



W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022

WEB COPY

**BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT**

**DATED : 02.12.2022**

**CORAM:**

**THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE R.MAHADEVAN  
and  
THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE J.SATHYA NARAYANA PRASAD**

**W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022**

R.Chandrasekar

... Petitioner

vs.

- 1.The Secretary to Government,  
Home (Transport) Department,  
Secretariat,  
Chennai – 9.
- 2.The Road Transport Commissioner,  
Eziligam,  
Chepauk,  
Chennai.
- 3.The Regional Transport Authority / District Collector,  
Karur District,  
Karur.
- 4.The Regional Transport Officer,  
Karur,  
Karur District.
- 5.The Superintendent of Police,  
Karur District,  
Karur.

**1/13**



**W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022**

WEB COPY

6.The Union of India,  
Represented by its Under Secretary,  
Ministry of Road Transport and Highways,  
103, Transport Bhavan,  
No.1, Parliament Street,  
New Delhi-1.

... Respondents

**PRAYER :** Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for issuance of a Writ of Mandamus, directing the respondents to take action against the vehicle owners violating the Rules 50 and 51 of the Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 based on the proceedings of the third respondent made in Na.Ka.No.E4/22847/2021-2, dated 30.05.2022.

For Petitioner : Mr.K.Govindaraj  
for Mr.B.Ponnupandi  
For RR 1 to 5 : Mr.P.Thilak Kumar  
Government Pleader

**ORDER**  
**(Order of the Court was made by R.MAHADEVAN, J.)**

Mr.P.Thilakkumar, learned Government Pleader takes notice for the respondents 1 to 5.

2.The prayer made in this writ petition is for issuance of a Writ of Mandamus, directing the respondents to take action against the vehicle owners, who are violating Rules 50 and 51 of the Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989, based on the proceedings of the 3<sup>rd</sup> respondent in Na.Ka.No.E4/22847/2021-2, dated 30.05.2022.

**2/13**



W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022

WEB COPY

3.The petitioner is a resident of S.Vellalapatti, Karur District. According to him, in most of the vehicles in Karur District, instead of registration numbers, the names and photos of the political persons are inscribed by way of adhesive stickers. In some other cases, the letters and numerals of the registration numbers are inscribed in small size, whereas the additions of photos and names are inscribed in bigger size. Such usage of the vehicles is contrary to Rules 50 and 51 of the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989, which mandate the manner and size of the letters and numerals to be inscribed in the number plates of the vehicles so as to identify the same easily. However, The respondents who are duty bound to take action against the violators of the said rules, did not take any effort. Taking advantage of the same, the vehicles in Karur District, are driven in a rash and negligent manner and are also used for illegal purposes, without proper number plates by simply affixing the political persons' photos in that place. Pointing out the same, the petitioner submitted a representation dated 07.12.2021 to the respondents 3 and 4 requesting to take action against such violators. Upon receipt of the same, the 3<sup>rd</sup> respondent by proceedings in Na.Ka.No.E4/22847/2021, dated 14.12.2021, directed the respondents 4 and 5 to take appropriate action. Even then, there was no response, which compelled the petitioner to make another representation dated 10.05.2022 enclosing the photos of the vehicles, which are plying in public roads with wrong number plate designs. However, nothing

**3/13**



W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022

WEB COPY progressed. Therefore, the petitioner is before this court with the present writ petition as a public interest litigation.

4.Further, it is the contention of the learned counsel for the petitioner that the Central Government has introduced the Motor Vehicles (High Security Registration Plates) Order, 2018, which requires the owners to follow high security registration plates alone, with Hologram. Similarly, Rule 50 (iii) of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 prohibits stickers and adhesive labels on the number plates; and Rule 51 mandates the size of letters to be followed in the number plates. Contrary to the said rules, many vehicles in Karur District are plying without proper number plates, but affixing photos of the political persons. Though the petitioner made several representations in this regard, to the authorities concerned, no action has been taken against such violators, till date. It is also submitted by the learned counsel that even the terrorist can use the vehicle without proper number plate, but using the photos of the political personalities, in order to escape from the clutches of law. Hence, the learned counsel prayed for appropriate direction to the respondent authorities in this regard.

