



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 17.04.2021

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE N.ANAND VENKATESH

W.P. (MD)No.17107 of 2014
(Through Video Conferencing)

A.Maheswari

... Petitioner

.Vs.

1. The Director,
Department of Government Examinations,
Chennai. 600 006.

2. The District Educational Officer,
Kovilpatti Educational District
Kovilpatti

3. The Headmaster,
Government Higher Secondary School
Villathikulam
Thoothukudi District

... Respondents

PRAYER : Writ Petition is filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India for issuance of a Writ of Mandamus to direct the respondents 1 and 2 to correct the petitioner's date of birth in the secondary school leaving certificate (SSLC) as 15.03.1995 instead of 10.04.1992 and issue the same to the petitioner within the period stipulated by this Court.

For Petitioner : Mr.M.Mahaboob Athiff for
M/s.Ajmal Associates

For Respondents : Mr.J.Gunaseelan Muthiah
Additional Government Pleader

ORDER

This writ petition has been filed for the issue of a writ of mandamus directing the first and second respondents to correct the date of birth of the petitioner in the Secondary School Leaving Certificate as 15.03.1995 instead of 10.04.1992.



2. Heard the learned counsel for the petitioner and the learned Additional Government Pleader appearing on behalf of the respondents.

3. The grievance of the petitioner is that an error had crept in while noting the date of birth of the petitioner and instead of mentioning the date of birth as 15.03.1995, the same has been mentioned as 10.04.1992 in the Secondary School Leaving Certificate. The petitioner, in order to substantiate the correct date of birth, has relied upon the birth certificate issued by the competent authority and it has been registered on 21.03.1995, which shows that the correct date of birth of the petitioner is 15.03.1995. That apart, even the transfer certificate that was issued by the third respondent shows that the date of birth of the petitioner is 15.03.1995. The mistake is found only in the Secondary School Leaving Certificate. It is also seen from the documents that the third respondent, by a letter dated 18.01.2012, has requested the first respondent to make necessary corrections and issue a fresh Secondary School Leaving Certificate to the petitioner reflecting the correct date of birth.

4. A counter affidavit has been filed by the third respondent and a specific stand has been taken to the effect that the date of birth that was entered in the Secondary School Leaving Certificate was based on the records maintained by the third respondent School.

5. The issue involved in the present writ petition is squarely covered by the earlier judgment passed by this Court in W.P.No.6026/2020 dated 10.03.2020. The relevant portions in the judgment is extracted hereunder:

"3. When the matter was taken up for admission, this Court questioned the learned counsel for the petitioner as to how the respondents can make such corrections after the course is completed. In reply to the same, the learned counsel brought to the notice of this Court a series of judgments passed by this Court on the same issue, wherein, this Court had directed the correction of date of birth. The learned counsel specifically relied upon the judgment of this Court in W.P.No.23716 of 2014 dated 03.03.2015. The relevant portions in the judgment are extracted hereunder:

"5. The very same issue came up for consideration before this Court in W.P. (MD) No.9340 of 2009 dated 18.09.2012. An identical prayer was made to rectify the date of birth in the petitioner's service records. The respondent Government took a stand that in view of Rule 5 of the Tamil Nadu Secondary School Certificate Rules, the request for correction of date of



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birth cannot be considered after the pupil have left the school. This Court after elaborately considered the Government Orders and taking note of other decisions on the point, allowed the Writ Petition and directed the respondent to consider the birth extracts and other records of the petitioner while considering his representation and making necessary changes in the date of birth as in the Secondary grade School Leaving Certificate and Higher Secondary grade School Leaving Certificate and other certificates. The petitioner therein was given liberty to make representation to the respondents along with the copy of the order. At this stage it would be beneficial to refer to the operative portion of the order.

"27.The Tamil Nadu Registration of Births and Deaths Rules, 2000 have come into force with effect from 01.01.2000. Rule 11, deals with the correction or cancellation of entry in the register of births and deaths under Section 15 and that the same is extracted hereunder:

"11.Correction or cancellation of entry in the register of births and deaths under Section 15:(1)If it is reported to the Registrar that a clerical or formal error has been made in the register or if such error is otherwise noticed by him and if the register is in his possession, the Registrar shall enquire into the matter and if he is satisfied that any such error has been made, he shall correct the error (by correcting or canceling the entry) as provided in section 6 15 and shall in the case of local authorities specified in column (1) of the Table below, send an extract of the entry showing the error and how it has been corrected to the officer specified in column (2) thereof.

"Local Authorities(1) Officers(2) Village Panchayat Village Panchayat President Town Panchayat Executive Officer Cantonment Executive Officer Municipality Commissioner Corporation Commissioner Neyveli Lignite Corporation Chief Health Officer (2)In the case referred to in sub-rule(1), if the register is not in his possession, the Registrar shall make a report to the officer specified in the Table in sub-rule



(1) and call for the relevant register and after enquiring into the matter, if he is satisfied that such error has been made make necessary correction.

(3) Any such correction as mentioned in subrule(2) shall be countersigned by the officer specified in the Table in sub-rule (1) in this behalf when the register is received from the Registrar.

(4) If any person asserts that any entry in the register of births and deaths is erroneous in substance, the Registrar may correct the entry in the manner prescribed under Section 15 upon production by that person a declaration setting forth the nature of the error and true facts of the case made by two credible persons having knowledge of the facts of the case.

(5) Notwithstanding anything contained in subrules (1) and (4), the Registrar shall make a report of any correction of the kind referred to therein giving necessary details to the officer specified in the Table in sub-rule(1)

(6) If it is proved to the satisfaction of the Registrar that any entry in the register of births and deaths has been fraudulently or improperly made, he shall make a report giving necessary details to the officer authorised by the Chief Registrar by general or special order in this behalf under Section 25 and on hearing from him take necessary action in the matter.

