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W.P. No.35864 of 2025

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 22.09.2025

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THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE M. DHANDAPANI

W.P. No.35864 of 2025

R.Senthilkumar

... Petitioner

Vs.

1. The Director of Information and
Public Relations Officer,
Secretariat, Chennai - 600 009.

2. The District Collector,
Nilgiris District 643 001.

3. The Superintendent of Police,
Nilgiris District 643 001.

4. The Public Information Officer,
Nilgiris District 643 001.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a Writ of Mandamus to direct the respondents 1, 2 and 4 to renew the petitioner's 'Media Accreditation Card' from 01.01.2025 onwards and include number in the whatsapp group.



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For Petitioner : Mr.S.Baskar

For Respondents : Mr.A.M.Ayyadurai,
Government Advocate for R1, 2 and 4

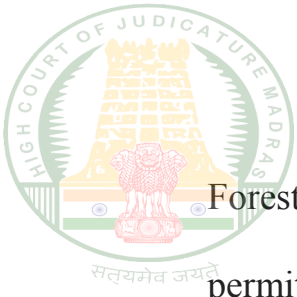
Mr.G.Balaji,
Government Advocate for R3

ORDER

Mr.A.M.Ayyadurai, learned Government Advocate accepts notice on behalf of respondents 1, 2 and 4. Mr.G.Balaji, learned Government Advocate accepts notice on behalf of the third respondent. By consent, the writ petition is taken up for final disposal at the admission stage itself.

2.The petitioner has filed this writ petition seeking for issuance of a Writ of Mandamus to direct respondents 1, 2 and 4 to renew his 'Media Accreditation Card' from 01.01.2025 onwards and include his number in the whatsapp group.

3.The case of the petitioner is that he is an authorized Reporter of 'NAMATHU MGR', a daily Newspaper for the District of Nilgiris. During the course of his reporting activities, on 31.09.2024, the petitioner has received a message that the trees grown alongside of the roads at Kunda



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Forest Range in Nilgiris District, which are posing threat to the public, were permitted to be cut off and the said work was given to the contractor. The petitioner came to know that under the guise of cutting the trees, which are posing threat, other valuable trees like Teakwood, Sandalwood and Naval trees, which are situated deep inside the forest, were also cut and smuggled by the Contractor in collusion with the Forest Officials. Therefore, the petitioner had reported the above message to his office. On 02.10.2024, the petitioner along with two other reporters, namely, Babu and Suresh travelled to the spot and took photos, which were published in the news. Thereafter, the Forest Ranger, Kunda Forest Range, Nilgiris District lodged a complaint on 25.10.2024 alleging that the news item, which was published in 'Dr.Namathu MGR newspaper, is false and that the petitioner along with two reporters visited the spot and demanded Rs.1,00,000/- from them for not publishing the news item. Apart from the said incident, the petitioner had received multiple calls from the District Administration forcing him to surrender his Media Accreditation Card issued by the first respondent, which is valid upto 31.12.2014. Since the petitioner has reported the illegality of the Forest Ranger, he has given a false complaint against the petitioner and based on the said complaint, the fourth respondent blocked



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the petitioner's whatsapp. Therefore, the petitioner is before this Court with the above prayer.

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4.Learned counsel for the petitioner would submit that since the petitioner has reported the illegality of the Forest Ranger, the Forest Ranger, Kunda Forest Range, Nilgiris District lodged a false complaint on 25.10.2024 alleging that the news item, which was published in 'Dr.Namathu MGR' newspaper is false and based on the said complaint, the petitioner was arrested and remanded in judicial custody for 20 days and later, he was released on bail. Based on the above complaint, the fourth respondent blocked the petitioner's whatsapp and the District Administration demanded the petitioner to surrender his 'Media Accreditation Card'. Unless the said card is renewed, the petitioner cannot act as a reporter. In spite of demand, respondents 1 and 2 have not renewed the petitioner's card. Therefore, the learned counsel for the petitioner prays for appropriate orders.

5.Placing on record a letter dated 21.09.2025 addressed by the Inspector of Police, Manjoor circle, Nilgiris, Mr.A.M.Ayyadurai, learned



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Government Advocate appearing for R1, 2 and 4 would submit that the petitioner and his two friends, claiming to be the reporters of 'Dr.Namathu MGR', have demanded bribe of Rs.1,00,000/- and therefore, on 25.10.2024, the Forest Ranger, Kunda Forest Range, Nilgiris District lodged a complaint and based on the said complaint, the petitioner was arrested and remanded in judicial custody and the vehicle of the petitioner was seized. On 20.12.2024, the petitioner has taken back his vehicle, by filing a petition and on 29.01.2025, a case was taken on file in C.C. No.72 of 2025 and the accused were produced before the Court on 24.03.2025 and the said case was pending for trial.

6.It is seen from records that the petitioner and his two friends are claiming to be the reporters of 'Dr.Namathu MGR' and on 25.10.2024, the Forest Ranger, Kunda Forest Range, Nilgiris District lodged a complaint alleging that the news item, which was published in 'Dr.Namathu MGR' newspaper is false and based on the said complaint, the petitioner was arrested and remanded in judicial custody and the vehicle of the petitioner was also seized and a case was taken on file in C.C. No.72 of 2025 and the accused were produced before the Court on 24.03.2025 and the said case



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M. DHANDAPANI, J.

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was pending for trial. Unless the petitioner was acquitted, the prayer sought for by him cannot be granted by this Court. As the prayer sought for by the petitioner cannot be entertained before this Court, this writ petition is dismissed. No costs.

22.09.2025

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To

1. The Director of Information and
Public Relations Officer,
Secretariat, Chennai - 600 009.
2. The District Collector,
Nilgiris District 643 001.
3. The Superintendent of Police,
Nilgiris District 643 001.
4. The Public Information Officer,
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