



Cont.P.No.3919 of 2025

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 29.01.2026

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE Mr.JUSTICE P.B.BALAJI

Cont.P.No.3919 of 2025

P.Rajalakshmi

... Petitioner

Vs.

1. Vivekanand Choubey
The General Manager,
State Bank of India
16, College Lane,
Nungambakkam,
Chennai – 600006.

2. Ramamoorthy
The Regional Manager,
State Bank of India
The Regional Office
173, JN Road,
Tiruvallur – 602 001.

3. Mukesh Kanna
The Bank Manager,
State Bank of India,
Ranipet Branch,
Railway Station Road,
Ranipet.

4. P.Thiyagarajan

... Respondents



Cont.P.No.3919 of 2025

Contempt Petition filed under Section 11 of the Contempt of Courts Act, praying to punish the respondents particularly the third respondent for his wilfully disobeying the orders passed in W.P.No.37787 of 2025 dated 03.10.2025.

For Petitioner : Mr.L.P.Shanmugasundram

For Respondent : Mr.B.Sivakollappan (for R1 to R3)
Mr.C.Prakasam (for R4)

ORDER

This Contempt Petition has been filed alleging non-compliance of the order dated 03.10.2025 passed by this Court in W.P.No.37787 of 2025 by the third respondent.

2.Heard the learned counsel appearing on either side and perused the materials available on record.

3.By order dated 03.10.2025, this Court disposed of W.P.No.37787 of 2025 in the following terms:-

“5. In view of the limited prayer sought for in this Writ petitioner, the respondents 1 to 3 are directed to deal with the objections of the petitioner after affording a fair opportunity to the petitioner as well as the 4th respondent before passing any final



orders regarding the return of jewellery, within a period of two weeks from the date of receipt of a copy of this order.

6.The learned counsel for the petitioner stated that the Bank is about to hand over the jewellery belonging to the petitioner in a day or two. It has been made clear in the foregoing paragraph that the decision to return the jewellery to the 4th respondent would be subject to hearing and considering the objections of the petitioner. Therefore, the petitioner need not have any apprehension that without hearing the petitioner, the jewellery would be handed over to the 4th respondent.”

4.The above order was passed in the presence of the learned counsel for the Bank. It is not in dispute that pursuant to the said order, the Bank issued notices to the writ petitioner as well as the fourth respondent on 09.10.2025. In compliance with the order dated 03.10.2025, the petitioner submitted his reply on 13.10.2025 reiterating his request for a personal hearing/enquiry. The Bank official concerned, upon perusing the objections and claims of both parties, communicated the decision to the petitioner and the fourth respondent by letter dated 16.10.2025. The said communication was served on the petitioner on 18.10.2025 and thereafter the jewels were handed over to the fourth respondent on 21.10.2025. These facts are not in dispute.



Cont.P.No.3919 of 2025

5.The grievance of the petitioner is that the direction of this Court requiring a personal hearing was not complied with and, therefore, there is willful disobedience of the order. On going through the communication dated 16.10.2025, this Court finds that the third respondent has rendered his decision based on the documentary evidence produced by both parties. Hence, this Court is of the view that there is no willful disobedience of the order passed by this Court. However, it is evident that an opportunity of personal hearing, as directed, was not afforded to the petitioner.

6.The learned counsel for the petitioner submitted that the petitioner would be satisfied if the General Manager, who is the first respondent herein, conducts an enquiry after affording an opportunity of personal hearing to both the petitioner and the fourth respondent and renders a finding regarding entitlement to the jewellery, thereby enabling the parties to work out their remedies before the competent Civil Court. This Court finds the said request to be reasonable.

7.This Court has already held that the Bank officials cannot be proceeded against for contempt, as there is substantial compliance with the order of this Court, though not in true letter in spirit.



Cont.P.No.3919 of 2025

8.In the light of the above, this Contempt Petition is closed with the

following directions:-

(i) The first respondent shall fix a date for enquiry and issue advance notice to the petitioner as well as the fourth respondent, consider the objections and documents already placed on record before the third respondent and any additional documents that may be furnished by the parties, and thereafter pass a reasoned speaking order within a period of thirty (30) days from the date of hearing. It is open to both parties to work out their remedies in the manner known to law, depending upon the outcome of the said order.

(ii) If the first respondent is of the opinion that production of the jewels is necessary for the purpose of enquiry, it is open to him to direct the fourth respondent to produce the same, without disturbing the lawful custody of the same with the fourth respondent.

29.01.2026

kv

Index : Yes/No

Speaking order/Non Speaking Order

Neutral Citation : Yes/No



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P.B.BALAJI, J.

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