



IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 20-05-2026

CORAM

THE HON'BLE MR JUSTICE G. R. SWAMINATHAN

W.P. No. 20028 of 2026

and

W.M.P. Nos.21410 and 21415 of 2026

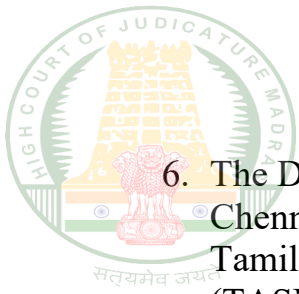
1. P.Saravanan

2. C.Mathiarasan

..Petitioners

Vs

1. The State of Tamil Nadu,
Represented by its Chief Secretary,
Government of Tamil Nadu, Secretariat,
Chennai 600 009.
2. The Secretary to Government
Department of Home, Prohibition and Excise,
Government of Tamil Nadu, Secretariat,
Chennai 600 009.
3. The Director,
Department of Information and Public
Relations, Government of Tamil Nadu,
Secretariat, Chennai 600 009.
4. The Managing Director,
Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation
(TASMAC), CMDA Towers - II, IV Floor,
Gandhi Irwin Bridge Road, Egmore,
Chennai 600 008.
5. The Regional Manager,
Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation
(TASMAC), B4, Industrial Estate, Ambattur,
Chennai 600 058.



6. The District Manager,
Chennai South District,
Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation
(TASMAC), B4, Industrial Estate,
Ambattur, Chennai 600 058.

..Respondent(s)

PRAYER: The Writ Petition is filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India seeking a declaration to declare the Press Release No.007 dated 12/05/2026 intended for closure of 717 TASMAC Shops in the State of Tamil Nadu, as inconsistent to the provisions of the Tamil Nadu Liquor Retail Vending (In Shops and Bars) Rules 2003, and ultra vires to the provisions of Tamil Nadu prohibition Act, 1937, illegal, null and void.

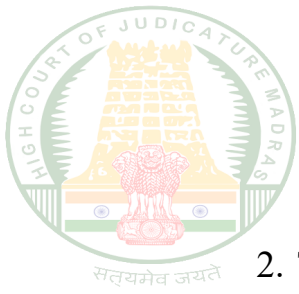
For Petitioners: Mr.V.Ramanareddy

For Respondents: Mr.Vijay Narayan, Advocate General
Assisted by Mr.L.S.M.Hasan Fizal
Additional Government Pleader
for R1 to R3

Mr.T.Gowthaman
Additional Advocate General
Assisted by Mr.K.Sathishkumar
for R4 to R6

ORDER

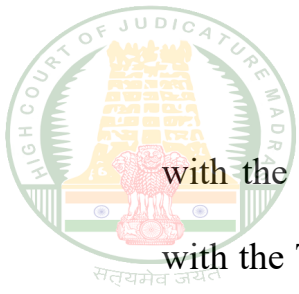
Heard Mr.V.Ramanareddy, learned counsel appearing for the petitioner, Mr.Vijay Narayan, learned Advocate General assisted by Mr.L.S.M.Hasan Fizal, learned Additional Government Pleader for respondent Nos.1 to 3 and Mr.T.Gowthaman, learned Additional Advocate General assisted by Mr.K.Sathishkumar, learned counsel for respondent Nos. 4 to 6.



2. The writ petitioners are owners of the premises bearing Door No.2/4, Venkatakrishna Road, R.A.Puram, Chennai - 600 028, which was leased out in favour of the fifth respondent Corporation to enable running of a liquor outlet with an attached Bar for which licence was granted to the petitioners herein. The petitioners thus don two hats. They are the landlords as well as licensees. Following the change of State Government, a policy decision has been taken to close 717 TASMAC shops across the State of Tamil Nadu by taking note of their location.

3. The learned counsel for the petitioner submits that without there being a formal Government Order, merely based on the strength of a press release effected by the third respondent on 12.05.2026, the shop was closed. He wants this Court to declare such a decision as null and void. He pointed out that the petitioners had invested a substantial sum of money with the fond hope that they would get regular income from the TASMAC for a reasonable period. He contends that the petitioners had been put to considerable financial loss on account of the impugned decision.

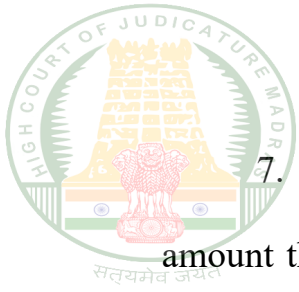
4. I am not swayed by the said submission. As rightly pointed out by the learned Advocate General, the petitioners do not have any direct relationship



with the State. They had only lessor-lessee and licensee-licensor relationship with the TASMAL. If the petitioners suffer any legal injury as a fall out of the decision taken by TASMAL, their remedy for the petitioners is only before the civil Court. They cannot be permitted to invoke the public law remedy.

5. I need not go into the question whether, without there being a formal Government Order, there can be enforcement of such policy decision. It is for the TASMAL, the fourth respondent which has been running the liquor outlet. They have chosen to abide by the direction issued by the Hon'ble Chief Minister. The petitioners have no locus standi in the matter. It is not for the Writ Court to test the correctness of the said decision. Article 47 of the Constitution of India emphasises that the States shall endeavour to promote prohibition as a policy. The impugned decision is in consonance with the said Constitutional objective. I, therefore, do not find any ground to grant the relief.

6. The learned counsel for the petitioners states that a sum of Rs.18,00,000/- had been deposited by the petitioners with the fourth respondent.



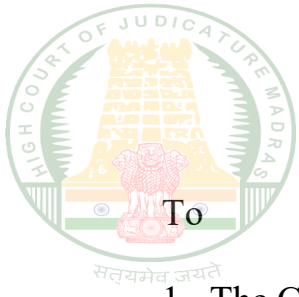
7. The learned Advocate General informs this Court that whatever amount that is due to be refunded to the petitioners, will be refunded within a period of three (3) weeks from the date of submission of a proper representation by the writ petitioners.

8. With the above observation, the Writ Petition stands dismissed. There shall be no order as to costs. Consequently, the connected Miscellaneous Petitions are closed.

20-05-2026

Index : Yes/No
Speaking/Non-speaking Order
Neutral Citation : Yes/No

Asi / Ssk



To

1. The Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu,
Secretariat, Chennai 600 009.
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Department of Home, Prohibition and Excise,
Government of Tamil Nadu, Secretariat,
Chennai 600 009.
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WP No. 20028 of 2



G.R.SWAMINATHAN, J.

Asi / Ssk

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