

W.P.Crl.(MD)No.3809 of 2026

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

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DATED : 16.07.2026

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE **MRS.JUSTICE L.VICTORIA GOWRI**

W.P.Crl.(MD)No.3809 of 2026

... Petitioner

Vs.

1.The State of Tamil Nadu,
Rep.by The Superintendent of Police,
District Police Office,
Tenkasi District,
Tenkasi.

2.The Inspector of Police,
AWPS Alangulam,
Tenkasi District.

3.The Sub Inspector of Police,
AWPS Alangulam,
Tenkasi District.

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... Respondents



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PRAYER : Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India for issuance of Writ of Mandamus, directing the respondents 1 to 3 to take appropriate and necessary action against the respondents 4 to 9 in accordance with law by considering the petitioner's representation dated 22.06.2026.

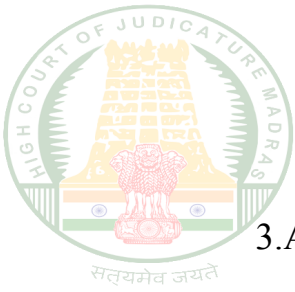
For Petitioner : M/s.Vanisha
for Mr.S.Kishore Kumar

For R1 – R3 : Mr.John Sathyan,
Public Prosecutor,
Assisted by
Mr.C.Susikumar
Government Advocate (Crl.)

ORDER

The present Writ Petition has been instituted under Article 226 of the Constitution of India seeking issuance of a Writ of Mandamus directing respondents 1 to 3 to take appropriate action, in accordance with law, against respondents 4 to 9 by considering the petitioner's representation dated 22.06.2026.

2. Learned counsel appearing for the petitioner submitted that the petitioner is the unfortunate father of a young woman whose marriage, after having been solemnly arranged through the conventional process of negotiations between two families, ultimately collapsed on account of unlawful dowry demands.



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3. According to the petitioner, after years of toil and savings, he arranged the marriage of his daughter with the fourth respondent, who is employed as a Senior Engineer in Quest Global Private Limited, Bengaluru. The alliance was finalized with the concurrence of the respective families, namely respondents 5 to 9, and the engagement ceremony was solemnised on 18.04.2026.

4. It is alleged that, on the date of engagement itself, respondents 4 to 9 compelled the petitioner to part with a sum of Rs.10,00,000/- in cash as dowry. The marriage was scheduled to be solemnised on 08.06.2026. However, before the scheduled date, respondents 4 to 6 allegedly demanded additional dowry and, upon the petitioner expressing his inability to satisfy such illegal demands, unilaterally cancelled the marriage.

5. The petitioner thereafter approached respondents 2 and 3 seeking appropriate legal action. However, instead of initiating proceedings in accordance with law, the police allegedly facilitated a private settlement, persuaded the petitioner to receive only Rs.5,00,000/- towards partial refund of the dowry amount, directed him to wait for another month for recovery of the remaining amount of Rs.5,00,000/-, and thereafter closed the complaint without taking any penal action. Aggrieved by such conduct, the petitioner has



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approached this Court.

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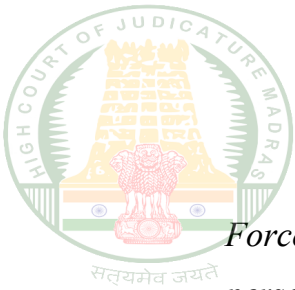
6. Per contra, the learned Government Advocate (Criminal Side) submitted that the complaint was duly enquired into and that the parties voluntarily arrived at an amicable settlement outside the police station. It was further submitted that written statements evidencing such settlement had been furnished before the third respondent and, therefore, the complaint came to be closed.

7. This Court has carefully considered the rival submissions and meticulously perused the materials placed on record.

8. The the matter came up for hearing on 09.07.2026 this Court passed the following order:

“11.The institution of the All Women Police Station is one of the pioneering reforms introduced in the State of Tamil Nadu. Conceived in the year 1992 under the visionary leadership of the then Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi Dr. J. Jayalalithaa, it was intended to provide women with a secure, approachable and empathetic forum for redressal of grievances. The institution was never envisioned merely as another police station. It was conceived as an integrated centre combining criminal law enforcement with counselling, mediation, gender sensitisation and community outreach.

12.The evolution of the Women's Wing of the Tamil Nadu Police



Force from its modest beginning in 1973 with one Sub Inspector and twenty personnel to a formidable force comprising thousands of women police personnel stands as testimony to the State's commitment towards gender-responsive policing. Today, the State proudly possesses hundreds of All Women Police Stations staffed by trained women police personnel, with the avowed object of ensuring that women victims may approach law enforcement without fear or inhibition.

