



Cont.A.Nos.17 to 20 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.Nos.17 to 20 of 2025  
and C.M.P.Nos.12331, 12337, 12338 & 12341 of 2025

**Cont.A.No.17/2025**

Mr.Manivel, Tahsildar,  
 Coimbatore North Taluk Office,  
 Coimbatore District,  
 Coimbatore – 641 018.

... Appellant

***Vs.***

1.John Chandy

2.Mr.Kranthi Kumar Patil, District Collector,  
 Office of the District Collector,  
 Coimbatore District,  
 Coimbatore – 641 018.

3.Ms.M.Sharmila,  
 District Revenue Officer,  
 Office of the District Revenue Officer,  
 Coimbatore District,  
 Coimbatore – 641 018.



Cont.A.Nos.17 to 20 of 2025

4.Mr.P.K.Govindan,  
Revenue Divisional Office,  
Office of the Revenue Divisional Officer (Coimbatore North),  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 030.

5.Ms.Yamuna,  
Village Administrative Officer,  
Office of the Village Administrative Officer,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 035.

... Respondents

*[R2 to R5 have given up vide this Court's order dated 27.06.2025 in Cont.A.No.17 of 2025 (MSRJ & VLNJ)]*

**Cont.A.No.18/2025**

Ms.M.Sharmila, District Revenue Officer,  
Office of the District Revenue Officer,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 018.

... Appellant

***Vs.***

1.John Chandy

2.Mr.Kranthi Kumar Patil, District Collector,  
Office of the District Collector,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 018.

3.Mr.P.K.Govindan,  
Revenue Divisional Office,  
Office of the Revenue Divisional Officer (Coimbatore North),  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 030.



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4.Mr.Manivel, Tahsildar,  
Coimbatore North Taluk Office,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 018.

5.Ms.Yamuna,  
Village Administrative Officer,  
Office of the Village Administrative Officer,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 035.

... Respondents

*[R2 to R5 have given up vide this Court's order dated 27.06.2025 in Cont.A.No.18 of 2025 (MSRJ & VLNJ)]*

**Cont.A.No.19/2025**

Mr.P.K.Govindan,  
Revenue Divisional Office,  
Office of the Revenue Divisional Officer (Coimbatore North),  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 030.

... Appellant

***Vs.***

1.John Chandy

2.Mr.Kranthi Kumar Patil,  
District Collector,  
Office of the District Collector,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 018.

3.Ms.M.Sharmila,  
District Revenue Officer,  
Office of the District Revenue Officer,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 018.



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4.Mr.Manivel, Tahsildar,  
Coimbatore North Taluk Office,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 018.

5.Ms.Yamuna,  
Village Administrative Officer,  
Office of the Village Administrative Officer,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 035.

... Respondents

*[R2 to R5 have given up vide this Court's order dated 27.06.2025 in Cont.A.No.19 of 2025 (MSRJ & VLNJ)]*

**Cont.A.No.20/2025**

Mr.Kranthi Kumar Patil,  
District Collector,  
Office of the District Collector,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 018.

... Appellant

***Vs.***

1.John Chandy

2.Ms.M.Sharmila,  
District Revenue Officer,  
Office of the District Revenue Officer,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 018.

3.Mr.P.K.Govindan,  
Revenue Divisional Office,  
Office of the Revenue Divisional Officer (Coimbatore North),  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 030.



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4.Mr.Manivel,  
Tahsildar,  
Coimbatore North Taluk Office,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 018.

5.Ms.Yamuna,  
Village Administrative Officer,  
Office of the Village Administrative Officer,  
Coimbatore District,  
Coimbatore – 641 035.

... Respondents

*[R2 to R5 have given up vide this Court's order dated 27.06.2025 in Cont.A.No.20 of 2025 (MSRJ & VLNJ)]*

**Common Prayer:** Contempt Appeals filed under Section 19(i) of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, praying to set aside the order dated 28.04.2025 passed in Cont.P.No.3283 of 2024 and allow the Contempt Appeals.

