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CRL.R.C.NO.888 OF 2023

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 06.06.2023

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE V. SIVAGNANAM

CRL.R.C.NO.888 OF 2023

Vanitha

.. Petitioner

Vs.

State Rep. By
The Inspector of Police
Aanaikaranchathiram Police Station
Nagapattinam.
Crime No.829 of 2020

.. Respondent

PRAYER: Criminal Revision Case filed under Section 397 read with 401 Cr.P.C., to set aside the order dated 04.03.2023 made in Cr.M.P.No.275 of 2023 on the file of Principal District and Sessions Judge at Nagapattinam and consequently return the vehicle.

For Petitioner : Mr.R.Parthiban

For Respondent : Mr.R.Vinothraja
Government Advocate (Criminal Side)



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ORDER

This Criminal Revision Case has been filed challenging the order of dismissal dated 04.03.2023 passed by the learned Principal District and Sessions Judge, Nagapattinam, in CrI.M.P.No.275 of 2023, seeking return of vehicle viz., Tipper Lorry bearing Registration No.TN33-AZ-8407 to the petitioner.

2.The facts of the case is that the petitioner is the owner of the Tipper Lorry bearing Registration No.TN33-AZ-8407. The respondent police registered a case in Crime No.829/2020 for the offences under Sections 420 and 466 IPC read with 21(1) of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, for illegal transportation of One Unit of river sand without any valid permit. They have seized the above said vehicle alleging that the vehicle has been engaged in illegal transportation of 3 Units of Gravel Sand. Since the petitioner is the owner of the vehicle, she filed a petition in Cr.M.P.No.275 of 2023 before the learned Principal District and Sessions Judge, Nagapattinam, seeking return of the vehicle and the same was dismissed by the Trial Court on 04.03.2023.

3.The learned counsel for the petitioner submitted that the vehicle



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is not involved in any previous case of offence of similar in nature and if the vehicle is kept in open space under unconditional weather conditions, the same would depreciate its value and user capacity.

4.Further, the learned counsel for the petitioner contended that no purpose will be served in keeping the vehicle under the custody of respondent police and if the vehicle is kept for a long time in the open space, it would cause damage to the vehicle. The petitioner is ready to give appropriate guarantee as well as security for return of vehicle and also she will produce the vehicle, as and when required either before the respondent police or before the Trial Court. Hence, the learned counsel prayed to return the vehicle.

5.The learned Government Advocate (Criminal Side) objected to return of vehicle, stating that the vehicle was used for illegal transportation of 3 Units of Gravel Sand and if the vehicle is ordered to be returned, she may use the vehicle for committing the same offence. He fairly conceded that the vehicle is not involved in any previous case of similar in nature.

6.Heard both sides and perused the entire materials available on



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7.A perusal of the records would reveal that on 29.08.2020, the respondent police seized the Tipper Lorry bearing Registration No.TN33-AZ-8407 having in possession of 3 Units of Gravel Sand without any valid permit and registered a case against the owner of the vehicle in Crime No.829 of 2020 under Sections 420 and 466 IPC read with 21(1) of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act. The petitioner is the owner of the Tipper Lorry bearing Registration No.TN33-AZ-8407

8.Perusal of records would further reveal that the petitioner is the owner of vehicle and she is ready to give guarantee and security for returning the vehicle. If the vehicle is being kept in an open space, it would cause damage to the vehicle and the value of the vehicle is diminished and continuing to keep the vehicle in open air would make the vehicle unusable. Further, the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***SUNDERBHAI AMBALAL DESAI AND OTHERS VS. STATE OF GUJARAT IN SPECIAL LEAVE PETITION (CRL.) 2745 OF 2022 DATED 01.10.2002*** has held that in



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order to protect the property, the Apex Court has directed to handover the seized articles to the owner on proper Panchnama.

9.Considering the above aspects and also the ratio laid down by the Hon'ble Apex Court, this Court is of the view that keeping the vehicle idle in the open space, will diminish its nature and lose its value and no purpose will be served. As such, considering the nature of offence and also taking into account the fact that the vehicle is not involved in any other case similar in nature previously, this Court is inclined to allow the Criminal Revision Case.

10.In the result, this Criminal Revision Case is allowed and the impugned order passed by the Trial Court is set aside. The interim custody of the vehicle viz., Tipper Lorry bearing Registration No.TN33-AZ-8407 is ordered to be handed over to the petitioner, who is the owner of the vehicle, on the following conditions:-

- (i) the petitioner shall prove her ownership of the vehicle by producing the R.C.Book and other relevant



records;

(ii) the petitioner shall execute a personal bond for a sum of Rs.5,00,000/- (Rupees Five Lakhs only) before the Principal District and Sessions Judge, Nagapattinam;

(iii) the abovesaid Court is directed not to insist upon the petitioner for producing Solvency Certificate while releasing the vehicle;

(iv) the Court may prepare a Panchnama in Judicial Form No.82 with regard to the vehicle and such panchanama can be used in evidence.

(v) the petitioner may take photograph of the vehicle and certified under Section 65B of the Central Act 1 of 1972 and such photographs may be used as secondary evidence.

(vi) the petitioner shall not alienate or encumber the vehicle in any manner;



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(vii) the petitioner shall give an undertaking that she will not use the vehicle for any illegal activities in future;

(viii) the petitioner shall also produce the vehicle as and when required before the court below and before the respondent police.

06.06.2023

Internet : Yes/No
TK

To

1.The Principal District and Sessions Judge
Nagapattinam.

2.The Inspector of Police
Aanaikaranchathiram Police Station
Nagapattinam.

3.The Public Prosecutor
High Court of Madras.

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V. SIVAGNANAM, J.

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