



CONT.P.(MD)No.533 of 2023

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

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DATED: 07.08.2023

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THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE G.R.SWAMINATHAN

Cont.P.(MD)No.533 of 2023

in

W.P.(MD)No.20174 of 2022

1.Salman Paris

2.Rafiq Raja

3.P.Murugesan

4.K.Jai Ganesh

... Petitioners

Vs.

1.Kumar Jayant IAS,
Secretary to Government,
Revenue and Disaster Managment Department,
Land Disposal Wing, LD1(2) Department,
Secretariat, Chennai.

2.S.Nagarajan IAS,
The Principal Secretary,
Commissioner of Land Administration,
Chepauk, Chennai.

3.S.Aneesh Sekhar IAS,
District Collector, Madurai.

... Respondents



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Prayer: Contempt petition is filed under Section 11 of the Contempt of Courts Act, to punish the contemnors/Respondents for their willful disobedience of the order of this Court in WP(MD).No.20174 of 2022 dated 11-10-2022.

For Petitioners : Mr.RM.Arun Swaminathan

For Respondents : Mr.R.Baskaran,
Addl. Advocate General,
Assisted by Mr.S.Shanmugavel,
Addl. Government Pleader.

ORDER

Heard the learned counsel for the petitioners and the learned Additional Advocate General assisted by the learned Additional Government Pleader for the respondents.

2.The subject matter concerns allotment of housing sites in favour of journalists / media personnel. The issue has a chequered history and I consciously refrain from narrating the trajectory of events. Suffice to say that the petitioners felt aggrieved since they were left out



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in the allotment process. They filed W.P.(MD)No.20174 of 2022. The writ petition was disposed of on 11.10.2022 in the following terms:-

2. The Writ Petitioners are Journalists. The first petitioner is a Senior Reporter working in Junior Vikatan. Earlier, he was with Nakkiran. These are well known Magazines. The petitioners 2 and 3 were associated with Sun T.V. The fifth petitioner is associated with Kalaingar T.V. Their grievance is that they have not been included in the list of beneficiaries for allotment of land to Media persons on payment basis. The Government of Tamil Nadu issued G.O.(M.S).No.76 (Revenue and Disaster Management Department) dated 28.02.2019 for allotting house sites to 86 members of Madurai Press Reporters Association and Press and Media Personnels. The validity of the said G.O. was put to challenge. The matter went up to the Division Bench of the Madurai Bench of High Court. The Division Bench upheld the assignment. Subsequently, a Journalist moved the National Green Tribunal and it was directed that a water body known as Pudhukulam Kanmai cannot be utilized for the purpose of allotting plots to the Media personnel. The order passed by the National Green Tribunal was



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subsequently sustained by the Hon'ble Supreme Court also. It is also seen that based on the assignment orders, a number of Media personnel have also made payments almost an year back, but on account of the queries raised by un~allotted journalists, the issue is still hanging fire. It is in this background, this Writ Petition also has been filed.

3.The assignment of house plots for Journalists and Media Personnel is definitely laudable. The Government in this case has introduced the scheme only on payment basis. However, while making the allotments, what has to be borne in mind is that the benefit reaches only the genuine Journalists. While I may not frown upon reporters working in not so well~known newspapers, I must clarify that those who are associated with leading dailies ought not to be ignored. Newspapers such as Tamil Hindu, Indian Express, Times of India, Dinamani, Dinamalar, Dinathandhi and Magazines such as Nakkiran, Junior Vikatan etc., and television channels like Sun T.V., Kalaighnar T.V., cannot be over looked. The authorities ought to ensure that all the Journalists and Media personnels associated with the main stream media are accommodated. While I would not disturb the



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allotments and assignments already made, I direct the respondents to take note of the representations made by the Writ Petitioners and pass final order within a period of twelve weeks from the date of receipt of copy of this order. The respondents are mandated to bear in mind the observations made above.”

Contending that the order passed by this Court has not been complied with, the present contempt petition came to be filed.

3.The respondents are willing to allot tenement under the Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Scheme. Even though 86 allotments were originally made, 38 allotments were cancelled. It appears that the aggrieved individuals including the press club filed appeal before the Government. The earlier order passed by this Court is also directed against the Government only. The petitioners' applications shall be taken up by the Secretary to Government, Revenue and Disaster Management Department, Secretariat, Chennai along with the appeals filed by the aggrieved persons whose allotments were cancelled. It is stated that two of the allottees whose allotments were cancelled are no more. But the press club appears to have taken up cudgels on behalf of the legal heirs.



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The Government can very well consider allotting the said two plots atleast in favour of the petitioners herein. The entire process shall be concluded by the Government within a period of four months from the date of receipt of a copy of this order.

4.This contempt petition is closed with the aforesaid direction.

07.08.2023

NCC : Yes/No
Index : Yes / No
Internet : Yes/ No
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To:-

1.Kumar Jayant IAS,
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Revenue and Disaster Managment Department,
Land Disposal Wing, LD1(2) Department,
Secretariat, Chennai.

2.S.Nagarajan IAS,
The Principal Secretary,
Commissioner of Land Administration,
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3.S.Aneesh Sekhar IAS,
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