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W.P.No.27755 of 2024

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 12.12.2024

CORAM :

THE HON'BLE MR.K.R.SHRIRAM, CHIEF JUSTICE

AND

THE HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE SENTHILKUMAR RAMAMOORTHY

W.P.No.27755 of 2024
and W.M.P.No.30267 of 2024

National Federation of the Blind,
rep. by its Director Project Southern India P.Manoharan,
Tamil Nadu Branch office at
Plot No.7, Door No.6/391,
Bharathiyar Street, Shweta Garden,
Balaji Nagar, Moondram Kattalai,
Kovur, Chennai-600 128.

.. Petitioner

Vs

- 1.The Government of Tamil Nadu,
rep. by its Secretary,
Welfare of Differently Abled Persons Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-600 009.
- 2.Directorate for Welfare of the Differently Abled,
No.5, Kamarajar Salai,
Lady Wellington College Campus,
Chennai-600 005.



W.P.No.27755 of 2024

3.The Principal Investigator,
Government Industrial Training Centre for the Blind,
Poonamallee, Chennai-600 056.

.. Respondents

Prayer : Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India seeking issuance of a writ of mandamus directing 2nd and 3rd respondents to commence the book binding course for persons with Visual Impairment at the 3rd respondent Training Centre for the Academic year 2024-2025.

For Petitioner : Ms.M.Karpagam

For Respondents : Mr.J.Ravindran
Addl. Advocate General
assisted by
Mr.A.Edwin Prabakar
State Government Pleader
Mr.M.Habeeb Rahman
Government Advocate

ORDER

(Order of the Court was made by the Hon'ble Chief Justice)

As noted in the prayer above, petitioner seeks writ of mandamus directing respondent Nos.2 and 3 to commence the bookbinding course for persons with visual impairment at the third respondent's training centre for the academic year 2024-2025.



W.P.No.27755 of 2024

2. On 21st November, 2024, this Court passed the following order:

“Shri Prabakar requests the matter be stood over by two weeks so that he could take instructions on the suggestion made by the court as to whether bookbinding course for the visually impaired could be continued for this academic year as well i.e., 2024-2025 and, in the meanwhile, explore possibilities of the other course.

2. Shri Prabakar states he will also inform the concerned Secretary to include petitioner during discussion while reviewing the situation and while considering the courses available as an alternative to bookbinding course, keeping in mind the employment opportunities, technological advancements and stakeholder feedback.

3. Ms.Karpagam states that the Government Order dated 20th September, 2024, being G.O.(Ms) No.21, contains observations against the visually impaired that are not only disrespectful, but also derogatory.

4. Shri Ravindran, who is present in court, states that he shall immediately advise the concerned department to either withdraw the Government Order or modify the same .

Stand over to 05.12.2024.”

3. Pursuant thereto, an affidavit has been filed by one Ms.Lakshmi, affirmed on 4th December, 2024. The said Lakshmi is presently working as Director for Welfare of the Differently Abled. Paragraphs 5, 6, 7 and 8 read as under:

“5. I respectfully submit that, on 14.11.2024, a meeting was conducted by the Managing Director of the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation with various stakeholders from differently-



WEB COPY



W.P.No.27755 of 2024

abled organizations regarding employment and training opportunities. In particular, representatives from associations for the Visually Impaired persons participated in this meeting. Furthermore, on 22.11.2024, another meeting was held with representatives from the petitioner association and the College Students Graduates Association of the Blind, during which they requested the continuation of the bookbinding course.

6. I respectfully submit that the Government considered the request of the visually impaired persons positively and following the withdrawal of the aforementioned Government Order, instructions were issued vide Letter No.Na.Ka.En.6605/Placement/2020 dated 22.11.2024 to the Managing Director, Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC), the Director of Employment and Training Department, and the 3rd Respondent Institute to commence the bookbinding course from January 2025.

7. Furthermore, the letter also requested the Managing Director of Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC) and the Director of Employment and Training Department to take necessary steps to initiate the alternate courses identified by them from January 2025. The training courses suggested by the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation includes (1) Telemedicine, (2) IT & Software Development, (3) Customer Support Executive, (4) Content Writer, (5) Packer, (6) SPA Therapist, (7) Patient Relation Associate, and (8) Recruitment Executive. Further, the Employment and Training Department has suggested Desktop Publishing Course with SCVT certification as an alternate course for visually impaired persons.

8. I respectfully submit that the 3rd Respondent Institute has begun issuing applications for the Bookbinding Course from 27.11.2024, ensuring the continuation of the course.”

4. In view of what is recorded in paragraph 8 above, in our view, the petition has worked itself out.



W.P.No.27755 of 2024

5. As regards alternate courses identified, it is a policy decision and, if the department needs input from any person, they are open to seek opinion.

6. Petition is disposed of. There shall be no order as to costs. Consequently, interim application stands closed.

(K.R.SHRIRAM, C.J.)

(SENTHILKUMAR RAMAMOORTHY, J.)

12.12.2024

Index : Yes/No

NC : Yes/No

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To:

- 1.The Secretary,
Government of Tamil Nadu,
Welfare of Differently Abled Persons Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-600 009.
- 2.The Directorate for Welfare of the Differently Abled,
No.5, Kamarajar Salai,
Lady Wellington College Campus,
Chennai-600 005.
- 3.The Principal Investigator,
Government Industrial Training Centre for the Blind,
Poonamallee, Chennai-600 056.



WEB COPY



W.P.No.27755 of 2024



WEB COPY



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W.P.No.27755 of 2024

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