



W.P.(MD)No.14840 of 2026

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

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DATED: 04.06.2026

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE **HEMANT CHANDANGOUDAR**

W.P.(MD)No.14840 of 2026

Ramkumar

... Petitioner

vs.

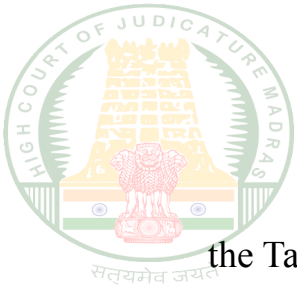
1.The Director of Town and Country Planning,
Floors 2, 3 and 4, C and E Market Road,
Koyembedu, Chennai 600107.

2.The Assistant Director of Town and Country Planning,
Door No.446/A, Seventeenth Ward,
Nehruji Street, Allinagaram,
Theni 625 531

3.The Commissioner,
Bodinayakanur Municipality,
Theni District.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India for issuance of Writ of Mandamus, to direct the respondents 1 and 2 to release the subject property in Town Survey No.4107/2C, Bodinayakanur Village, now situated in New Colony Street No.4, Bodinayakanur Town, Theni District earmarked for the Bodinayakanur Detailed Development Plan in DDP/DT & CP (MR) No.5/95 for the Bodinayakanur Local Planning Area as lapsed by invoking Section 38 of



W.P.(MD)No.14840 of 2026

the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971.

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For Petitioner :Mr.R.Raja
For Respondents :Mr.M.Mahaboob Athiff
Government Advocate

ORDER

The petitioner is before this Court seeking issuance of a Writ of Mandamus, to direct the respondents 1 and 2 to release the subject property in Town Survey No.4107/2C, Bodinayakanur Village, now situated in New Colony Street No.4, Bodinayakanur Town, Theni District earmarked for the Bodinayakanur Detailed Development Plan in DDP/DT & CP (MR) No.5/95 for the Bodinayakanur Local Planning Area as lapsed by invoking Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971.

2.Heard the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner and the learned counsel appearing for the respondents. The materials placed on record have also been perused.



W.P.(MD)No.14840 of 2026

3.The undisputed facts reveal that the subject property of the petitioner was reserved for the formation of a scheme road under the Detailed Development Plan notified in the year 1995. The petitioner contends that, despite the lapse of more than three decades from the date of such notification, the respondents have neither acquired the subject land nor taken any effective steps for implementation of the proposed road scheme.

4.In this context, it would be apposite to refer to Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971, which reads as follows:

“38. Release of land.—If within three years from the date of publication of the notice in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette under Section 26 or Section 27—

(a) no declaration as provided in sub-section (2) of Section 37 is published in respect of any land reserved, allotted or designated for any purpose specified in a regional plan, master plan, detailed development plan or new town development plan covered by such notice; or

(b) such land is not acquired by agreement, such land shall be deemed to be released from such reservation, allotment or designation.”



W.P.(MD)No.14840 of 2026

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5.A plain reading of the above provision makes it clear that where land reserved, allotted, or designated for a public purpose under a planning scheme is neither acquired nor subjected to acquisition proceedings within the time stipulated under the statute, the reservation automatically lapses by operation of law. The provision embodies a legislative safeguard intended to ensure that private property is not kept under indefinite reservation without acquisition.

6.In the present case, it is not disputed by the respondents that the petitioner's land was reserved for formation of a scheme road under the Detailed Development Plan. It is equally undisputed that no acquisition proceedings have been initiated and no steps have been taken to acquire the subject property within the period contemplated under Section 38 of the Act. Nor is there any material placed before this Court to show that the land has been acquired by agreement or otherwise utilised for the purpose for which it was reserved.



W.P.(MD)No.14840 of 2026

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7. In view of the admitted factual position and the statutory mandate contained in Section 38 of the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971, this Court has no hesitation in holding that the reservation of the petitioner's property for the proposed road under the Bodinayakanur Detailed Development Plan has lapsed by operation of law and the land stands released from such reservation.

8. Accordingly, the Mandamus sought for by the petitioner is granted. The respondents are directed to carry out all consequential changes and necessary corrections in the relevant planning, revenue, and municipal records so as to reflect the release of the petitioner's property from the reservation made under the Detailed Development Plan.

9. It is made clear that the petitioner shall be entitled to enjoy, possess, and deal with the subject property in accordance with law, subject to compliance with all applicable statutory requirements.



W.P.(MD)No.14840 of 2026

10. With the above directions, the writ petition stands allowed.

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There shall be no order as to costs.

Index : Yes / No

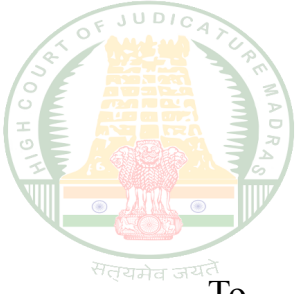
Internet : Yes / No

NCC : Yes / No

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HEMANT CHANDANGOUDAR, J.

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