



W.P.No.9914 of 2017

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IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 08.06.2023

CORAM :

THE HON'BLE MR.SANJAY V.GANGAPURWALA, CHIEF JUSTICE

AND

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

W.P.No.9914 of 2017

A.Saravanan

.. Petitioner

Vs.

1. The Director of Mines and Minerals
Guindy, Chennai.
2. The District Collector
Vellore District.
3. The Revenue Divisional Officer
Ranipet, Vellore District.
4. The Tahsildar
Valaja Taluk
Vellore District 632 401.
5. The Joint Director of Mines
Vellore District.
6. The Asst. Executive Engineer
Public for Department of Water Resources
Vellore District.



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7. The Junior Engineer
Public Works Department
Ranipet Division, Vellore District.

.. Respondents

Prayer: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India seeking issuance of a writ of Mandamus directing the respondents to stop the illegal quarry of sand mines in Sathapakkam and Chakaramallur in Valaja Taluk in Vellore District based on petitioner's representation dated 25.06.2016.

For the Petitioner : No appearance

For the Respondents : Mr.P.Muthukumar
State Government Pleader
Assisted by
Mr.U.Bharanidharan
Additional Government Pleader

ORDER

(Made by the Hon'ble Chief Justice)

None appears for the petitioner. Heard Mr.P.Muthukumar, learned State Government Pleader, assisted by Mr.U.Bharanidharan, learned Additional Government Pleader appearing for the respondents.

2. The petitioner seeks a direction against the respondents to stop the illegal quarrying of sand mines in Sathapakkam and Chakaramallur in Walajah Taluk, Vellore District, based on his



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representation dated 25.06.2016.

3. A status report has been filed by the second respondent. The affidavit states that the illegal sand quarry operations is fully controlled and stopped by the District Administration by taking various effective steps. The District Collector conducts meeting on every Monday at the Collectorate, to review sand quarry operations and give instructions to the District Level Officers.

4. Paragraphs 4, 5 and 7 of the status report filed by the second respondent state thus:

"4. It is submitted that the sand quarrying operations are being closely monitored and controlled by the District Level Task Force Committee headed by the District Collector and Taluk Level Task Force Committee headed by the Tahsildar of the Taluks concerned by making surprise raids and inspection by the members of the committee such as Officials of the Police, Water Resources Department, Revenue Department and Department of Geology and Mining and seized illicit sand is auctioned by the Public Works Department and amount so collected is remitted into



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*proper Government head of account and illicitly transported vehicles and bullock carts loaded with sand have also been seized by enforcement officials concerned and penalty is levied by the Revenue Divisional Officers concerned and the penalty amount collected is also remitted in to the Government Head of Account and fetched revenue to the Government. In respect of Vellore District 659 illicitly sand transported vehicles, and 1074 Bullock carts were seized and a sum of **Rs.98,88,273/-** was collected by way of imposing penalty to the offenders and sale of seized illicit sand from **1.4.2016 to 31.03.2017**. As many as **483** FIR have been booked by the Police Department in Vellore District. Further, in the places, where illicit sand quarrying operations are identified immediately, deep narrow trenches are excavated across the approaches to the river bed so as to avoid entering of machinery or bullock cart as the case may be, to prevent access to the river in order to curtail illicit sand quarrying. Hence, it is submitted that the District Administration is very cautious of the illegal sand quarrying and has taken all preventive measures to curb the illegal activity. Further I submit that at present all the sand quarries were closed due to expiry of lease periods, except Vadavirinjipuram Bullock Cart sand quarry and the*



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depth permitted to Public Works Departments for quarrying of sand is only one meter along the river beds, so that it does not affect Environment, Ground Water and Agriculture.

5. I respectfully submit that in the permitted sand quarries, the Public Works Department (PWD) has quarried only in the permitted area and up to the allowable depth of 1 metre only manually. In Vellore District machineries were not used for sand quarrying. In all the approved sand quarries the Public Works Department (PWD) has not exceeded the permitted quantity and they have closed the quarries whenever sand exhausts or the permitted limit reaches or the approval period ends, whichever comes earlier.

...

7. I submit that the representation dated 25.06.2016 of the writ petitioner has already been sent to Taluk Level Task Force Committee for getting inspection report. Accordingly the Taluk Level Task Force Committee has inspected and gone into the details of the representation and submitted a report for placing before District Level Task Force Committee. Necessary final orders are passed and necessary instructions have also been given to the



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Public Works Department, Revenue Department, Police Department and Mines Department to take severe action to curb illegal sand quarrying and illicit sand transportation of vehicles, if any, that takes place along the Palar river bed in Vellore District. Further, in the places, where illicit sand quarrying operations are identified, immediately deep narrow trenches are excavated across the approaches to the river bed so as to avoid entering of machinery or the cart as the case may be, from the river bed to prevent access to the river in order to curtail illicit sand quarrying. Hence, it is submitted that the District Administration is very cautious of the illegal sand quarrying and has taken all preventive measures to curb this illegal activity."

5. The representation of the petitioner is already considered and necessary steps are undertaken to curb the illegal sand quarry and illegal sand transportation of vehicles, if any.

6. In the light of the above, the representation of the petitioner is decided. The writ petition stands disposed of. There will be no order as to costs. Consequently, W.M.P.No.10912 of 2017 is closed.



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(S.V.G., CJ.)

(P.D.A., J.)

08.06.2023

Index : Yes/No
Neutral Citation : Yes/No

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THE HON'BLE CHIEF JUSTICE
AND
P.D.AUDIKESSAVALU, J.

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