13. The primary purpose behind establishing All Women Police Stations was never confined merely to registration of criminal cases. They were expected to perform a delicate institutional balance protecting victims of domestic violence and dowry harassment, preserving family harmony wherever legally permissible, promoting gender sensitisation within society and, above all, ensuring that justice remains accessible to vulnerable women. The officers manning such stations are expected to function not merely as investigators but also as facilitators of justice, equipped with empathy, legal acumen and constitutional sensitivity.

14. Various Government circulars have also envisaged counselling units, mobile counselling services, awareness programmes and village outreach initiatives as integral components of these institutions. Regrettably, many of these mechanisms have become virtually dormant. Counselling units remain non-functional, mobile awareness programmes have largely disappeared and the larger mission of social sensitisation appears to have been relegated into oblivion.

15. It is deeply disturbing that, instead of inspiring confidence among women, some All Women Police Stations are increasingly perceived

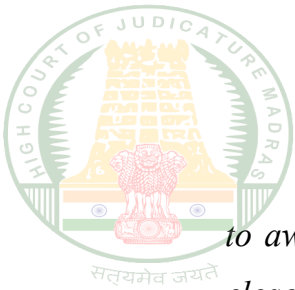


as informal forums for negotiated settlements, often overlooking the mandatory requirements of criminal law. Instances where complaints involving cognizable offences are informally compromised, depending upon the influence, financial strength or bargaining power of the parties, seriously erode public confidence in the administration of criminal justice.

16. An institution established to protect women cannot be permitted to degenerate into an informal adjudicatory mechanism operating outside the statutory framework. Police officers are neither arbitrators nor private mediators when allegations disclose commission of cognizable offences. Their foremost obligation remains faithful compliance with the mandate of criminal law.

17. The facts presented before this Court disclose an even more disturbing scenario. The complaint pertains to allegations of dowry demand—a social evil which the Legislature has sought to eradicate through stringent penal provisions under the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, besides attracting penal consequences under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita wherever applicable. The allegations are not confined to a mere matrimonial misunderstanding but concern receipt of substantial amounts allegedly as dowry and subsequent cancellation of the marriage upon further unlawful demands.

18. If the allegations contained in the complaint are accepted at face value, they unmistakably disclose commission of cognizable offences warranting registration of a First Information Report and investigation in accordance with law. Instead, the police appear to have facilitated return of only a portion of the alleged dowry amount, persuaded the complainant



to await repayment of the remaining amount and thereafter proceeded to close the complaint. Such an approach not only lacks legal sanction but also trivialises the gravity of allegations relating to dowry harassment. Police officers cannot assume unto themselves the jurisdiction to convert allegations of cognizable offences into private monetary settlements. The duty of the police is to enforce the law not to negotiate its dilution.

19. This Court is therefore prima facie of the view that the action of respondents 2 and 3 in closing the complaint without registering a First Information Report, despite allegations disclosing cognizable offences, calls for serious judicial scrutiny. Accordingly, the second respondent—Inspector of Police, All Women Police Station, Alangulam—is directed to appear before this Court on 14.07.2026 and furnish a detailed explanation explaining:

- (i) the reasons for not registering a First Information Report on the basis of the allegations contained in the petitioner's complaint;*
- (ii) the legal authority under which the complaint was treated as settled without initiating criminal proceedings; and*
- (iii) the circumstances under which the complaint came to be closed despite allegations relating to demand and receipt of dowry.*

20. This Court is further constrained to observe that the conduct presently disclosed prima facie reflects a serious dereliction of statutory duty on the part of respondents 2 and 3. Consequently, respondents 2 and 3 are directed to deposit a sum of Rs.1,00,000/- (Rupees One Lakh only) each with to the credit of the petitioner's account number on or before 13.07.2026 as compensation ,for the injury caused as a result of their dereliction of duty as police officers ,without prejudice to any further



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orders that may be passed after considering their explanation They shall also produce proof of such deposit at the time of their appearance before this Court.

