



W.P(MD)No.8476 of 2026

WEB COPY BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED : 08.06.2026

CORAM:

**THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE N.SATHISH KUMAR
and
THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE M.JOTHIRAMAN**

**W.P(MD)No.8476 of 2026
and
W.M.P(MD)No.6868, 6869 & 6870 of 2026**

S.Vinoth Ragavendran

... Petitioner

vs.

- 1.The State of Tamilnadu
Represented by its Secretary,
Tourism Culture and Hindu
Religious Charitable Endowment
and Administration Department,
Fort St. George,
Chennai.
- 2.The Commissioner,
Hindu Religious Charitable Endowment
And Administration Department,
Uttamar Gandhi Road,
Nungambakkam,
Chennai - 34.
3. The Joint Commissioner,
Hindu Religious Charitable Endowment
And Administration Department,

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WEB COPY Palani, Dindigul District.

4.The Board of Trustees,
Arulmigudhandayuthapaniswamy Temple,
Palani,
Dindigul District.

5. Sri Balaji Associates Private Limited,
No.1387/1, Jeevanandamst,
Molokoundarpalayam,
Erode 638004.

6. M/s. Thanya Projects,
No.5, Naiyakerstreet,
Kollampalayam,
Erode 638002.

7. M/s. Alu Structure,
No.14, Banadurai Thirumanjana St,
Kumbakonam,
Thanjavur District.

8. M/s. Pride Constructions,
No.163, Chinnamuthu Main St,
E.K.Valasu,
Erode 638011.

... Respondents

PRAYER : Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for issuance of a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the entire records pertaining to impugned order in G.O.Ms.No.9 in the Tourism, Culture and Endowment (Anee 5.1) Department dated 07.01.2026 issued by the 1st Respondent and consequential of the impugned Tender Notifications issued by the 3rd Respondent in Tender Reference No.4/2025-2026 dated 02.01.2026 with

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Work Order in Na.Ka.No.4192/2025/E2 dated 25.02.2026 awarded to the 6th Respondent, Tender Reference No.4/2025-2026-2 dated 02.01.2026 with Work Order in Na.Ka.No.6847/2025/E1 dated 18.02.2026 awarded to the 6th Respondent, Tender Reference No.5/2025-2026 dated 24.01.2026 with Work Order in Na.Ka.No.4560/2024/E2 dated 25.02.2026 awarded to the fifth respondent, Tender Reference No.6/2025-2026/1 dated 12.02.2026, Tender Reference No.6/2025-2026-2 dated 12.02.2026, Tender Reference No. 7/2025-2026 dated 12.02.2026, Tender Reference No.8/2025-2026 dated 13.01.2026, 3-Tender Notice Nos.9/2025-2026 dated 23.02.2026 and 10/2025-2026 dated 27.02.2026, on the file of the third respondent and to quash the same as illegal.

For Petitioner	: Mr.N.Suresh
For R1 & R2	: Mr.M.S.Parthiban Counsel for State
For R3 & 4	: Mr.A.K.Sriram Senior Counsel for Mr.R.Murali
For R5	: Mr.K.Chellapandian Senior Counsel for Mr.A.K.Baskara Pandian
For R6	: Mr.N.Shanmugaselvam
For R7	: Mr.C.Padmaraj

ORDER

(Order of the Court was made by **N.SATHISH KUMAR, J.**)

The present writ petition has been filed as a Public Interest Litigation



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WEB COPY challenging G.O.Ms.No.9, Tourism, Culture and Endowment (Anee 5.1)

Department, dated 07.01.2026, issued by the first respondent, and the consequential tender notifications, primarily on the ground that most of the tenders were issued as short-term tender notices without the existence of any emergent circumstances.

2. The case of the petitioner is that the temple funds are likely to be misused. When the matter came up for admission, this Court took note of the submission made by the learned counsel for the petitioner that most of the tenders had been issued as short-term tenders. This Court requested the Committee had earlier constituted by this Court, headed by Mr. Justice V. Bharathidasan, a retired Judge of the Madras High Court, as its Chairman to conduct an inspection and submit a report indicating whether the proposed expenditure was necessary and whether any additional construction or renovation was warranted.

