



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: **01.12.2020**

CORAM

WEB COPY

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE ABDUL QUDDHOSE

W.P(MD) .No.17289 of 2020

Latha

.. Petitioner

Vs.

1.The Revenue Divisional Officer,
Musiri, Trichy District.

2.The Assistant Director of Mines and Minerals,
Trichy District, Trichy.

3.The Inspector of Police,
Jambunathapuram Police Station,
Jambunathapuram, Trichy District.
(Crime No.593 of 2020)

.. Respondents

PRAYER: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of Constitution of India for issuance of Writ of Mandamus, directing the third respondent to release the petitioner's Mahindra Tractor with Trailer bearing Registration Number TN 48 AP 9543, Chassis No.MBNBT53ABLCG20545 and Engine No.DC.3009/SBG07754, seized on 19.11.2020 and kept under the custody of the third respondent, by considering the petitioner's representation dated 20.11.2020.

For Petitioner : Mr.K.Arunraj

For Respondents : Mr.C.Ramar
Additional Government Pleader

ORDER

(This Matter was heard through the Video Conferencing)

This Writ Petition has been filed for a Mandamus seeking for a direction to the third respondent to release the petitioner's Mahindra Tractor with Trailer bearing Registration Number TN 48 AP 9543, Chassis No.MBNBT53ABLCG20545 and Engine No.DC.3009/SBG07754, seized on 19.11.2020 and keeping under the custody of the third respondent by considering the petitioner's representation dated 20.11.2020.

2. Mr.C.Ramar, learned Additional Government Pleader accepts notice on behalf of the respondents.



3. Heard Mr.K.Arunraj, learned counsel for the petitioner and Mr.C,Ramar, learned Additional Government Pleader for the respondents.

4. It is the case of the petitioner that she is the owner of the above said vehicle. According to the petitioner, on 19.11.2020, the third respondent seized the vehicle and registered a case against the petitioner in Crime No.593 of 2020 for the offence punishable under Section 379 of I.P.C., read with Section 21 (1) of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, alleging that the petitioner has transported sand without any valid license. According to the petitioner, ever since the seizure, the said vehicle is still in the custody of the third respondent Police.

5. It is also the contention of the petitioner that the vehicle has also not been produced by the third respondent Police before the concerned Jurisdictional Court. According to her, the seized vehicle is now kept idle in the Police Station premises in the open place and exposed to the vagaries of nature, resulting in the vehicle depreciating in value. In such circumstances, she has filed this Writ Petition seeking for release of the seized vehicle.

6. According to the petitioner, she gave representation to the third respondent on 20.11.2020 for releasing of the seized vehicle back to her. According to her, the third respondent has failed to respond to the said representation. In such circumstances, she has filed this Writ Petition seeking for release of the seized vehicle.

7. Admittedly, the vehicle was seized by the third respondent on 19.11.2020 and a case has been registered by the third respondent Police against the petitioner in Crime No.593 of 2020, for the offence punishable under Section 379 I.P.C. read with Section 21 (1) of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, alleging that the petitioner has transported sand without any valid license. Admittedly, the vehicle is now in the Police Station premises and kept in the open place and exposed to the vagaries of nature and the vehicle has also not been produced before the Jurisdictional Court.

8. As rightly contended by the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner, the vehicle will certainly depreciate in value, if it is allowed to remain in the open place and kept idle for a long period of time. No useful purpose will be served if the vehicle is allowed to be kept idle. In similar matters, this Court has granted release of seized vehicle to the respective petitioners subject to fulfillment of certain conditions. 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.50,000/- (Rupees Fifty 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 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 she shall cooperate with the enquiry to be conducted by the respondents.

9. Upon completion of the above mentioned formalities, the respondents shall release the petitioner's Mahindra Tractor with Trailer bearing Registration Number TN 48 AP 9543, Chassis No.MBNBT53ABLCG20545 and Engine No.DC.3009/SBG07754, 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.

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

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (CS-III)

// True Copy //

/ /2020

Sub Assistant Registrar(CS)

tsg

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



To

1.The Revenue Divisional Officer,
Musiri, Trichy District.

2.The Assistant Director of Mines and Minerals,
Trichy District, Trichy.

3.The Inspector of Police,
Jambunathapuram Police Station,
Jambunathapuram, Trichy District.

+1 CC to SGP (SR-23656[F] dated 02/12/2020)

W.P (MD) .No.17289 of 2020

01.12.2020

PU (CO)

NR (09/12/2020) 4P : 5C