



Cont.A.No.24 of 2025

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

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<i>Reserved on</i>	<i>20.08.2025</i>
<i>Pronounced on</i>	<i>10.10.2025</i>

CORAM :

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE M.S. RAMESH
AND
THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE V. LAKSHMINARAYANAN

Cont.A.No.24 of 2025
and C.M.P.No.12350 of 2025

Mr.Vijayakumar,
Village Administrative Officer,
Vellalur Village Administrative Officer Office,
Vellalur, Coimbatore – 641 111.

... Appellant

Vs.

1.Murugathal

2.Mrs.Shri Malathi,
The Special Tahsildar (LA),
Adi Dravidar Welfare,
Coimbatore District Collectorate Complex,
Coimbatore – 641 105.

3.Mr.A.Sathyan, Tahsildar,
Madukkarai,
Madukkarai Taluk Office,
Coimbatore – 641 105.

... Respondents

*[R2 & R3 have given up vide Court's order dated 27.06.2025 (recorded)
in Cont.A.No.24 of 2025 by MSRJ & VLNJ]*



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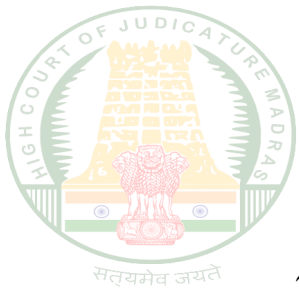
Prayer: Contempt Appeal filed under Section 19 of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, praying to set aside the order passed in Cont.P.No.3064 of 2024 dated 28.04.2025 and allow this Contempt Appeal.

For Appellant	: Mr.R.Ramanlaal, Additional Advocate General assisted by Mr.T.Arun Kumar, Additional Government Pleader
For R1	: Mr.S.Lakshminarayanan
For R2 & R3	: Given up

JUDGMENT

M.S.RAMESH, J.

This Contempt Appeal arises out of an order passed in Contempt Petition No.3064 of 2024 dated 28.04.2025, wherein the learned Single Judge had found the contemnors of having committed 'civil contempt' and sentenced the appellant herein to undergo simple imprisonment for a period of one month and to pay the compensation of Rs.25,000/- to the first respondent herein/petitioner in the Contempt Petition.



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2. The aforesaid Contempt Petition arises out of an order passed in W.P.No.501 of 2024 dated 10.01.2024. The grievance of the writ petitioner is that his representation given before the Revenue Authorities seeking not to grant E-Patta to the sixth respondent therein has not been considered and therefore, he sought for issuance of a Writ of Mandamus. The learned Single Judge, while passing final order in the Writ Petition on 10.01.2024, had directed the concerned respondents therein to consider the writ petitioner's representation, within a period of two months from the date of receipt of a copy of the Writ Order. Alleging disobedience of this order, the Contempt Petition came to be filed. The contemnor in Cont.P.No.3064 of 2024 is the Village Administrative Officer, who has filed this Contempt Appeal.

3. The learned Additional Advocate General appearing for the appellant herein submitted that the Special Tahsildar had complied with the order passed in the Writ Petition by considering the representation of the first respondent herein, conducting an inquiry and thereafter rejecting the request on 12.02.2025. He further submitted that he had filed a

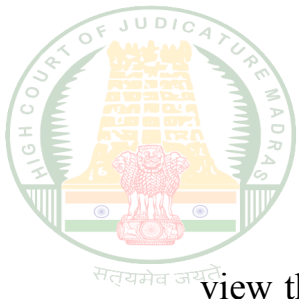


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compliance report before the learned Single Judge in Cont.P.No.3064 of 2024 and had also tendered an unconditional apology before the Court without any reservation, for any act of commission or omission.

4. The learned Single Judge had recorded that the counter affidavits filed by the individual contemnors were not satisfactory to the Court, since all of them have similar overt acts. The learned Single Judge had rejected the explanation offered by the contemnors that the delay in complying with the Court's order was due to the announcements and conduct of Parliamentary General Elections 2024, for which the respondents were assigned with various election duties. According to the learned Single Judge, the order was passed way back on 10.01.2024 and the elections were held on 19.04.2024 and even assuming that they were engaged in the election duties, the same could be only upto 10.09.2024, whereas the final order came to be passed only on 12.02.2025. Though the specific direction in the Writ Petition was to conclude within 2 months, the final order came to be passed after much delay, causing serious prejudice to the writ petitioner. In this background, the learned Single Judge was of the



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view that the contemnors have committed civil contempt and accordingly, punished them under Section 12 of the Contempt of Courts Act, as detailed above.

5. In the Writ Petition, the petitioner therein had given a representation to the Revenue Authorities, not to grant E-Patta to the sixth respondent therein. Such a representation could be effectively considered only by the Special Tahsildar (LA), Adi-Dravidar Welfare, Coimbatore and the Tahsildar, Madukkarai Taluk Office, Coimbatore, who were already impleaded as the respondents 1 and 2 in the Writ Petition. The order passed in the Writ Petition was a direction to the respondents 1 and 2, including the third respondent who is the Village Administrative Officer/appellant herein, to consider the representation seeking to refrain from issuing E-Patta to the sixth respondent. The Revenue Authorities, who may be responsible for considering such a representation, would only be the respondents 1 and 2 in the Writ Petition and the Village Administrative Officer/third respondent in the Writ Petition will have no authority or role in considering the writ petitioner's representation. Thus,



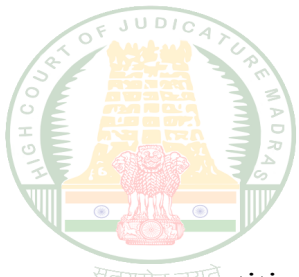
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initiating contempt proceedings against the Village Administrative Officer for alleged violation of the Writ Court's order, will not be justifiable, since by no stretch of imagination will the Village Administrative Officer have the authority to deny grant of E-Patta to the private respondents.

6. Incidentally, the Contempt Petition came to be filed against the Special Tahsildar and the Tahsildar in Cont.P.No.3064 of 2024 for violation of the order passed in W.P.No.501 of 2024. The learned Single Judge, by an order dated 28.04.2025 passed in Cont.P.No.3064 of 2024, had found both the Tahsildar and the Special Tahsildar, apart from the Village Administrative Officer/appellant herein, to be guilty of civil contempt and had also punished them. When the order in the Contempt Petition was challenged before us in Cont.A.Nos.21 & 22 of 2025, this Bench had confirmed the recording of wilful disobedience and had modified the sentence alone through our final order passed today.

7. In this background, we are of the affirmed view that when the Village Administrative Officer lacks authority to consider the writ



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petitioner's representation, finding him guilty of civil contempt cannot be sustained.

8. Accordingly, the impugned order dated 28.04.2025 passed in Cont.P.No.3064 of 2024 is set aside. The Contempt Appeal stands allowed and the appellant is purged from the contempt proceedings. Connected miscellaneous petition is closed.

[M.S.R, J.]

[V.L.N, J.]

10.10.2025

Index: Yes
Speaking order
Internet: Yes
Neutral Citation: Yes

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and
V. LAKSHMINARAYANAN, J.

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judgment made in
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