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WP No.14391 of 2025



IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 23.07-2025

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE MRS JUSTICE N. MALA

WP.No.14391 of 2025

M/s.Sri SNS Charitable Trust
Rep. by its Trustee, Dr.S.Nalin Vimal Kumar,
No.536, Sri SNS Charitable Trust,
Saravanampatti, Thudiyalur Road,
Coimbatore-641 029.

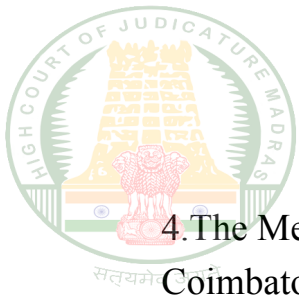
Petitioner(s)

Vs

1.The Secretary,
Housing and Urban Development Department,
Fort St.George, Chennai-600 015.

2.The Director of Town and Country Planning
Office of the Directorate of Town and Country Planning,
Second, Third And Fourth Floor,
C And E Market Road,
Koyambedu, Chennai-600 107.

3.The Joint Director,
District Town and Country Planning,
No.50, First and Second Floor, FCI Road,
Gandhimanagar, Ganapathy,
Coimbatore-641 006



4. The Member Secretary,
Coimbatore Local Planning Authority,
No.50, First and Second Floor, FCI Road,
Gandhimanagar, Raju Naidu Street,
Sivananda Colony, Coimbatore-641 012.

Respondent(s)

PRAYER: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying for the issuance of a direction in the nature of Writ of Mandamus, directing the Respondents to release the Petitioner's land viz., to an extent of 1140 Sq.mt situated in S.F No.169/ 1B, Chinnavedampatti village, Coimbatore North Taluk, Coimbatore District under Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971 which was proposed to be acquired on 26.02.1990 for Chinnavedampatti Extension Development Scheme No 5(DD P/ R (CN) NO 52/ 90), and not been utilized till date based on various representations including the representation dated 18.02.2025 made by the Petitioner and pass such further orders.

For Petitioner: Mr.P.Mahesh Kumar

For Respondents: Mr.M.Rajendiran,
Additional Government Pleader

ORDER

This writ petition has been filed seeking a direction to the respondents to release the Petitioner's land viz., to an extent of 1140 Sq.mt situated in S.F No.169/ 1B, Chinnavedampatti village, Coimbatore North Taluk, Coimbatore District under Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act,



1971 which was proposed to be acquired on 26.02.1990 for Chinnavedampatti

Extension Development Scheme No 5(DD P/ R (CN) NO 52/ 90), and not been utilized till date based on various representations including the representation dated 18.02.2025 made by the Petitioner.

2. The case of the Petitioner is that The Petitioner's Trust, a charitable institution running Dr.SNS Rajalakshmi College of Arts and Science since 2002, purchased 1.27 acres of land in S.F. No. 169/1B, Chinnavedampatti Village, Coimbatore, through a registered Sale Deed dated 01.01.2001. Out of this land, 1140 sq.mt. was earmarked under the Chinnavedampatti Extension Development Scheme No. 5 in 1994 by invoking Section 25 of the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971, for laying an 80 feet road. However, no acquisition proceedings were initiated, and no notice was ever served to the Petitioner or the Vendor. The land remains in the possession and enjoyment of the Trust.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner submits that despite several representations, including one dated 18.02.2025, the Respondents have failed to act upon the request for release of land under Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu

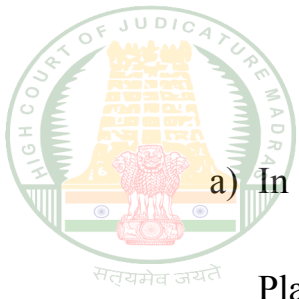


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Town and Country Planning Act, 1971. As per Section 38, if no acquisition takes place within three years from the date of publication of the development plan, the land shall be deemed to be released. Since no acquisition or implementation of the Scheme has occurred since 1990, the land must be deemed released. He relies on various precedents, including the Supreme Court's decisions and High Court rulings, to substantiate that the land, not being acquired or used, must revert to the Trust's full ownership. Hence, a direction is sought for formal release of the land under Section 38 of the Act.

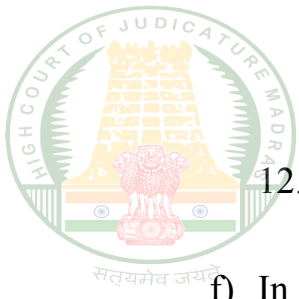
4. Learned counsel for the petitioner would further submit that the petitioner had made representations several times including the recent representation dated 18.02.2025 to the respondents to release the lands belonging to him, as the same are not acquired and no more public purpose is involved under the deemed proviso, viz., under Section 38 of the Act, land would be deemed to be released from reservation, allotment or designation.