3. Today, the Committee has filed its report. The relevant portions of the report have been extracted hereinbelow:



WEB COPY“I Tender:

“4.The tender was invited for construction of Additional Que Complex infront of the existing Que Complex at Kudamuzhkku Complex. The construction of additional Queue Complex is proposed to connect the existing Queue Complex infront of Kudamuzhukku pathway with the North Giri Veethi in the foot hills of Palani Temple. Already there is a Queue Complex available starting near the Kudamuzhukku Complex and there is a long gap between the existing Queue Complex and the North Giri veethi from where all the devotees entering into the existing Queue Complex. Now this portion is covered with temporary sheds and it is stated by the authorities that during festival season, they will provide temporary sheds in between the existing Queue Complex and the Giri veethi, in the other days it is remain open to sky and the devotee are suffering in the summer and rainy season. During inspection, it is seen that lot of devotees are using the existing Queue Complex from the North Giri veethi entrance and the temple authorities have put up a temporary shed. The present plan prepared and Tenders invited by the authorities for the New construction is only in the interest of devotees. Considering the same, the Committee is of the opinion that the construction of Additional Que Complex is necessary in the interest of devotees visiting the temple, and very much warranted.

5. The temple authorities furnished the details of the proposals



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WEB COPY regarding the above construction. From the perusal of the same, it is seen that the Board of Trustees by a Resolution dated 05.03.2025 approved the proposal for construction of the Queue Complex along with various other developmental works, which was approved by the Government in G.O. (Ms.). No.465 dated 24.11.2025. Thereafter, after completing various formalities, the tender was called for. In our view the expenditure is necessary as it is being spend in the interest of the devotees visiting the Temple.

II Tender:

6. The Second tender is in respect of renovation work for prasadam preparation centre at Arulmigu Dhandayuthapani Swamy Temple, Palani. The Committee visited the existing Prasadam preparation building, which is situated within the panjamirtham preparation complex near Giri Veethi. The prasadam prepared in that building are distributed by the temple through various sales outlets in the temple and other areas in and around the hill. The Committee was told that as the number of devotees visiting the temple increasing day by day, the demand for prasadam also increased and the existing unit could not cope up with the demand. In that circumstances, the Department decided to renovate and modernize the existing prasadam manufacturing building by constructing the additional machine room and put up the tiles in the floor, wall and other related works. On inspection, the Committee found the existing prasadam manufacturing building is very old and



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WEB COPY without much facilities and it necessarily be renovated for preparing the prasadam in a more hygienic way and also to meet the raising demand of prasadam. Committee fully satisfied that this renovation work is necessary in the interest of the devotees and the work is very much warranted.

7. From the material furnished to the Committee, it could be seen that the Board of Trustees passed a Resolution as early as on 06.08.2025 and the Commissioner, HR&CE Department, Chennai granted permission in and by a proceeding dated 05.12.2025. Thereafter the Tender was called.

III Tender:

8. The third tender is for demolishing the existing Kandan illam, Kadamban Illam and Idumban kudil and construction of new pilgrims rest houses in that place. Kandan and Kadarmban illams are pilgrims rest houses located in the Dhandapani Nilayam campus on North of Giri veethi, where the devotees are accommodated. Idumban kudil is another pilgrim centre situated adjacent to the Giri veethi on the Eastern side. It is stated that all the three pilgrims centres are more than 60 year old and all are in dilapidated condition. Considering the safety, and providing more room for the devotees, the Department decided to dismantle all the existing



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WEB COPY

structures and proposed to construct a new pilgrim rest houses with more facilities. On inspection Committee found that in Kadamban illam and Kandan Illam, the existing superstructures were almost demolished. Now further demolition was stopped due to the orders of this Court. The Idumban kudil,yet to be demohshed, on the inspection the Committee found that the buildings are ve old buildings. In all the three pilgrim centres, works have been initiated to demolish tr old existing buildings and construct new buildings with more rooms and better fac??? All three pilgrim centres are constructed in the interest of the devotees visiting the temple by providing accommodation with more facilities. Considering the same the Committee is of the view that these works are necessary in the interest of the devotees visiting the temple and the construction is warranted.

