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IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 09-03-2026

CORAM

THE HON'BLE MR JUSTICE S. M. SUBRAMANIAM

AND

THE HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE K. SURENDER

WA No. 1431 of 2023

and

CMP No. 13931 of 2023

S.Arul Antony

Member (college Education)Cum The Public
Information Officer, Teachers Recruitment Board,
MGR Centenary Building, DPI campus, College
Road, Chennai- 600 006.

..Appellant(s)

Vs

1. The State Information commissioner
Tamil Nadu Information Commission,
No.19, Government Farm Village, Nandanam,
Chennai- 600 038.

2. P.Ramar
S/o.Pichaimuthu,
Door No.4/ 144, Devendrakula Vellalar Nagar,
Anayampatti Post, Gangavalli Taluk,
Salem District- 636 105.

..Respondent(s)

WA No. 1431 of 2023

To set aside the order passed in WP.No. 23494 of 2022 dated
05.09.2022.

WA No. 1431 of 2023

For Appellant(s):

Mr.R.Neelakandan,
Additional aDvcoate General
assisted by
Mr.C.Kathiravan,
Standing Counsel



For Respondent(s): Mr.C.Vigneshwaran
for R1
Mr.J.Jayamalan for R2

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Judgment**(Judgment of the Court was delivered by S.M.Subramaniam J.)**

The Writ Order dated 05.09.2022 passed in W.P.No.23494 of 2022 is under challenge in the present intra-court Appeal preferred under Class 15 of the Letters Patent.

2. The 2nd respondent is the Information seeker under the RTI Act. His application seeking information about the persons who obtained PSTM Certificate was initially rejected by the Public Information officer. The 2nd respondent preferred an appeal before the State Commissioner. The State Commission in its order dated 26.11.2021 directed the Public Information Officer to provide copy of the PSTM Certificate as such sought for by the Information seeker/ 2nd respondent. The reasons stated by the State Commission is that the certificate issued by the competent authority holding that the person studied under tamil medium is to be construed as public document and not protected under the provisions of the Right to Information Act, 2005. Challenging the said order passed by the State information Commission, the Public Information Officer, in his personal capacity, had filed a writ petition. The writ petition was dismissed affirming the findings made by the State Commission.

3. Mr.R.Neelakandan, learned Additional Advocate General appearing on behalf of the appellant would mainly contend that PSTM Certificate was



issued by an authority and therefore, it is a personal information. Thus, the certificate is protected under Section 8(1)(j) of the Right to Information Act.

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4. Plain reading of the said provision would show that the information which relates to personal information the disclosure of which has no relationship to any public activity or interest, or which would cause unwarranted invasion of the privacy of the individual unless the Central Public Information Officer or the State Public Information Officer or the appellate authority, as the case may be, is satisfied that the larger public interest justifies the disclosure of such information.

5. PSTM certificate cannot be construed as a private document. Once a certificate has been issued and submitted in a recruitment process, it becomes a public document, and not protected under Section 8(1)(j) of the Act, as rightly held by the State Information Commissioner and affirmed by the writ court.

6. Learned counsel for the 2nd respondent would submit that a person ineligible and not selected under the PSTM quota, filed an application under the RTI Act seeking information.

7. Be that as it may, this Court need not go into the other merits of the case. However, the said document as such sought for by the 2nd respondent/ information seeker is not a protected document under section 8(1)(j) of the Act. That apart, the language employed under section 8(1)(j), in unequivocal terms reiterates that if any such information relates to public activity then it is not protected. In the present case, the PSTM certificate is produced for the



purpose of selection and that being the factum, the said provision would have no application and thus, there is no impediment for providing a copy of the certificate or the information about the candidate to the information seeker as such sought for. That apart, information regarding the correctness of PSTM certificate or related information would not fall under the definition of personal information.

8. For all these reasons, this Court is inclined to affirm the order of the writ court. Consequently, the Writ Appeal stands dismissed. No costs. The connected miscellaneous petition is closed.

(S.M.S.,J.) (K.S.,J.)
09-03-2026

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

vsi

To

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**S.M.SUBRAMANIAM J.
AND
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