21. Post the matter on 14.07.2026 under the caption "For Appearance of the Second and third Respondent and Compliance."

9. The the matter was further taken up for hearing the respondents 2and 3 are present before this Court.Heard the Petitioner's counsel M/s.Vanisha, the learned State Public Prosecutor Mr.John Satyan for the respondents 1 to 3, Mr.Narayana Kumar for the respondents 4 to 9. In view of the submissions made on either side and taking note of the subsequent developments brought to the notice of this Court, particularly that:

(i) disciplinary action has already been initiated against respondents 2 and 3 by placing them under suspension;

(ii) a First Information Report has since been registered on the basis of the petitioner's complaint against respondents 4 to 9; and

(iii) the investigation has been set in motion and the matter has been forwarded to the District Dowry Prohibition Officer, Tenkasi District, for enquiry in accordance with law,

this Court is of the considered view that the primary grievance of the petitioner now stands substantially redressed. Nevertheless, the seriousness of

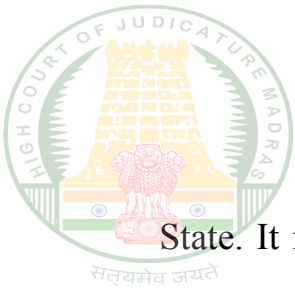


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the allegations relating to demand and receipt of dowry warrants a thorough, impartial and expeditious investigation uninfluenced by any observations made in this order.

10. Accordingly, respondents 4 to 9 are directed to appear before the District Dowry Prohibition Officer, Tenkasi District, as and when required and extend their fullest cooperation for the purpose of enquiry and investigation. The Investigating Officer as well as the District Dowry Prohibition Officer shall proceed strictly in accordance with law, independently assess the materials collected during investigation and file the appropriate final report before the jurisdictional Court without being influenced by any observations contained in this order, which are confined only to the adjudication of the present writ petition.

10. This Court also records its appreciation of the prompt corrective measures taken by the first respondent pursuant to the earlier order of this Court dated 09.07.2026. The learned State Public Prosecutor has fairly submitted that the Government has taken serious note of the institutional deficiencies highlighted by this Court and has initiated appropriate measures for strengthening the functioning of the All Women Police Stations throughout the



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State. It is expected that the observations contained in the earlier order of this

Court shall be treated as an occasion for institutional introspection and reform so that the statutory mandate of protecting women and enforcing the criminal law is faithfully discharged.

11.Having considered the explanation submitted by respondents 2 and 3, their appearance before this Court expressing unconditional remorse and regret for the manner in which the petitioner's complaint was dealt with, and bearing in mind that they have already undergone suspension for a period of ten days pursuant to the earlier directions of this Court, this Court is inclined to take a lenient view insofar as further disciplinary consequences are concerned.

12.Nevertheless, the lapse committed by respondents 2 and 3 cannot be ignored, since their failure to register a case despite allegations disclosing cognizable offences resulted in avoidable hardship and prejudice to the petitioner. As a measure of public law compensation for the injury caused by such dereliction of statutory duty, respondents 2 and 3 shall each pay a sum of Rs.1,00,000/- (Rupees One Lakh only) to the petitioner by crediting the said amount to the petitioner's bank account on or before 24.07.2026 and shall file proof of such payment before the Registrar (Judicial) of this Court on or before



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27.07.2026.

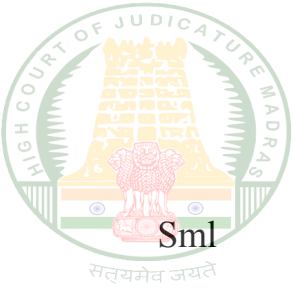
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13.In view of the remorse expressed by respondents 2 and 3 and the disciplinary action already suffered by them, the first respondent is at liberty to revoke the order of suspension with effect from 20.07.2026, if not already revoked.

14.It is further clarified that the payment of compensation directed under this order shall be treated as a measure of public law accountability for the dereliction committed by respondents 2 and 3 and shall attain finality. No further departmental proceedings shall be initiated against respondents 2 and 3 solely on the basis of the subject matter of the present writ petition, as this Court is satisfied that the ends of justice would be adequately met by the disciplinary action already undergone by them coupled with the payment of compensation directed herein.

15.With the above directions and observations, this Writ Petition stands disposed of. There shall be no order as to costs. Consequently, connected miscellaneous petitions, if any, shall stand closed.

16.07.2026



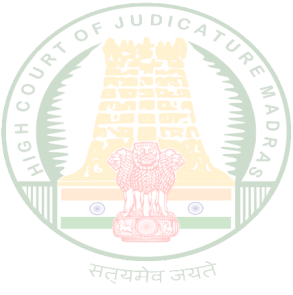
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Note: Issue order copy on 17.07.2026.

TO:-

- 1.The Superintendent of Police,
District Police Office,
Tenkasi District,
Tenkasi.
- 2.The Inspector of Police,
AWPS Alangulam,
Tenkasi District.
- 3.The Sub Inspector of Police,
AWPS Alangulam,
Tenkasi District.
- 4.The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court, Madurai.



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L.VICTORIA GOWRI, J.

Sml

Order made in
W.P.Crl.(MD)No.3809 of 2026

Dated
16.07.2026