9. From the materials provide by the Committee, it is seen that Board of Trustees passed a Resolution on 05.03.2025, subsequently the work is also approved by the Government in G.O(Ms). No.9 dated 07.01.2026.

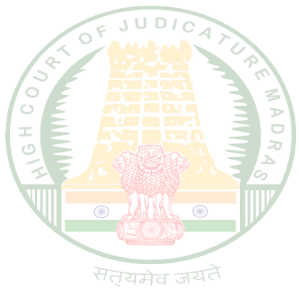
IV Tender:

10. The fourth tender was invited for construction of a Indoor Stadium in the Palaniandavar Womens Arts and Culture College at



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WEB COPY Chinnakalaiyamuthur, Palani. The Palaniandavar Womens college is being run by the Palani temple. From the available records, it is seen that now about 1,825 girl students are studying in various courses in the college. The teaching staff strength is about 70 and 25 non-teaching staff. Most of the students are coming from villages and it is a autonomous college. The college is situated in an extent of 37 acres at Chinnakalalyamuthur village near Palani. It is stated that girl students studying in the college are actively involved in the sports activities and participating in various National as well as State level competition and also Inter-University sport competitions. It is further stated that the students won various trophies in Volley ball, Badminton and Kabadi competitions. In order to develop the sports activities in the college, the Administration said to have decided to construct an Indoor Stadium within the college campus. During the inspection, the Committee found that the available open ground is not sufficient for the sports activities. The Committee also visited the proposed site, where the Indoor Stadium is proposed to be constructed and satisfied the area available is more than sufficient for construction of Indoor Stadium. Considering the fact that most of the girl students are coming from the rural areas, in and around Dindigul District where no facilities available for them to develop their sports skills. In order to encourage the students and involve them in the sports activities, the Committee is of the opinion that the construction of Indoor Stadium is necessary and warranted in the



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WEB COPY *interest of the students studying in the college. From the records it is seen that the Board of Trustees passed a Resolution on 13.06.2024, which was approved by the Department of HR&CE by a proceeding dated 11.02.2026.*

V Tender:

11. The fifth tender relates to construction of a Indoor Stadium at Palani Andavar College of Arts and Culture, Palani. From the records, it is seen that the above said college was started in 1962, and the college is conducting both U.G and P.G courses. It is further stated that students studying in the college are very much interested in sports activities and they are participating in the National level, State level sports apart from Inter-University sport meets. The students won various cups in the volley ball tournaments and in many indoor games. It is stated that in order to encourage the students to participate in the sports activities, the Department is proposed to construct Indoor Stadium inside the college campus.

12. On inspection, the Committee found that the college is very old having large extent of vacant sites and in the above vacant site, the Department proposed to construct a Indoor Stadium. On enquiry, the Committee found that the students studying in the college are mostly coming from rural areas in Dindigul District and



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WEB COPY *from adjacent Districts which are backward areas and number of students are interested in the sports activities and participating in various National and State level sports meets. The students don't have any much facilities to develop their sports skills in their respective Villages. In the said circumstances, the Department is proposed to construct a Indoor Stadium in the available space within the college campus to involve the students in the sports activities and develop their skills, and constructing the Indoor Stadium is only in the interest of students. That apart, the sports activities are being a co-curricular activity, constructing an Indoor Stadium cannot said to be unnecessary, and the Committee is of the view that the proposed construction is necessary and warranted.*

13. From the material provided to the Committee, it is seen that Board of Trustees passed a Resolution for constructing the Indoor Stadium on 08.03.2025 and the Government has also granted administration permission in G.O.(Ms). No.68 dated 11.02.2026.

