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W.P.(MD)NO.28236 OF 2022

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 15.12.2022

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE G.R.SWAMINATHAN

W.P.(MD)No.28236 of 2022

Ramakrishnan

... Petitioner

Vs.

1. The District Revenue Officer,
Ramanathapuram,
Ramanathapuram District.

2. The Inspector of Police,
Civil Supplies CID Ramanathapuram,
Madurai Region.

... Respondents

Prayer: Writ petition is filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, to issue a Writ of Mandamus, directing the 1st respondent to entrust the interim custody of the petitioner's vehicle by branding name TATA 207 bearing Registration No. TN 59 AK 6982 seized in connection with FIR in Crime No. 257 of 2022 on the file of the 2nd respondent police.

For Petitioner : Mr.A.Balaji

For R-1 : Mr.M.Siddharthan,
Additional Government Pleader.

For R-2 : Mr.R.Sivakumar,
Government Advocate(Crl.Side).

* * *

**ORDER**

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Heard the learned counsel on either side.

2. The petition mentioned vehicle was seized in connection with Crime No. 257 of 2022 registered on the file of the second respondent.

3. The petition mentioned vehicle is presently in the custody of the first respondent. The vehicle is said to have been used for illegally transporting PDS rice.

4. It is of course open to the respondent authority to initiate confiscation proceedings. In this case we are concerned only with the issue of granting interim custody of the vehicle to the petitioner.

5. No purpose will be served in keeping the vehicle under the custody of the respondents. The Hon'ble Supreme Court in the decision reported in (2002) 10 SCC 283 (Sunderbhai Ambalal Desai and Others V. State of Gujarat) has held as follows:-



"17.In our view, whatever be the situation, it is of no use to keep such seized vehicles at the police stations for a long period. It is for the Magistrate to pass appropriate orders immediately by taking appropriate bond and guarantee as well as security for return of the said vehicles, if required at any point of time. This can be done pending hearing of applications for return of such vehicles.

6. Therefore, the first respondent is directed to grant interim custody of the said vehicle to the petitioner subject to the following conditions:-

- a) The petitioner shall pay a sum of **Rs.5,000/-** (Rupees Five Thousand only) towards cost in the bank account of **Government Leprosy Home, Y.Pudhupatti, Madurai** (Savings Account No.80080760197, IFSC Code : SBIN0002246 State Bank of India, Othakadai Branch, Madurai). It will be a non-refundable payment. The Trust shall utilise the said amount for the benefits of the inmates of Madurai Home.*
- a) The petitioner shall not alienate or encumber the vehicle till the proceedings are completed.*
- b) The petitioner shall produce all the documents pertaining to the ownership of the seized vehicle.*



c) 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.

7.The petitioner's counsel submits that the petitioner's name is not figuring in the R.C.Book, because he is only an agreement holder. The original documents are with the financier. The respondents nevertheless are directed to return the same to the petitioner upon fulfilment of the conditions.

8. Upon completion of these formalities, the respondents shall grant interim custody of the vehicle forthwith to the petitioner without any delay. If this undertaking given by the petitioner is breached, the petitioner will not be entitled to interim custody of the vehicle in future. The Writ Petition is allowed accordingly. I make it clear that allowing of this writ petition will not have any bearing on the confiscation proceedings that may be initiated by the authorities. No costs.

15.12.2022

Index : Yes / No

Internet : Yes/ No

PMU

Note : Issue order copy on 16.12.2022.



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To:

1. The District Revenue Officer,
Ramanathapuram,
Ramanathapuram District.
2. The Inspector of Police,
Civil Supplies CID Ramanathapuram,
Madurai Region.

Copy to :

The Government Leprosy Home,
Y.Pudhupatti, Madurai.



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G.R.SWAMINATHAN,J.

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