5.Refuting the allegations raised by the petitioner, the learned Government Pleader taking notice for the respondent authorities submitted that the respondents are

**4/13**



**W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022**

periodically checking the vehicles plying in Karur District and levying fine, in case of any violation. However, the learned counsel fairly submitted that the claim of the petitioner would be considered and appropriate action would be taken, as per law.

6.This court considered the submissions made by the learned counsel on either side and also perused the documents enclosed in the typed set of papers.

7.The petitioner's grievance in this writ petition is that many vehicles in Karur District are not following the statutory rules of the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989 and are plying in a rash and negligent manner, without proper number plates, but affixing the photos of the political parties. The same was demonstrated by enclosing certain photographs of the vehicles, in the typed set of papers filed along with the writ petition. Though the same was brought to the knowledge of the respondent authorities, but, no effective action has been taken so far.

8.At the outset, it would be relevant to extract Rules 50 and 51 of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989, which read as under:

"50. Form and manner of display of registration marks on the motor vehicles.—(1) On or after commencement of this rule, the registration mark referred to in sub-section (6) of section 41 shall be displayed both at the front and at the rear of all motor vehicles clearly and legibly in the form of security license plate of the following specifications,



W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022

WEB COPY namely:—

(i) the plate shall be a solid unit made of 1.0 mm aluminium conforming to DIN 1745/DIN 1783 or ISO 7591. Border edges and corners of the plate shall be rounded to avoid injuries to the extent of approx. 10 mm and the plates must have an embossed border. The plate shall be suitable for hot stamping and reflective sheet has to be guaranteed for imperishable nature for minimum five years. The fast colouring of legend and border to be done by hot stamping;

(ii) the plate should bear the letters "IND" in blue colour on the extreme left centre of the plate. The letter should be one-fourth of the size of letters mentioned in rule 51 and should be buried into the foil or applied by hot stamping and should be integral part of the plate;

(iii) each plate shall be protected against counterfeiting by applying chromium-based hologram, applied by hot stamping. **Stickers and adhesive labels are not permitted.** The plate shall bear a permanent consecutive identification number of minimum seven digits, to be laser branded into the reflective sheeting and hot stamping film shall bear a verification inscription;

(iv) apart from the registration marks on the front and rear, the third registration mark in the form of self-destructive type, chromium based hologram sticker shall be affixed on the left-hand top side of the windshield of the vehicle. The registration details such as registration number, registering authority, etc., shall be printed on the sticker. The third registration mark shall be issued by the registering authorities/approved dealers of the license plates manufacturer along with the regular registration marks, and thereafter if such sticker is destroyed it shall be issued by the license plate manufacturer or his dealer;

(v) the plate shall be fastened with non-removable/non-reusable snap lock fitting system on rear of the vehicle at the premises of the registering authority;

The license plates with all the above specifications and the specified registrations for a vehicle shall be issued by the registering authority or approved the license plates manufacturers or their dealers. The Central Road Research Institute, New Delhi or any of the agency authorized by the Central Government shall approve the license plates manufacturers to the above specification;

(vi) the size of the plate for different categories of vehicles shall be as follows:—



W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022

WEB COPY

For two and three-wheelers	200 x 100 mm
For Light Motor Vehicles/Passenger Cars	340x200mm/500x120 mm
For medium commercial vehicles, heavy commercial vehicles and Trailer/combination	340 x200 mm:

Provided that this sub-rule shall apply to already registered vehicles two years from the date of commencement:

Provided further that the size of the registration plates for agricultural tractors shall be as follows:—

Front 285x45 mm

Rear 200x100 mm

Provided also that the size of registration plate for power tiller shall be 285x45 mm and shall be exhibited at the front. Further, in case of trailer coupled to power tiller, the size of registration plate shall be 200x100 mm and shall be exhibited on its rear:

Provided also that in case of a motor cycle, the size of 285x45 mm for front registration plate shall also be permitted.