***(in all Contempt Appeals)***

For Appellants : Mr.R.Ramanlaal,  
Additional Advocate General  
assisted by Mr.T.Arun Kumar,  
Additional Government Pleader

For R1 : Mr.K.R.Ramesh Kumar

For R2 to R5 : Given up



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## **COMMON JUDGMENT**

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**M.S.RAMESH, J.**

All these four Contempt Appeals arise out of an order passed in Contempt Petition No.3283 of 2024 dated 28.04.2025, wherein the learned Single Judge had found the contemnors of having committed 'civil contempt' and sentenced the appellant in Cont.A.No.17 of 2025 to undergo simple imprisonment for a period of one month and to pay an amount equivalent to his one month's salary as compensation and a compensation of Rs.10,000/- each payable by the appellants in Cont.A.Nos.18, 19 & 20 of 2025.

2. The aforesaid Contempt Petition arises out of an order passed in W.P.No.29844 of 2023 dated 08.11.2023. The grievance of the writ petitioner is that his representations given before the Revenue Authorities seeking for removal of certain entries in the patta passbook have not been considered and therefore, he sought for issuance of a Writ of Mandamus. The learned Single Judge, while passing final orders in the Writ Petition on 08.11.2023, had directed the concerned respondents therein to consider



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his representations, 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 contemnors in Cont.P.No.3283 of 2024 are the Tahsildar, District Revenue Officer, Revenue Divisional Officer and District Collector, who have all filed individual Contempt Appeals.

3. The learned Additional Advocate General appearing for the appellants herein submitted that all the appellants had complied with the order passed in the Writ Petition by considering the representations of the first respondent herein, conducting an inquiry and thereafter rejecting the request on 13.02.2025. He further submitted that he had filed a compliance report before the learned Single Judge in Cont.P.No.3283 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



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all of them have similar overt acts. According to the learned Single Judge, though the order in the Writ Petition was passed on 08.11.2023, based on the first respondent's representation, the first date of inquiry was fixed only on 13.02.2024, which concluded on 22.10.2024. Though the specific direction in the Writ Petition was to conclude within 2 months, the final orders came to be passed after much delay, causing serious prejudice to the writ petitioner. In this background, the learned Single Judge was of the 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 our view, the learned Single Judge had rightly arrived at such a decision and hence, no interference is required to the findings.

6. With regard to the quantum of punishment, the Hon'ble Supreme Court, in '*Pushpaben and another Vs. Narandas V.Badiani and another*' reported in *AIR 1979 SC 1536*, had, while interpreting Section 12(3) of the Contempt of Courts Act 1971, held that there is no room for doubt that



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in normal circumstance, a sentence of fine should be imposed. However, the Act has conferred special powers on the Court to award punishment, if the ends of justice so require. By observing so, it held that the Court must properly apply its mind and give special reasons that a sentence of imprisonment alone is called for in a particular situation. As per the said decision, while imprisonment is an exception, fine is the general rule.

7. In the present case, the Contempt Court has not recorded any special reasons, as to why imprisonment was awarded together with the compensation amount. In our view, the Contempt Court could have restricted the punishment to fine alone, as contemplated under Section 12 of the Contempt of Courts Act, since no such reasons have been assigned for the sentence of imprisonment.

8. On this view, we are inclined to interfere with the order of the learned Single Judge made in the Contempt Petition, insofar as it sentences the appellants herein to one month simple imprisonment.



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9. Accordingly, para 24(i) of the impugned order dated 28.04.2025 in Cont.P.No.3283 of 2024, insofar as it sentences the appellants to undergo simple imprisonment for one month, is set aside. All other observations and findings in the impugned order are confirmed.

10. The Contempt Appeals are disposed of accordingly. Connected miscellaneous petitions are 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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**M.S.RAMESH, J.**  
**and**  
**V. LAKSHMINARAYANAN, J.**

*Sni*

judgment made in  
Cont.A.Nos.17 to 20 of 2025

10.10.2025