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W.A.No.1629 of 2026

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 13.07.2026

CORAM :

THE HONOURABLE MR. SUSHRUT ARVIND DHARMADHIKARI,
CHIEF JUSTICE

AND

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE G.ARUL MURUGAN

W.A.No.1629 of 2026

R.Rajalingam
S/o.Raja
Mottupatti Village, Barur Post,
Pochampalli Taluk
Krishnagiri District - 635 201.

Appellant(s)

Vs

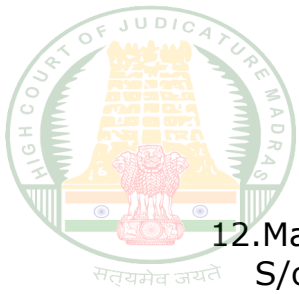
1. The Commissioner of Fisheries and
Fishermen Welfare
3rd Floor, Integrated Animal Husbandry
And Fisheries Building, Nandanam
Chennai - 600 035.
2. The Additional Director of Fisheries and
Fishermen Welfare
Avvai Nagar, Oppostie to Collector Office
Dharmapuri - 636 705.
3. The Assistant Director of Fisheries and
Fishermen Welfare
24-25 Co-Operative Colony, 4th Cross,
Krishangiri - 635 001.



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4. The Inspector of Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare
Nalathurai, Barur Post, Pochampalli Taluk,
Krishnagiri District – 635201.
5. The Special Officer
FMR-1 Kaveripattinam Paruvatharajakula
Fishermen Co-Operative Society,
Krishnagiri Dam, Krishnagiri.
6. Murugan
S/o.Mariyappan
Keezhkuppam, Barur Post,
Pochampalli Taluk, Krishnagiri - 635 201.
7. Kannan
S/o.Ponnusamy, Vetrilaikaranur Village,
Barur Post, Pochampalli Taluk,
Krishnagiri - 635 201.
8. Veerapathiran
S/o.Devaraj, Vetrilaikaranur Village,
Barur Post, Pochampalli Taluk,
Krishnagiri - 635 201
9. Anuman
S/o.Pullaar, Mottupatti Village,
Barur Post, Pochampalli Taluk,
Krishnagiri - 635 201.
- 10.Prabhakaran,
S/o.Murugan, Mottupatti Village,
Barur Post, Pochampalli Taluk,
Krishnagiri - 635 201
- 11.Kesavan
S/o.Magendiran, Mottupatti Village,
Barur Post, Pochampalli Taluk,
Krishnagiri - 635 201



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12.Madasamy
S/o.Sambasivan,
Barur Village and Post , Pochampalli Taluk,
Krishnagiri - 635 201.

13.Gokulraj
S/o.Perumal, Vetrilaikaranur Village,
Barur Post, Pochampalli Taluk,
Krishnagiri - 635 201.

14.Manikavasagam
S/o.Govindhasamy, Mottupatti Village,
Barur Post, Pochampalli Taluk,
Krishnagiri - 635 201.

15.Vetrivel
S/o.Ganesan, Kavappatti Village,
Barur Post, Pochampalli Taluk,
Krishnagiri - 635 201.

Respondent(s)

PRAYER: Appeal filed under Clause 15 of the Letters Patent to set aside the order dated 15.07.2025 by the learned Single Judge in W.P.No.31453 of 2024.

For Appellant(s): Mr.S.Shanmuga Sundaram

For Respondent(s): Mr.Mohammed Fayaz Ali
Government Pleader
for R1 to R5

Mr.V.Elangovan
for R6 to R15



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JUDGMENT
(Delivered by the Hon'ble Chief Justice)

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This appeal brings to the forefront a delicate friction between individual economic interests and a broader, inclusive cooperative effort aimed at uplifting an entire community. At its heart, the dispute is simple, viz., should a massive public lake be preserved exclusively for an existing group of fishermen, or should its waters be shared with more of the members of the fifth respondent/society, who are equally struggling to earn a living?