5. Learned counsel for the petitioner would then place reliance on the similar orders passed by this Court, which are as follows:



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- a) In the case of A.Kondasamy Vs. The Director of Town & Country Planning, Office of the Directorate of Town and Country Planning, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Floor, E & C Market Road, Koyambedu, Chennai – 600 107 and others in W.P.No.25243 of 2021 dated 29.11.2024.
- b) In the case Alagirisamy Vs. The Director of Town & Country Planning, 807, Anna Salai, Chennai, Chennai District and others in W.P.No.27672 of 2022 dated 12.12.2022.
- c) In the case of M/s.C.Vasanthadevi and another Vs. The Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department, Fort St.George, Chennai – 600 015 and others in W.P.No.29069 of 2022 dated 12.12.2022.
- d) In the case of V.Vijayalakshmi Vs. The Managing Director, Office of Director Municipality, Chepauk, Near Anna Square, Chennai – 600 005 and others in W.P.No.29297 of 2022 dated 12.12.2022.
- e) In the case of S.Ponnusamy and others Vs. The Director of Town & Country Planning, Office of Directorate of Town & Country Planning, Second, Third and Fourth Floors, E & C Market Road, Koyambedu, Chennai – 600 107 and others in W.P.No.30168 of 2022 dated



12.12.2022.

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f) In the case of Ramesh Chand and others Vs. The Commissioner, Directorate of Town & Country Planning, Chengalvarayan Building, 4th Floor, 807, Anna Salai, Chennai – 600 002 and others in W.P.No.31752 of 2022 dated 12.12.2022.

g) In the case of M.Shanmugharaj Vs. The Director of Town & Country Planning, Office of Directorate of Town & Country Planning, Second, Third and Fourth Floors, E & C Market Road, Koyambedu, Chennai – 600 107 and others in W.P.No.30169 of 2022 dated 25.01.2023.

6. Heard both sides and perused the materials available on record.

7. The orders relied on by the learned counsel for the petitioner in the case of **A.Kondasamy Vs. The Director of Town & Country Planning, Office of the Directorate of Town and Country Planning, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Floor, E & C Market Road, Koyambedu, Chennai – 600 107** and others in **W.P.No.25243 of 2021**, which held as follows:



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“5. This Court has consistently held that if the land has not been acquired within a period of three years from the date of publishing the detailed development plan in the Gazette, the concerned lands shall be deemed to be released from such reservation. In the present case, the respondents had failed to take any steps to acquire the subject land therefore, by operation of Section 38 of the Act, the scheme has lapsed.”

b) In the case **Alagirisamy Vs. The Director of Town & Country Planning, 807, Anna Salai, Chennai, Chennai District and others in W.P.No.27672 of 2022**, which held as follows:

“4. The main issue that has been urged before this Court is that the detailed development plan has lapsed as per Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, since the land has not been acquired within a period of three years from the date of publication of the notice under the Tamil Nadu Gazette.

5. It is not necessary for this Court to dwell much on the entire allegation in the Writ Petition, since for the very same detailed development scheme, a Division Bench of this Court in W.A (MD) No.485 of 2020 has held that the scheme had lapsed by virtue of Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act. The relevant portions in the judgment are extracted hereunder :

“11. As rightly pointed out by the learned counsel appearing for the respondents/writ petitioner that the counter affidavit proceeds on the merits of the claim and in no way deal with deemed lapse and in the considered opinion of this Court, the learned Judge, on correct appreciation of facts and by applying the legal position as enumerated in the above said judgment, allowed the writ petition. This Court, on going through the reasons assigned in the impugned order, is of the considered view that there is no infirmity or error apparent on



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the face of the record for the reason assigned by the learned Single Judge for allowing the writ petition and finds that the writ appeal lacks merits.

12. It is also brought to the knowledge of this Court that the writ appeal filed by the official respondents in WA(MD) No.340 of 2020, against the order dated 27.02.2017 in W.P.(MD) No.14456 of 2014 was also dismissed on 02.03.2020.”

