

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT PATNA
Civil Writ Jurisdiction Case No.4088 of 2022

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Krishna Kumar Son of Anil Kumar Rai, Village - Loknathpur, P.S. -
Dalsinghsarai, District - Samastipur.

... .. Petitioner/s

Versus

1. The State of Bihar through the Chief Secretary, Government of Bihar, Patna.
2. The Additional Chief Secretary - Cum - Principal Secretary, Department of Prohibition, Excise and Registration Department, Government of Bihar, Patna.
3. The Excise Commissioner - Cum - Inspector General of Registration, Department of Prohibition Excise and Registration, Government of Bihar, Patna.
4. The District Magistrate, Samastipur.
5. The Sub Divisional Officer, Dalsinghsarai, Samastipur.
6. The Deputy Collector Land Reforms, Dalsinghsarai, Samastipur.

... .. Respondent/s

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Appearance :

For the Petitioner/s : Mr.Kumar Kaushik, Advocate
For the Respondent/s : Mr.Vivek Prasad (GP7)

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CORAM: HONOURABLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE

and

HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE S. KUMAR

ORAL JUDGMENT

(Per: HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE S. KUMAR)

(The proceedings of the Court are being conducted through Video Conferencing and the Advocates joined the proceedings through Video Conferencing from their residence.)

Date : 06-05-2022

Heard learned counsel for the parties.

Petitioner has prayed for the following relief(s):-

- i. For issuance of an order, direction or a writ of *certiorari* for quashing and setting aside the order dated 14.01.2022 passed in Excise Appeal Case No. 871/2021 whereby and where under the appeal filed by the writ petitioner against the order dated 01.10.2021 passed in Certificate (Excise) Case No. 39/2021-22 by the Deputy Collector Land Reforms, Dalsinghsarai by which he directed for confiscating the Maruti Dzire Car bearing number BR-09 AA-9351, has been rejected.
- ii. For issuance of an order, direction or a writ of *certiorari* for quashing and setting aside the order dated 01.10.2021 passed in Certificate (Excise) Case No. 39/2021-22 by the DCLR, Dalsinghsarai in exercise of powers under Section 58 of the Bihar Prohibition & Excise Act, 2016 by which the aforesaid authority has directed for confiscation of the Maruti Dzire Car bearing number BR-09 AA-9351 belonging to the writ petitioner.
- iii. For issuance of an order, direction or a writ of *mandamus* for directing the respondent authorities to release the four wheeler Maruti Dzire Vehicle of the writ petitioner bearing number BR-09AA-9351 forthwith which has been confiscated by the respondent authorities in connection with Dalsinghsarai P.S. Case No. 154 of 2021 dated 11.06.2021 registered for offence

under Section 30 (a) and 37 (c) of the Bihar Prohibition & Excise Act, 2016.

- iv. For issuance of an order, direction or a writ of *certiorari* for quashing and setting the Press Note published in the Hindi News Daily 'Hindustan' on 04.03.2022 to the extent to which the auction notice against Maruti Dzire Vehicle bearing number BR-09 AA-9351 which has been confiscated by the respondent authorities has been issued and the vehicle has been directed to be put up for auction on 16.03.2022.
- v. For issuance of an order, direction or an appropriate writ for restraining the respondent authorities from auctioning the Maruti Dzire Vehicle of the writ petitioner bearing number BR-09 AA-9351 during the pendency of the present writ application.

52/2020 in Confiscation Case No.723/2020-21,

This writ application is also being filed to restrain the respondents from further proceeding with the auction of the petitioner's vehicle bearing Reg. No. BR-01-CW-4191, Chassis No.-ME4JC714DGT000980, Engine No.-JC71ET0166854 seized in connection with Didarganj P.S. Case No. 52/2020.

Petitioner has approached this Court without availing the statutory remedy of revision against the impugned appellate order, as such, liberty is granted to petitioner to file revision against the appellate order before the Revisional Authority and if any such Revision is filed within 4 weeks, then Revisional Authority shall decide the revision petition preferably within 8 weeks from the date of its filing on its own merit.

During pendency of revision petition, confiscated property / vehicle shall not be auction sold, if not already auction sold.

OR

It is submitted on behalf of counsel for the State that during pendency of writ petition, there has been amendment in the Bihar Prohibition and Excise Rules, 2021 and a new Rule 12(A) has been inserted which reads as under:-

**“12. A. Release of Vehicles, Conveyance etc.
on payment of Penalty:-** (1) If any vehicles,

conveyance, vessel, animal etc. has been seized by any police or excise officer under the Act, then in terms of section -57B(1) of the Act, the Collector or an officer authorized by him upon receipt of an application in Form IV by the owner of the said conveyance or vehicle etc., may release the said conveyance or vehicle upon payment of such penalty as may be ordered by the Collector or the officer authorized by him.

Provided, where it is not possible to ascertain the owner of the vehicle or the owner is not coming to claim the vehicle, the Collector or the officer authorized by him, after waiting for 15 days from the date of seizure, shall proceed to confiscate and auction the vehicle as per the provisions of the Act.

(2) The penalty shall be 50% of the latest insured value of vehicle/conveyance. The insured value is the value of the vehicle as assessed by the insurance company. Where, the insured value is not available or the Collector or the officer authorized by him has reason to believe that the vehicle is undervalued, he shall get the valuation done by the District Transport Officer and 50% of that value shall be the amount of penalty.

In any case, the Collector shall not wait beyond 15 days from the date of seizure and if during this period, the accused/owner does not pay up the penalty, he shall proceed with the confiscation/auction.

(3) Notwithstanding above, if on a report by police officer or excise officer, the Collector or the officer authorized by him is satisfied that releasing the vehicle or conveyance shall not be in the public

interest, he shall proceed ahead with the confiscation of the said vehicle or conveyance and its subsequent auction / disposal.

(4) Where the conveyance is such that its valuation / insurance is not possible, the Collector or the officer authorized by him shall impose such fine as he deems fit. While imposing such fine, the Collector or the officer authorized by him shall have due regard to the economic status of the individual, nature of his involvement in the crime and the quantum of intoxicant recovered.

(5) Such penalty shall be, regardless of the outcome of the trial if any, before the Special Court, non-refundable.

(6) The owner of the vehicle / conveyance shall, after the release of the vehicle / conveyance, produce the vehicle/ conveyance as and when required by the authorities.

[Explanation:- In all pending / ongoing cases of confiscation/auction of vehicles, the Collector or the officer authorized by him may give an opportunity to the existing owner to pay the aforesaid penalty and get the vehicle released. Upon satisfaction about ownership and upon payment of such penalty, the ongoing confiscation/auction proceeding may be dropped and the vehicle released.]”

In view of amendment in the Excise Act, and same being applicable in pending cases, it shall be open for the petitioner to get his/her vehicle released after making payment

of penalty in terms of Rule 12(A) inserted by amending Bihar Prohibition and Excise Rules, 2021.

With said observation and direction, this writ petition is disposed of.

Equally, liberty reserved to petitioner to approach this Court for same and subsequent cause of action, if need so arises.

(Sanjay Karol, CJ)

(S. Kumar, J)

veena/rajiv-

AFR/NAFR	
CAV DATE	
Uploading Date	
Transmission Date	