respondents forthwith to release the petitioner's two wheeler bearing Registration No.TN-65-AF-0993 (TVS SCOOTY ZEST BSIV) which seized by the second respondent in connection with crime No.73 of 2020 by considering petitioner's representation dated on 28.10.2020 within the time.

2. Heard Mr.D.Balamurugapandi, learned counsel appearing for the petitioner and Mr.C.Ramar, learned Additional Government Pleader, who accepts notice on behalf of the respondents. By consent of both parties, the Writ Petition is taken up for final disposal at the admission stage itself.



3. It is the case of the petitioner that he is the owner of the two wheeler bearing Reg.No.TN 65 AF 0993. According to the him, on 19.05.2020, when his father proceed towards his home, the respondent Police intercepted the two wheeler alleging that he said to have transported 96 liquor bottles containing 180 m.l. Liquor in that vehicle and seized the vehicle and registered a case in Crime No.73 of 2020 for the alleged offence under Section 4(1)(a)(Transport) of TN Prohibition Act. According to the petitioner, ever since the seizure, the said vehicle is still in the custody of the second respondent Police.

5. It is the contention of the petitioner that he is never involved in any illegal transportation of liquor bottles as alleged by the Police and he has not committed any prior criminal offence. 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 28.10.2020 to the respondents seeking for release of the said seized vehicle. According to the petitioner, the said representations have not been considered by the respondents till date. As rightly contended by the petitioner, if the vehicle, which was seized by the second 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 an order as sought for by the petitioner in this Writ Petition, subject to the fulfillment of the following conditions by the petitioner.

(i) the petitioner shall execute a bond for a sum of **Rs.5,000/- (Rupees 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 give an unconditional undertaking to the first respondent that he shall not alienate or encumber the vehicle in question without permission of the Jurisdictional Magistrate till the completion of the confiscation proceedings

(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 first respondent.

(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 vehicle viz., two wheeler bearing Registration No.TN 65 AF 0993 to the petitioner forthwith without any delay. If this undertaking given by the petitioner is breached, the petitioner will not be entitled to interim release of the vehicle in future. As far as confiscation proceedings initiated against the seized vehicle is concerned, the same can go on without any interference.

9. The Writ Petition is disposed of accordingly. There shall be no order as to costs.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (CO)

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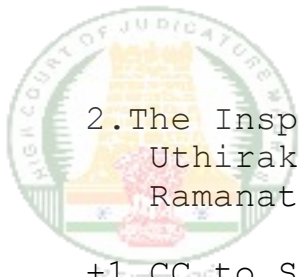
Sub Assistant Registrar (CS)

Mrn

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 Additional Superintendent of Police,
(Prohibition Enforcement Wing),
Ramanathapuram District,
Ramanathapuram.



2.The Inspector of Police,
Uthirakosamangai Police Station,
Ramanathapuram District.

+1 CC to SGP (SR-21889[F] dated 11/11/2020)

+1 CC to Mr.D. BALAMURUGAPANDI, Advocate (SR-21839[F] dated
11/11/2020)

W.P. (MD)No.15868 of 2020
10.11.2020

NS (CO)

KM (09.12.2020) 4P 5C