



W.P(MD)No.943 of 2024

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

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DATED: 18.01.2024

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THE HONOURABLE MRS.JUSTICE V.BHAVANI SUBBAROYAN

Writ Petition(MD)No.943 of 2024

Victor Raja Paraman

..Petitioner

Vs

1.The Regional Passport Officer,
Bharathi Ula Veethi,
Race Course Road,
Madurai – 625 002.

2.The Inspector of Police,
Subramaniyapuram Police Station,
Madurai District.

3.The Inspector of Police,
Gandharvakottai Police Station,
Pudukkottai District.

..Respondents

Prayer: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Mandamus, directing the first respondent to renew the petitioner's passport No.L2335334 by considering the petitioner's application No.23-1013946807 in file number in MD1075975371123 dated 16.11.2023 within the stipulated time.



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For Petitioner :Mr.I.Joshua
For R1 :Mr.R.Arunarajan
Central Govt. Standing Counsel
For R2 & R3 :Ms.M.Aasha
Government Advocate (Crl.side)

ORDER

The Petitioner has filed this Writ Petition seeking for issuance of a Writ of Mandamus directing the first respondent to renew the petitioner's passport No.L2335334 by considering the petitioner's application No.23-1013946807 in file number in MD1075975371123 dated 16.11.2023 within the stipulated time.

2.Heard the learned counsel appearing on either side and perused the materials placed before this Court.

3.The case of the petitioner is that he submitted an application for renewal of his passport before the first respondent. The first respondent has sent a communication to the second respondent for verification of his passport. Thereafter, the first respondent sent a communication dated 04.12.2023 to the petitioner stating that one criminal case in Crime No.349 of 2023 under Section 279 and 337 IPC on the file of the third respondent police, is pending against



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the petitioner. Apprehending that the first respondent may not process his application, he filed the present writ petition.

4.The learned Central Government Standing Counsel appearing for the first respondent would submit that the Writ Petition is premature, as the Petitioner's application was neither rejected nor closed, as on date. The Petitioner was asked to appear before the first respondent for clarification about the pendency of the criminal case registered against him and the Petitioner did not appear before the authorities, but had filed the present Writ Petition. Further, the first respondent could not proceed with the issuance of passport on the ground that FIR has been registered against the Petitioner in Crime No.309 of 2019.

5.The learned Government Advocate (criminal side) appearing for the respondent Police would submit that the petitioner has involved in a criminal case and that the crime being a heinous crime and hence, the authorities cannot issue passport to him. The case is in preliminary stage. The Petitioner is under criminal investigation and only after the completion of trial, the first respondent can decide the issue and pass appropriate orders.



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6.The learned counsel for the Petitioner produced a decision of this Court in the case of ***W.Jaihar William and others .vs. The State of Tamil Nadu and others reported in 2014(2) CWC 684***, wherein, it has been observed as follows:

"8.....the applications submitted by the Petitioners for passport were not considered by the third respondent for the reason that FIRs are pending against them. The Superintendent of Police , Tirunelveli, has filed counter affidavits stating that First Information Reports have been filed against the Petitioners for the alleged offences, stated supra, since they are involved in the agitation against the Koodankulam Nuclear Project. So far as the Petitioner in W.P(MD)NO.8349 of 2014 is concerned, the criminal case has been registered under Sections 147, 148, 294(b), 353 and 307 IPC. Since the FIRs are pending against the Petitioners, the third respondent has not considered the applications of the Petitioners, by placing reliance on section 6(2)(f) of the Passports Act, 1967.Section 6(2)(f) reads as follows:

6.Refusal of passports,travel documents, etc---(i)....

(2)subject to the other provisions of this Act, the Passport Authority shall refuse to issue a passport or travel document for visiting any foreign country under Clause © of sub section (2) of Section 5 on any one or more of the following grounds and on no other ground namely:

(a) and (b).....

(f)that proceedings in respect of an offence alleged to have



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been committed by the Applicant are pending before the Criminal Court in India"

It is well settled legal principle that mere pendency of FIR cannot be construed as pendency of Criminal Proceedings in respect of the offences alleged to have been committed by the Applicant before the Criminal Court. Only after the Court takes cognizance of the offence alleged to have been committed by the Applicant, as stipulated under Section 190 of Cr.P.C, it can be construed as "proceedings pending before the Court".

7. This Court and various High Courts had allowed the Writ Petition of this nature, on the ground that unless and until the Judicial Magistrate takes cognizance of the offence, the respondents/Officials cannot mechanically refuse to issue passport to the parties, stating that FIR is pending and that mere pendency of FIR cannot be construed as pendency of criminal proceedings and the same cannot be a bar for issuance of passport to the parties concerned.

8. In view of the above settled position of law, this Court directs the first respondent to consider the petitioner's application No.23-1013946807 in file number in MD1075975371123 dated 16.11.2023 and renew the petitioner's passport No.L2335334, if it is otherwise in order and issue appropriate orders regarding issuance of passport to the Petitioner, within a period of six weeks from the date of receipt of a copy of this order.



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WEB COPY 9. With the above direction, the Writ Petition stands disposed of. No costs.

18.01.2024

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

1. The Regional Passport Officer,
Regional Passport Office,
Bharathi Ula Veethi,
Madurai District.
2. The Inspector of Police,
Melur Police Station,
Madurai District.
In Crime No.309/2019.



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V.BHAVANI SUBBAROYAN, J.

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