(2) In the case of motor cycles the registration mark in the front shall be displayed parallel to the handle bar or on any part of the vehicle including mudguard facing the front instead of, on a plate in line with the axis of the vehicle:] Provided that—

(a) the registration mark exhibited at the rear of a transport vehicle shall be affixed to the vehicle on the right hand side at a distance not exceeding one metre from the ground as may be reasonably possible having regard to the type of the body of the vehicle;

(b) the registration mark shall also be painted on the right and left side on the body of the vehicle in the case of a transport vehicle;

(c) the registration mark shall also be painted and exhibited on the partition provided between the driver and the passengers, facing the passengers' seats or, where there is no such partition, on the front interior of the vehicle near the roof to the left side of the driver's seat facing the passengers' seats in the case of a stage carriage or a contract carriage and in the case of a motor cab or a taxi cab it shall be sufficient if the registration mark is painted on the dash-board;

(d) the letters of the registration mark shall be in English and the figures shall be in Arabic numerals and shall be shown:—



W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022

WEB COPY

(A) in the case of transport vehicles in black colour on yellow background; and

(B) in other cases, in black colour on white background, the registration mark on the trailer shall be exhibited on the left hand side in black colour on yellow background. In addition, the registration mark on the drawing vehicle shall be exhibited on the trailer also and this shall be done on the right hand side at the rear of the trailer or the last trailer as the case may be, in black colour on retro-reflective type yellow background:

Provided that where provisions of this clause have not been complied with in respect of motor vehicle, on or before the commencement of the Central Motor Vehicles (8<sup>th</sup> Amendment) Rules, 2001, then the provisions shall be complied with,—

- (i) in respect of transport vehicle, on or before 1st February, 2002; and
- (ii) in other cases, on or before 1st July, 2002.

(3) The registration mark shall be exhibited in two lines, the State code and registering authority code forming the first line and the rest forming the second line, one below the other:

Provided that the registration mark in the front may be exhibited in one line:

Provided further that in models of vehicles having no sufficient provision at the rear to exhibit the registration mark in two lines, it shall be sufficient if in such vehicles registration mark is exhibited in a single line:

Provided further that registration mark on a light motor vehicle may be in the centre with illumination.

(4) Every motor vehicle, except motor cab and motor car, manufactured on and from the date of commencement of the Central Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Rules, 1993, shall be provided with sufficient space in the rear for display of registration mark in two lines.

(5) In case of agricultural tractors, the registration mark need not be inclined to the vertical plane by more than 45 degrees.

(6) The registration mark of the drawing agricultural tractor may not be exhibited on the agricultural trailer or trailers."

51. Size of letters and numerals of the registration mark.—The dimension of letters and figures of the registration mark and the space between different letters and numerals and letters and edge of the plain surface shall be as follows:





**W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022**

**WEB COPY**

Sl. No.	Class of vehicle		Height	Thickness	Space between
(1)	(2)		(3)	(4)	(5)
1	All motor cycles and three-wheeled invalid carriages	Rear-letters	35	7	5
2	All motor cycles and three-wheeled invalid carriages	Rear-numeral	40	7	5
3	Motorcycles with engine capacity less than 70 cc	Front-letters & numerals	15	2.5	2.5
4	Other motor cycles	Front-letters & numerals	30	5	5
5	Three-wheelers of engine capacity not exceeding 500 cc	Rear and front numerals and letters	35	7	5
6	Three wheelers of engine capacity exceeding 500 cc	Rear and front numerals and letters	40	7	5
7	All other motor vehicles	Rear and front letters and numerals	65	10	10
8	Power tillers	Front letters and numerals	15	2.5	2.5
9	Trailers coupled to power tillers	Rear letters and numerals	30	5	5

Thus, the above provisions clearly stipulate the manner of display and size of the letters and numerals of the registration numbers to be exhibited in the motor vehicles; and that, stickers and adhesive labels are not permitted.



