



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 09.12.2020

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE ABDUL QUDDHOSE

W.P. (MD)No.17973 of 2020
(Through Video Conference)

Sarathkumar

... Petitioner

Vs.

1. The Assistant Director,
Mines and Minerals Department,
Ramanathapuram District.

2. The Sub Collector Cum
Revenue Divisional Officer,
Revenue Divisional Office,
Ramanathapuram District.

3. The Thasildar,
Ramanathapuram,
Ramanathapuram District.

4. The Inspector of Police,
Uchipuli Police Station,
Ramanathapuram, Ramanathapuram District.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a Writ of Mandamus, to direct respondents 2 to 4 herein to forth with release the petitioner's Tractor bearing Registration No.TN-63-BA-9670 from their custody on the basis of the petitioner's representation dated 01.12.2020.

For Petitioner : Mr.Susi Kumar

For Respondents : Mr.C.Ramar

Additional Government Pleader

O R D E R

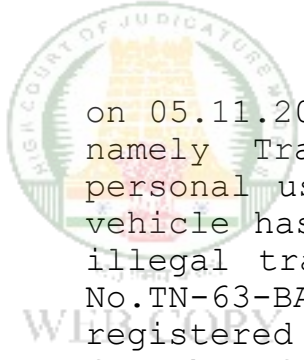
This writ petition has been filed for a Mandamus to direct respondents 2 to 4 herein to forth with release the petitioner's Tractor bearing Registration No.TN-63-BA-9670 from their custody on the basis of the petitioner's representation dated 01.12.2020.

2. Heard Mr.Susi Kumar, learned counsel appearing for the petitioner and Mr.C.Ramar, learned Additional 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 Tractor bearing Registration No.TN-63-BA-9670. According to him,

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on 05.11.2020, the driver of the petitioner has borrowed the vehicle namely Tractor bearing Registration No.TN-63-BA-9670 for his personal use and the petitioner came to know that the petitioner's vehicle has been seized by the respondents 3 & 4 in connection with illegal transportation of sand in the Tractor bearing Registration No.TN-63-BA-9670 belonging to the petitioner and therefore, registered a case against the petitioner in Crime No.495 for 2020 for the offences under section 379 of IPC and Section 21(4) of Mines and Minerals Development and Regulation Act, 1957. The petitioner's vehicle was seized by the third and fourth respondents and is in the custody of the fourth respondent Police on the same date.

5. It is the contention of the petitioner that the Tractor bearing Registration No.TN-63-BA-9670 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 Tractor bearing Registration No.TN-63-BA-9670.

6. The petitioner has also given a representation on 01.12.2020 to the respondents seeking for release of the said Tractor bearing Registration No.TN-63-BA-9670. 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 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 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 vehicles 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.

WEB COPY

7. Upon completion of the above mentioned formalities, the respondents shall release the Tractor bearing Registration No.TN-63-BA-9670 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 (CO)

// 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 Assistant Director,
Mines and Minerals Department, Ramanathapuram District.
2. The Sub Collector Cum Revenue Divisional Officer,
Revenue Divisional Office,
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3. The Thasildar,
Ramanathapuram, Ramanathapuram District.
4. The Inspector of Police,
Uchipuli Police Station,
Ramanathapuram, Ramanathapuram District.

+1 CC to M/s.SPL GP (SR-25109[F] dated 11/12/2020)

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09.12.2020

PM(CO)

KB(28.12.2020) 3P 6C

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