VI Tender:

14. The 6th tender called for construction of a hostel block, Cafeteria for Arulmigu Palani Andavar Arts College for Women in ThanneerPandal Dharam at



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WEB COPY *Ottanchatram, Dindigul District. This college for women is situated at Ottanchatram near Palani. The college has been started recently and functioning in a rental building at Ottanchatram. Earlier the Department is proposed to construct a new building for the college with Ground + 2 floors to accommodate more number of students and the construction was commenced and it is in the completion stage. Now, for constructing a hostel block for the girl students and a Cafeteria, the present tender has been called for.*

15. The Committee visited the college premise at Ottanchatram and found that the new college building is in the completion stage and the college is now functioning in a rental building. The officials informed us that the construction will be completed soon and the college will be shifted to the new building during this academic year. It is further stated that most of the students are coming from rural areas in Dindigul District as well as other Districts, it is necessary to provide hostel facilities for the students coming from far-away places. Hence, they proposed to construct the hostel for the girl students, as there is no accommodation facilities available in Ottanchatram, which is a small town. The proposed hostel block is constructed within the college campus, in the available vacant area. As the new college building is being constructed, and that most of the girl students studying in the college are coming from the rural areas from far



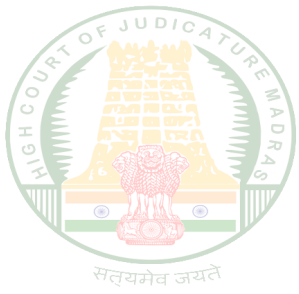
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away places, in the interest of those students, for their safety and convenience providing a hostel is more necessary along with a cafeteria for all the students studying in the college is essential. Constructing the hostel is only in the interest of the girl students studying in the college. Now, a new college building is being constructed and constructing the hostel for girl students in the very same campus is more warranted and essential it cannot be said unnecessary.

VII Tender:

16. The 7th tender was invited for construction of new devotees Rest Houses for Arulmigu Thandayuthapani Swamy Temple at Palani. The Rest Houses is proposed to be constructed at a place near the by-pass road. It is stated that earlier more than 50 acres of lands have been acquired from third parties for the temple in a Land Acquisition proceedings by the Government. After various litigations, possession was handed over to the temple on 24.12.2025, thereafter, the revenue records were mutated in the name of the temple. It is further stated that the existing pilgrim centers in the temple is not sufficient to meet the requirements of the devotees, as more than 1.75 crores of devotees visit the Palani temple every year from all over Tamil Nadu as well as from other States and Foreign Countries. Considering the needs of the devotees, the



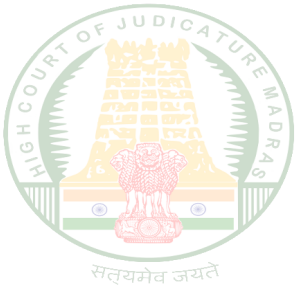
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WEB COPY Department is proposed to construct a pilgrim center in the above said land and a Resolution has been passed by the Board of Trustees on 13.01.2026 and the Administrative permission was also granted by the Government in G.O.Ms.No.91 dated 19.02.2026.

17. The Committee inspected the proposed sites where the new pilgrim center is proposed to be constructed. The construction is only for the benefit of the devotees visiting Palani temple by providing accommodation to the devotees in a reasonable cost. The Committee also convinced that the existing accommodation facilities available with the temple is not sufficient to meet the requirement of devotees visiting the temple. In the said circumstances, it is necessary to construct more pilgrim centers in the interest of the devotees and it cannot be said as wasteful expenditure.

VIII Tender:

18. The 8th tender relates to purchase of wooden tables, chairs and desks and other items for the newly constructed Women's College at Ottanchathiram. As stated earlier, now the college is running in a rental building in Ottanchathiram and a new building with ground + 2 floors is almost completed and it is stated that the college will be shifted to the new building during this academic year. As a new building has been constructed for the college, it is



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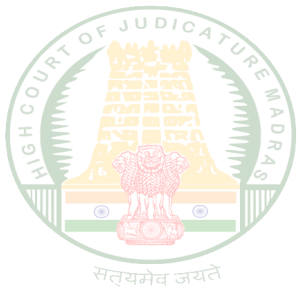
necessary to purchase furniture's like table, chairs, desks etc. which are necessary for running the college. From the material provided to the Committee, it is seen that Board of Trustee passed a Resolution on 27.01.2026, for which the Commissioner, HR&CE also granted permission by order dated 17.02.2026. Considering the fact that the tender is called only for the purpose of purchasing tables, chairs, desk for the newly constructed college, which are incidental and necessary for running the college and it is warranted, it is not a wasteful expenditure.

