



W.P.(MD)No.17163 of 2022

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

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DATED : 13.08.2024

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE N.SATHISH KUMAR

W.P.(MD)No.17163 of 2022

P.Anantha Sekaran

... Petitioner

Vs.

1.The District Registrar (Administration),
Thanjavur Registration District, Thanjavur.

2.Sub Registrar,
Vallam, Thanjavur District.

3.K.Srinivasa Reddy

.... Respondents

PRAYER: Writ Petition is filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying for the issuance of a Writ of Certiorari, calling for the records relating to the impugned order made by the 1st respondent Mu.Mu.No. 3611/A1/2021 dated 15.06.2022 and quash the same as illegal.

For Petitioner	: Mr.Mohamed Arshath for Mr.MMahaboob Athiff
For Respondents	: Mr.P.Subbaraj, Spl. Govt. Pleader for R1 & R2 Mr.C.Jawahar Ravindran for R3



W.P.(MD)No.17163 of 2022

ORDER

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This Writ Petition has been filed for issuance of a Writ of Certiorari, calling for the records relating to the impugned order made by the 1st respondent in Mu.Mu.No. 3611/A1/2021, dated 15.06.2022 and quash the same as illegal.

2. Heard the learned counsel for the petitioner, the learned Special Government Pleader appearing for the respondents 1 and 2 and the learned counsel appearing for the third respondent and perused the materials available on record.

3. It is the case of the writ petitioner that the subject property is an ancestral property. The petitioner is in complete possession and enjoyment of the said property by way of a registered settlement deed dated 04.10.2021, executed by his father and the same was registered as Document No.2400/2021. While so, the third respondent sought to interfere with the petitioner's possession claiming that the petitioner's grandfather's brother had sold the petition mentioned property in his favour by a sale deed dated 18.05.1953 and in this regard, he has given a complaint before the first respondent. On the basis of the complaint given by the



W.P.(MD)No.17163 of 2022

third respondent, the first respondent has conducted an enquiry under Section 68(2) of the Registration Act, 1908 and passed the impugned order stating that prosecution to be initiated against the petitioner and his father and also directed the 2nd respondent to make an endorsement in the encumbrance register that the Document No.2400/2021 is a fraudulent one. Hence, the petitioner has filed this Writ Petition.

4. The learned counsel appearing for the petitioner submitted that without serving a copy of the complaint or the documents relied by the third respondent to the petitioner, the first respondent has passed the impugned order. Hence, the impugned order is in violation of principles of natural justice and the same is liable to be set aside.

5. Considering the facts and circumstances of the case, this Court is of the view that the Registering Authority has no power to cancel the document. In ***Satya Pal Anand vs. State of Madhya Pradesh and others*** reported in (2016) 10 SCC 767, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has held that power conferred on the Registrar by virtue of Section 68 cannot be invoked to cancel the registration of the document already registered. Sections 22-A and 22-B were inserted by Tamil



W.P.(MD)No.17163 of 2022

Nadu Act 28 of 2022 and Act 41 of 2022 respectively to prevent registration of certain category of the documents. Thereafter, Section 77-A has been brought by Act 41 of 2022 to cancel the document registered in contravention of Sections 22-A and 22-B not beyond it. Now Section 77-A of the Registration Act, 1908 also is struck down by the Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court in W.P.No.10291 of 2022 batch as unconditional. Such being the position, this Court is of the definite view that the title cannot be decided by the Registering Authorities. These facts have been discussed by this Court in **W.P.No.29706 of 2022 [G.Rajasulochana Vs. Inspector General of Registration and others]** and the Order in the writ petition is as follows:

“... 3. It is relevant to note that the object of the law of registration is to provide public notice of the transaction embodied therein. The execution of documents and its validity, the right created or extinguished is governed by the substantive law namely the Transfer of Property Act, 1882. The provisions contained in the Registration Act, 1908 relates to the factum of registration alone. The Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of State of Rajasthan v. Basant Nahata, (2005) 12 SCC 77 has held as follows:

“The Act only strikes at the documents and not at the transactions. The whole aim of the Act is to govern documents and not the transactions embodied therein. Thereby only the notice of the public is drawn.”