W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022

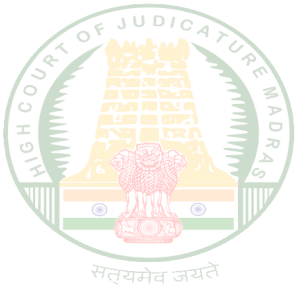
WEB COPY 9. Earlier, a co-ordinate bench of this Court in the case of **V.Ramesh v. the**

**Vice Chancellor and others** [W.P.(MD)No.15931 of 2020, dated 19.08.2021] had heavily come down on the fixing of portraits of political personalities, name boards of organizations and party flags on the dashboards and windshields of the motor vehicles. Taking a view that such portraits or designation boards are used for deterring the police officials, to involve in unlawful activities and flout the law, a direction was issued for removal of such portraits or name boards on windshields and dashboards of the motor vehicles. The relevant passage of the said order can be quoted below for ready reference:

*"20. This Court raised query No.VII with regard to the entitlement of the owners to have the number plate according to their choice. The Motor Vehicle Rules permits the owners to have the number boards in the particular size and the number should also be in the prescribed sizes. However, the numbers are written either in a zig zag manner or in different sizes and colours contrary to the Rules. It will lead to a confusion to the public and some times some letters are written very small and in case of any accident or misbehavior of the drivers or disobedience of the police command or violation of the road rules, it is very difficult for the public as well as the police to find out the number of the vehicle and register a case."*

10. This court is of the opinion that the use of stickers bearing the official name, designation or political marks in the motor vehicles is a tactic employed by those, attempting to avoid being questioned by the police officers and to project a sense of superiority. It is the responsibility of the citizens to abide by the laws and regulations of the State and any failure to do so results in serious consequences. The sole purpose of

**10/13**



**W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022**

WEB COPY

fixing the standards for registration marks, size of numbers and letters on the number plates, is to ensure seamless identification of motor vehicles. Stickers on number plates, in effect, renders the whole intention of prescribing the size of letters and numbers nugatory. Therefore, such unlawful activities committed under the shield of such stickers/political marks, cannot be accepted by this court.

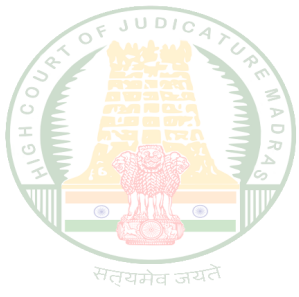
11.Applying the aforesaid legal position to the facts of the present case, wherein, the petitioner alleged that the respondent authorities have not taken against the violators of the rules 50 and 51 of the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989, despite the repeated representations, this court directs the Regional Transport authorities of the State to conduct inspections every day, and seize the vehicles, if its number plates are not in accordance with the requirements set out in Rules 50 and 51 of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 and impose fine and appropriate action, against such violators, in accordance with law.

12.With the above direction, the Writ Petition is disposed of. No costs.

**[R.M.D.,J.] [J.S.N.P.,J.]**  
**02.12.2022**

Bala/ps  
Index : Yes / No  
Internet : Yes

**11/13**

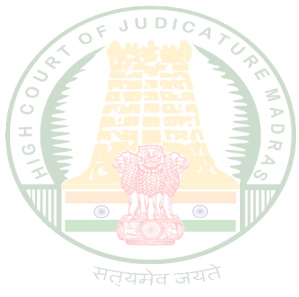


W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022

WEB COPY To

- 1.The Secretary to Government,  
Home (Transport) Department,  
Secretariat,  
Chennai – 9.
- 2.The Road Transport Commissioner,  
Eziligam,  
Chepauk,  
Chennai.
- 3.The Regional Transport Authority / District Collector,  
Karur District,  
Karur.
- 4.The Regional Transport Officer,  
Karur,  
Karur District.
- 5.The Superintendent of Police,  
Karur District,  
Karur.
- 6.The under Secretary, Union of India,  
Ministry of Road Transport and Highways,  
103, Transport Bhavan,  
No.1, Parliament Street,  
New Delhi.

**12/13**



WEB COPY



W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022

**R.MAHADEVAN,J.**  
**and**  
**J.SATHYA NARAYANA PRASAD,J.**

bala/ps

**ORDER MADE IN**  
**W.P(MD)No.27376 of 2022**

**DATED : 02.12.2022**

**13/13**