2. The appellant, a member of the Kaveripattinam Paruvatharajakula Fishermen Co-operative Society (the fifth respondent/society), has preferred this writ appeal challenging the order of the learned Single Judge dated 15.7.2025. By the said order, the learned Single Judge dismissed the appellant's writ petition and upheld an order passed by the third respondent on 7.10.2024, which permitted 10 additional fishing groups to fish in the Barur Big Lake.



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3.1. The Barur Big Lake is an expansive waterbody under the care of the Fisheries Department, which granted exclusive fishing rights to the fifth respondent/society. Fishing in this lake was organized into groups of local fishermen. Over the years, as the community grew, the number of permitted groups gradually rose from 37 to 61. Each group was permitted a daily catch limit, for which they were paid a fixed wage by the society.

3.2. For the year 2024–2025, the State Government increased the fishing target for the Barur Big Lake from 445 tonnes to 620 tonnes. Recognizing that the existing 61 groups could not harvest this quantum, the fifth respondent/society passed a resolution on 18.9.2024, deciding to include 10 more fishing groups. Acting upon this collective decision, the third respondent issued the proceeding on 7.10.2024, validating the inclusion of these 10 new groups.

3.3. The appellant rushed to this court, securing an interim stay on the grounds that adding more people would dilute his income, cause starvation among existing fishermen and violate an



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old "peace committee" understanding from 2005. The learned Single Judge, after considering the grievance ventilated, vacated the stay, and dismissed the petition. Aggrieved thereby, the appellant is before us.

4. Learned counsel for the appellant submitted that the third respondent had no authority to interfere in the internal matters of the fifth respondent/society. It was contended that adding 10 new groups would ruin the meager daily earnings of the existing fishermen and lead to massive unrest. He further claimed that the fifth respondent/society's resolution was shrouded in secrecy and lacked proper attendance.

5. On the other side, learned Government Pleader appearing for the State authorities and learned counsel for respondent Nos.6 to 15 submitted that the Director of Fisheries is legally vested with the powers of a Registrar over these societies. They pointed out that the inclusion of more groups was a conscious decision to meet a higher production target while ensuring that more families in the village could put food on the table.



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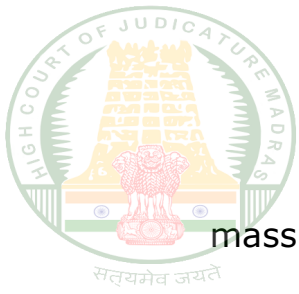
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6. We have given our anxious consideration to the arguments presented and carefully perused the documents on record.

7. The primary grievance of the appellant is that the Fisheries Department acted without jurisdiction. However, the records reveal that the fifth respondent/society itself passed a clear resolution on 18.9.2024 acknowledging that the 61 existing groups were insufficient to meet the expanded target of 620 tonnes. The third respondent's order was an administrative response that perfectly matched the fifth respondent/society's resolution.

8. It is admitted that the individuals comprising these 10 new groups are registered members of the very same fifth respondent/Society. No single member or exclusive group can claim a monopoly over a public waterbody to the complete exclusion of their fellow brethren, who are also members of the same society.

9. The appellant's argument regarding starvation and diminished returns is born out of personal interest. The lake is



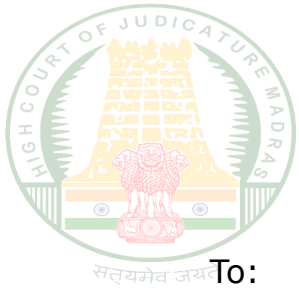
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massive. As noted by the authorities, even with 70 groups operating, each group gets a vast expanse of roughly 8.5 acres of water space to fish in. By expanding the groups, the benefit is spread horizontally across more households, enhancing the collective rural economy of the region. Significantly, the fifth respondent/society itself has not come forward to protest against the department's order.

10. For the aforegiven reasons, the writ appeal is dismissed. The order of the learned Single Judge stands confirmed. There shall be no order as to costs.

(SUSHRUT ARVIND DHARMADHIKARI,CJ) (G.ARUL MURUGAN,J)
13.07.2026

Index : Yes/No
Neutral Citation : Yes/No
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THE HON'BLE CHIEF JUSTICE
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