4. The practice has been developed in the recent past in Tamil Nadu to entertain the applications given by the so-called affected parties to cancel all the documents under the pretext of either forgery or fraudulent



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transactions. The Inspector General of Registration, Government of Tamil Nadu has brought out Circular No.67 dated 03.11.2021 to deal with the fraudulent registrations through impersonation. The said circular is mainly based on the judgment of the Full Bench of the Andhra Pradesh High Court in the case of YanalaMalleshwari v. AnanthulaSayamma, reported in AIR 2007 AP 57. However, the three bench of Hon'ble Apex Court in the case of Satya Pal Anand v. State of M.P., reported in (2016) 10 SCC 767 has held that the power of the Registrar, under the Registration Act, is purely administrative and not quasi-judicial. The same is extracted hereunder:

“34. The role of the Sub-Registrar (Registration) stands discharged, once the document is registered (see Raja Mohammad Amir Ahmad Khan [State of U.P. v. Raja Mohammad

Amir Ahmad Khan, AIR 1961 SC 787]). Section 17 of the 1908 Act deals with documents which require compulsory registration. Extinguishment deed is one such document referred to in Section 17(1)(b). Section 18 of the same Act deals with documents, registration whereof is optional. Section 20 of the Act deals with documents containing interlineations, blanks, erasures or alterations. Section 21 provides for description of property and maps or plans and Section 22 deals with the description of houses and land by reference to government maps and surveys. There is no express provision in the 1908 Act which empowers the Registrar to recall such registration. The fact whether the document was properly presented for registration cannot be reopened by the Registrar after its registration. The power to cancel the registration is a substantive matter. In absence of any express provision in that behalf, it is not open to assume that the Sub-Registrar (Registration) would be competent to cancel the registration of the documents in question.



Similarly, the power of the Inspector General is limited to do superintendence of Registration Offices and make rules in that behalf. Even the Inspector General has no power to cancel the registration of any document which has already been registered.”

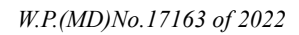
5. In fact, the Hon'ble Apex Court has held that and in the absence of any express power to cancel the registered document, the Registrar has no power to cancel the document. Section 68(2) of the Registration Act, 1908 relied upon by the Registration Department to substantiate the circular in this regard, when carefully seen. Section 68(2) of the Registration Act, 1908 reads as follows:

“68. Power of Registration to superintend and control Sub Registrars.

(1) every Sub Registrar perform the duties of his office under the superintendence and control of the Registrar in whose district the office of such Sub Registrar is situate.

(2) Every Registrar shall have authority to issue (Whether on complaint or otherwise) any order consistent with this Act which he considers necessary in respect of any act or omission of any Sub Registrar subordinate to him or in respect of the rectification of any error regarding the book or the office in which any document has been registered.”

6. The above provision makes it clear that the said section confers power upon the Registrar to supervise and control all the acts of the Sub-Registrar. Sub-Section 2 empowers the Registrar to issue any order consistent with the Act, which he considers necessary in respect of any act or omission of any Sub-Registrar subordinate to him. Similarly, the Registrar shall also have power in respect of the rectification of any error regarding the book or the office in which any document has been



5. In view of the above settled position of law, the impugned order by the first respondent is liable to be set aside. Accordingly, the impugned order of the first respondent in Mu.Mu.No.3611/A1/2021, dated 15.06.2022 is hereby set aside and the Writ Petition is allowed. There shall be no order as to costs.

NCC : Yes/No
Index : Yes/No
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W.P.(MD)No.17163 of 2022

N.SATHISH KUMAR, J.

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To

- 1.The District Registrar (Administration),
Thanjavur Registration District, Thanjavur.
- 2.Sub Registrar,
Vallam, Thanjavur District.

W.P.(MD)No.17163 of 2022

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