(7) In every case in which an entry is corrected or cancelled under this rule, intimation thereof should be sent to the permanent address of the person who has given information under section 8 or section 9".

28. Reading of the statutory provisions makes it clear that the Act provides for correction or cancellation of entry in the register of births and deaths. The decision relied on by the respondents in their counter affidavit rendered in W.P.No.4244 of 1965, dated 26.10.1965 and reported in 1966 MLJ 80, is prior to the introduction of Registration of Births and Deaths



Act, 1969 and the rules framed thereunder.

29. Subsidiary Rule 5 of the Secondary School Leaving Certificate scheme, relied on by the respondents to contend that the application for alteration in the date of birth will not be entertained after a pupil had completed his course or appeared for the S.S.L.C public examination also is much earlier to the advent of the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 and the rules framed thereunder. Needless to say that the provisions of any Central Act, will prevail over the State Act or the rules or regulations, framed by the latter, on the same subject. When the statutory provisions stated supra, enable the competent authorities under 9 the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969, to make correction or cancellation as the case may be, the contention of the respondents that no alteration is permissible in the school records, after the student leaves the secondary education cannot be countenanced.

30. As stated supra, as per the birth certificate issued by the Sub Registrar, Thiruvattar enclosed in the typed set of papers, the name of the child entered in the said certificate is S.Rajesh Kumar. The date of birth has been shown as 19.01.1975. When the statute provides for correction or cancellation of an entry in the register of births and deaths maintained by the Sub Registrar after coming into force of the Act, the said certificate can be relied on for making necessary changes in public records which includes the records maintained in the office of the Director of Government Examinations Chennai. The contention of the respondents that the said correction can be made only before the student leaves the school and not later, cannot be accepted for the reason that any entry in the birth certificate by virtue of registration or 10 alteration or cancellation by the competent authority under the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969, has to be given effect to otherwise, the purpose for registration or alteration or modification would be defeated. There cannot be different entries in the public records maintained by different authorities, one under the Registration of Births and Deaths Act,



1969 and the other by the educational authorities. The date of birth as entered in the birth extract has to be entered in all the public records uniformly, unless and until any statutory rules, restrict such entry, like in the case of a Government servant, governed by the Tamil Nadu State and Subordinate Services Rules. In the light of the above discussion, this Court is not inclined to accept the objections of the educational authorities made on the basis of the Subsidiary rules framed before the introduction of the Central Act, 1969.

31. In the light of the decision made in W.P.No.9800 of 2009, dated 21.10.2009 in R.Deepak Vs.The Chairman Tamil Nadu Uniform Service Recruitment Board, Chennai and two others, the certificate issued by the competent authority under Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969, and other supporting documents relied on by the present writ petitioner has to be considered.

32. For the foregoing reasons, the writ petition is allowed. There shall be a direction to the respondents to consider the birth extract and other evidence produced by the petitioner while considering his representation, dated 03.09.2009 and make necessary changes, in the date of birth as 19.01.1975 in the Secondary School Leaving Certificate and the Higher Secondary Course and other certificates. The petitioner is at liberty to make a representation to the respondents along with a copy of this order and that he shall produce the original certificates for making necessary corrections. No costs."

6. The decision referred supra is squarely applicable to the facts of the case on hand and in the instant case, the only ground for rejection is that the petitioner cannot seek for alteration of School Certificates after he has completed the studies. Since similar issue has already been decided by this Court, this Writ Petition has to be necessarily allowed.

4. The learned Government Advocate appearing on behalf of the respondents submitted that Rule 5 of the Tamil Nadu Secondary School Certificate Rules prohibits such



alteration of date of birth after the candidate leaves the school and therefore, it will be beyond the jurisdiction of the respondents to make such corrections in the School Leaving Certificate.

5.The objections that have been raised by the learned Government Advocate, have been answered in the judgment that has been cited supra. Apart from the above judgment, this Court is taking a very consistent view that, after coming into the force of the Tamil Nadu Registration of Births and Deaths Rules, 2000 w.e.f. 01.01.2000, such corrections can be carried out in the school records when they are found to be in variance with the birth certificate issued by the competent authority."

6. It is clear from the above that the Secondary School Leaving Certificate must be in line with the birth certificate and it must reflect the correct date of birth. That apart, after coming into force of the Tamil Nadu Registration of Births and Deaths Rules, 2000, such corrections can be carried out in the school records, when they are found in variance with the birth certificate issued by the competent authority.

7. In view of the above, there shall be a direction to the first respondent to consider the birth certificate of the petitioner and any other documents produced by the petitioner and deal with the representation dated 18.07.2014 and make necessary changes in the date of birth in the Secondary School Leaving Certificate as 15.03.1995 instead of 10.04.1992.

8. The petitioner is directed to make a fresh representation to the first respondent along with all the relevant documents and also a copy of this order.

9. The first respondent shall complete the exercise within six weeks from the date of receipt of a copy of this order.

10. The writ petition is disposed of with the above directions. No costs.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (AE)

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Sub Assistant Registrar(CS)



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 Director,
Department of Government Examinations,
Chennai. 600 006.
2. The District Educational Officer,
Kovilpatti Educational District
Kovilpatti
3. The Headmaster,
Government Higher Secondary School
Villathikulam
Thoothukudi District

+1 CC to M/s.SPL GP (SR-16467[F] dated 19/04/2021)

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RS (05.05.2021) 8P 5C