



W.P. No. 21334 of 2014

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 13.10.2022

CORAM

THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE P.D. AUDIKESAVALU

W.P. No. 21334 of 2014

1. T.Muthulakshmi
2. D.Ramachandran Poosari
3. Mariammal
4. D.Kadhiresan Poosari
5. D.Muthuraman Poosari
6. Jeyalakshmi
7. D.Balasubramanian Poosari
8. D.Umaparvathi
9. D.Marimuthu Poosari
- 10.D.Gomathi

... Petitioners

-VS-

1. The Secretary to Government
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department
Fort St. George, Chennai – 600 009.
2. The Commissioner
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department
Nungambakkam High Road
Chennai – 600 034.



W.P. No. 21334 of 2014

3. The Joint Commissioner
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department
Sivagangai, Virudhunagar District.

4. The Assistant Commissioner /
Executive Officer
Irukkankudi, Sattur Taluk
Virudhunagar District.

. . . Respondents

Prayer:- Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, 1950, praying to issue a Writ of Certiorari, calling for the records pertaining to the proceedings of the Commissioner, Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department, Chennai, the Second Respondent herein, in R.P. 36 of 2014/D2 dated 09.06.2014 and to quash the same as illegal and against the principles known to law.

For Petitioners : Mr. S.Sivashanmugam

For Respondents : Mr. M.Bindran
Additional Government Pleader

ORDER

Heard Mr. S.Sivashanmugam, Learned Counsel for the Petitioners and Mr. M.Bindran, Learned Additional Government Pleader for the Respondents and perused the materials placed on record, apart from the pleadings of the parties.



W.P. No. 21334 of 2014

2. The Writ Petition has been filed challenging the Proceedings in R.P. 36 of 2014/D2 dated 09.06.2014 of the Second Respondent.

3. It is not in dispute that the Temple in respect of which claim is made by the Petitioners and the offices of the Third and Fourth Respondents are located within the territorial limits of jurisdiction of the Madurai Bench of this Court. The only reason stated for having approached the Principal Seat of this Court instead of approaching the Madurai Bench of this Court is that the offices of the First and Second Respondents are situated at Chennai within the territorial limits of jurisdiction of this Court. There cannot be any doubt that the First and Second Respondents exercises powers for the whole of the State of Tamil Nadu, but that cannot be said to mean as if the cause of action has arisen within the territorial limits of jurisdiction of the Principal Seat of this Court at Chennai. Even if it is assumed that a part of cause of action has arisen within the territorial limits of jurisdiction of this Court, the principle of *forum conveniens* would come into play as held by the Division Bench of this Court in **C.Ramesh -vs- The Director General of Police** (Order dated 06.06.2013 in W.P. (MD) No. 8790 of 2013), as follows:-

“7. *Exercise of jurisdiction is based on arising of the cause of*



W.P. No. 21334 of 2014

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action, either in whole or in part in any one of the said Revenue Districts. [See RAJASTHAN HIGH COURT ADVOCATES' ASSOCIATION Vs. UNION OF INDIA AND OTEHRS (2001 (2) SCC 294) and B.STALIN Vs. THE REGISTRAR, SUPREME COURT OF INDIA AND OTHERS (2012 (3) LW 489 (FB))].

8. *It should be remembered that the part of cause of action must be substantial in nature. The territorial jurisdiction of the Court is linked with the place of accrual of cause of action. [See U.P. RASHTRIYA CHINI MILL ADHIKARI PARISHAD, LUCKNOW Vs. STATE OF U.P. AND OTHERS (1995 (4) SCC 738)].*

9. *Referring to KUSUM INGOTS & ALLOYS LTD. Vs. UNION OF INDIA (2004 (3) CTC 365), a Full Bench of this Court in SANJOS JEWELLERS Vs. SYNDICATE BANK, BANGALORE AND OTHERS (2007 (5) CTC 305), held as under:-*

"30. We must, however, remind ourselves that even if a small part of cause of action arises within the territorial



W.P. No. 21334 of 2014

WEB COPY

jurisdiction of the High Court, the same by itself may not be considered to be a determinative factor compelling the High Court to decide the matter on merit. In appropriate cases, the Court may refuse to exercise its discretionary jurisdiction by invoking the Doctrine of forum conveniens. [See BHAGAT SINGH BUGGA Vs. DEWAN JAGBIR SAWHNEY, AIR 1941 CAL 670 : ILR (1941) 1 CAL 490; MADANLAL JALAN Vs. MADANLAL, 1945 (49) CWN 357: AIR 1949 CAL 495; BHARAT COKING COAL LTD. Vs. JHARIA TALKIES & COLD STORAGE (P) LTD., 1997 CWN 122; S.S.JAIN & CO. Vs. UNION OF INDIA, 1994 (1) CHN 445, and NEW HORIZONS LTD. Vs. UNION OF INDIA, AIR 1994 DEL 126]."

10. *Question of entertaining a lis disclosing a cause of action or part of cause of action is based on the averments contained in the affidavit etc. At that stage, the truth or otherwise of the averments need not be gone into. But, there must be necessary averments disclosing a cause of action, so that the Court can take cognizance of/entertaining the lis exposed in the petition*



W.P. No. 21334 of 2014

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for taking further action. [See OIL AND NATURAL GAS COMMISSION Vs. UTPAL KUMAR BASU AND OTHERS (1994 (4) SCC 711)].

11. A Court cannot arrogate/assume/confer upon itself a jurisdiction-territorial jurisdiction, when it has no such jurisdiction. Lack of jurisdiction to entertain a matter goes to the root of the matter, otherwise whatever action taken or orders passed by the Court becomes a nullity, it is non est and of no consequence at all resulting in wasting of precious public time. Courts are barred from indulging in hypothetic and academic exercises.”

Having regard to the aforesaid legal position *viz-a-viz* factual matrix of this case, the cause of action for the Writ Petition, would have to be necessarily construed as having arisen wholly outside the territorial limits of jurisdiction of the Principal Bench of this Court, notwithstanding that the office of the First and Second Respondents are located in Chennai.

4. When it is pointed out that the Writ Petition cannot be entertained in the Principal Seat of this Court in that backdrop, Learned Counsel for the



W.P. No. 21334 of 2014

Petitioners seeks permission of the Court to withdraw this Writ Petition with liberty to file fresh Writ Petition before the Madurai Bench of this Court and he has made an endorsement to that effect in the court record.

In fine, the Writ Petition is dismissed as withdrawn granting such liberty. No costs.

13.10.2022

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Index: Yes/No

Note: (i) Issue order copy by 04.11.2022

(ii) Registry is directed to return the original copy of the impugned order under written acknowledgment after retaining a copy of the same for record.

To

1. The Secretary to Government
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department
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2. The Commissioner
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department
Nungambakkam High Road
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W.P. No. 21334 of 2014

P.D. AUDIKESAVALU, J.

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W.P. No. 21334 of 2014

13.10.2022