6. This Court has consistently held that if the land has not been acquired within a period of three years from the date of publishing the detailed development plan in the Gazette, the concerned lands shall be deemed to be released from such reservation. It will be beneficial to provide the details of the cases, wherein this Court had reached such a conclusion :

1. M.Amsavalli v. Director of Town and Country Planning reported in (2017) 2 CWC 418.

2. RM.Shanmuganathan v. Director of Town and Country Planning reported in (2018) 2 CWC 20.

3. W.P.(MD) No.5652 of 2019 (LKS Mohammed Meera Mohaideen v. Director of Town and Country Planning)

4. W.A.(MD) No.485 of 2020 (The Director of Town and Country Planning and another v. Muthu and others) and

5. W.P.(MD) No.166 of 2021 (Nagendran v. The Director of Town and Country Planning).

Section 38 of the Tamilnadu Town and Country Planning Act reads as follows :

38. Release of land - If within three years from the date of the publication of the notice in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette under section 26 or section 27- (a) no declaration as provided in sub-section (2) of section 37 is published in respect of any land reserved, allotted or designated for any purpose specified in a regional plan, master plan, detailed development plan or new town development plan covered by such notice; or (b) such land is not acquired by agreement, such land shall be deemed to be released from such reservation, allotment or designation.



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7. In the present case, the detailed development plan was notified under Section 37 of the Act in the year 2007. However, the respondents failed to take any steps to acquire the land and therefore, by operation of Section 38, the scheme lapsed.”

c) In the case of **M/s.C.Vasanthadevi and another Vs. The Secretary,**

Housing and Urban Development Department, Fort St.George, Chennai –

600 015 and others in W.P.No.29069 of 2022, which held as follows:

“4. The main issue that has been urged before this Court is that the detailed development plan has lapsed as per Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, since the land has not been acquired within a period of three years from the date of publication of the notice under the Tamil Nadu Gazette.

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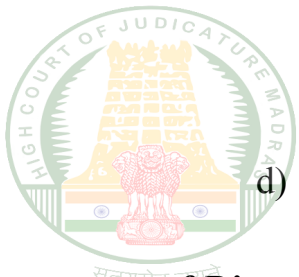
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7. In the present case, the detailed development plan was notified under Section 37 of the Act in the year 2007. However, the respondents failed to take any steps to acquire the land and therefore, by operation of Section 38, the scheme lapsed.”



d) In the case of **V.Vijayalakshmi Vs. The Managing Director, Office of Director Municipality, Chepauk, Near Anna Square, Chennai – 600 005**

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and others in W.P.No.29297 of 2022, which held as follows:

“4. The main issue that has been urged before this Court is that the detailed development plan has lapsed as per Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, since the land has not been acquired within a period of three years from the date of publication of the notice under the Tamil Nadu Gazette.

5. It is not necessary for this Court to dwell much on the entire allegation in the Writ Petition, since for the very same detailed development scheme, a Division Bench of this Court in W.A (MD) No.485 of 2020 has held that the scheme had lapsed by virtue of Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act. The relevant portions in the judgment are extracted hereunder :

11. As rightly pointed out by the learned counsel appearing for the respondents/writ petitioners that the counter affidavit proceeds on the merits of the claim and in no way deal with deemed lapse and in the considered opinion of this Court, the learned Judge, on correct appreciation of facts and by applying the legal position as enumerated in the above said judgment, allowed the writ petition. This Court, on going through the reasons assigned in the impugned order, is of the considered view that there is no infirmity or error apparent on the face of the record for the reason assigned by the learned Single Judge for allowing the writ petition and finds that the writ appeal lacks merits.

12. It is also brought to the knowledge of this Court that the writ appeal filed by the official respondents in WA(MD) No.340 of 2020, against the order dated 27.02.2017 in W.P.(MD) No.14456 of 2014 was also dismissed on 02.03.2020.



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follows:

“4. The main issue that has been urged before this Court is that the detailed development plan has lapsed as per Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, since the land has not been acquired within a period of three years from the date of publication of the notice under the Tamil Nadu Gazette.

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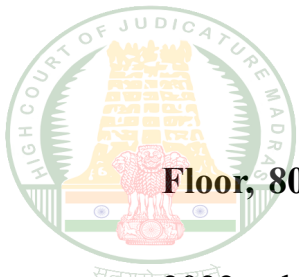
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7. In the present case, the detailed development plan was notified under Section 37 of the Act in the year 2007. However, the respondents failed to take any steps to acquire the land and therefore, by operation of Section 38, the scheme lapsed.”

f) In the case of **Ramesh Chand and others Vs. The Commissioner,**

Directorate of Town & Country Planning, Chengalvarayan Building, 4th



Floor, 807, Anna Salai, Chennai – 600 002 and others in W.P.No.31752 of

2022, which held as follows:

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“4. Admittedly, though the scheme road was proposed to be constructed, no steps have been taken by the respondents to acquire the land as per Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu Town Country Planning Act, which reads as follows :

“38. Release of land.- If within three years from the date of the publication of the notice in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette under section 26 or section 27- (a) no declaration as provided in sub-section (2) of section 37 is published in respect of any land reserved, allotted or designated for any purpose specified in a regional plan, master plan, detailed development plan or new town development plan covered by such notice; or (b) such land is not acquired by agreement, such land shall be deemed to be released from such reservation, allotment or designation.”

5. Having regard to the above section and as steps has not been taken to acquire the land within three years as per the above section, the respondent shall, without reference to the original proposal of the ring road, is directed to consider the representation of the petitioners on its own merits.”

g) In the case of **M.Shanmugharaj Vs. The Director of Town & Country Planning, Office of Directorate of Town & Country Planning, Second, Third and Fourth Floors, E & C Market Road, Koyambedu, Chennai – 600 107 and others in W.P.No.30169 of 2022**, which held as follows:



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“4. Learned counsel for the petitioner would submit that only an extent of 4.85 acres have been developed as a layout. While developing the layout, necessary lands have been gifted by gift deed bearing No.10974/2019. According to him, as far as the land already gifted in respect of a layout forming 4.85 acres, he is not claiming any right over the gifted properties. Only he seeks the declaration in respect of the remaining properties as the acquisition has not happened within a period of three years, as contemplated under Section 38 of Tamilnadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971.

5. Learned counsel for the respondents would submit that since the lands have already been gifted, the petitioner cannot have any right over the property. The entire extent of 7.04 acres was shown in a detailed development plan No.8 of the respondents for the purpose of constructing Elementary School, High school and Play ground. Though the declaration has been made on 15.07.1992, the land has not been acquired within a period of three years.

6. It is relevant to note that Section 38 of Tamilnadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971, reads as follows:-

“38. Release of land:- If within three years from the date of the publication of the notice in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette under Section 26 or Section 27- (a) no declaration as provided in sub-section 26 or section 27- (a) no declaration as provided in sub-section (2) of section 37 is published in respect of any land reserved, allotted or designated for any purpose specified in a regional plan, master plan, detailed development plan or new town development plan covered by such notice: or
(b) such land is not acquired by agreement, such land shall be deemed to be released from such reservation, allotment or designation.”

7. However, it is admitted case that the land has not been acquired within a period of three years. In such view of the matter, as per Section 38 of the Tamilnadu Town and Country Planning Act, the remaining area other than the layout already



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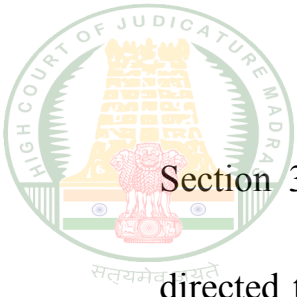
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developed shall be released from the development plan. It is also made clear that in future, if the Government intends to acquire the land for any other purposes, this order will not bar for the Government in view of the provision of Land Acquisition Act. Similarly, any application is filed or pending for regularisation of unapproved layout, such application shall be dealt as per Tamilnadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971, on its own merits, strictly in terms of the Rules.”

8. In view of the plethora of decisions of this Court as quoted above, the law is well settled in this regard, as the issue raised in the writ petition is no longer res integra. Once the three-year period is lost within the meaning of Section 37(2) proviso thereafter, Section 38 can very well be pressed into service and ultimately, the land is deemed to be released from such reservation, allotment, or designation.

9. Therefore, in view of the legal provisions as well as the categorical decisions made by this Court, this Court has no hesitation to hold that the Petitioner's land viz., to an extent of 1140 Sq.mt situated in S.F No.169/ 1B, Chinnavedampatti village, Coimbatore North Taluk, Coimbatore, shall be deemed to be released from such reservation or allotment or designation under



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Section 38 of the Town and Country Planning Act, and the respondents are directed to pass appropriate orders in releasing the Petitioner's land viz., to an extent of 1140 Sq.mt situated in S.F No.169/ 1B, Chinnavedampatti village, Coimbatore North Taluk, Coimbatore, within a period of four weeks from the date of receipt of a copy of this order.

In the result, **this writ petition stands allowed with the above observation and direction.** No costs.

23.07-2025

cda

Index:Yes/No

Speaking/Non-speaking order



To
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Housing and Urban Development Department,
Fort St.George, Chennai-600 015.
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