IX Tender:

19. The 9th tender invited for construction of Entrance Arch in the Arulmigu Palaniandavar Women's Arts and Science College, Ottanchathiram. This tender has been called for construction of front arch in the newly constructed college. During the inspection, the Joint Commissioner, HR&CE has informed that this construction has been sponsored by a donor and the temple is not constructing the arch, consequently, the tender is not persued.

X Tender:

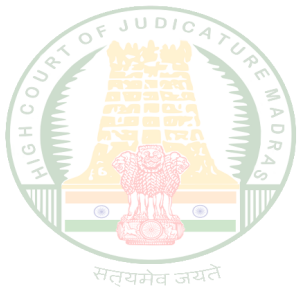
20. The 10th tender relates to construction of new Staircase in the central building of Arulmigu Palaniandavar Women's Arts and



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WEB COPY Science College, Ottanchathiram. This work relates to a construction of third Staircase in the central building at the newly constructed college building. During the inspection, it is stated that as per the original plan, two staircases were constructed at each end of the building. Now the planning authority insisting that there should be an another Staircase in the center of the building for easy access for the students as per the regulations. Hence the temple authority proposed to construct a 3 Staircase in the centre wing of the building. While inspecting the building, it is seen that the staircase is almost constructed, on enquiry, the Committee was informed that as the construction of the building is over and they have proposed to open the building soon and shift the classes to the new building, considering the urgency, the staircase is being constructed by the present building contractor.

21. On inspecting the building, the Committee found that in the building consisting of ground + 2 floors and the two staircases have been provided at the ends of the building. There is no staircase at the center wing of the building. It is stated that more than 800 students are studying in the college. Considering the above fact, constructing a another staircase at the center wing of the building will facilitate easy access for the students to reach their class rooms and it is totally in the interest of the students and staff members working in the college. Hence these expenditure cannot be

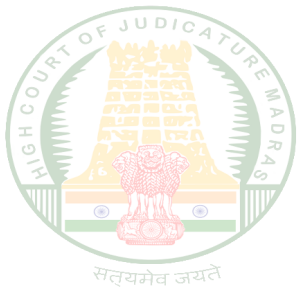


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WEB COPY *considered as a wasteful expenditure and the proposed 3d staircase is necessary, and warranted for the reasons stated above.*

XI Tender:

22. The 11th tender invited for the construction of Front Elevation of the Arulmigu Palaniandavar Women's Arts and Science College, Ottanchathiram. This work is for constructing a Elevation and face lifting for the newly constructed college building. It is stated that at the time preparing original plan, no Front Elevation was provided. Now in order to give some aesthetic look to the building, the Board of Trustees decided to do some symmetrically pleasing work to give a devotional outlook for the building. The Board of Trustees passed a Resolution on 27.01.2026, which was also approved by the Commissioner, HR&CE Department on 17.02.2026. While the Committee inspecting the building, the officials informed that since the college being run by HR&CE Department, managed by the Temple, they are proposed to give devotional outlook to the building by the proposed Elevation in the building and also shown the skectch of the proposed elevation. It is only a additional construction to the existing building which was not form part of the original plan. No doubt, the proposed construction will give an aesthetic look to the building as stated by the officials. Consideration all those facts, the Committee is of the view that it



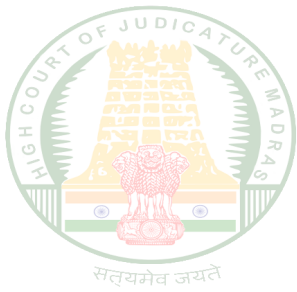
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WEB COPY *cannot be said to be a wasteful expenditure, as it is a part of the new building.*

23. The Committee respectfully submit that all the works involved in the tenders invited by the Department are necessary and the constructions are warranted. So far as the cost involved in the construction is concerned, as the Committee is not expertise in that field, not in a position to state anything about the estimated cost of each work, and the Committee is not in a position to give any opinion regarding the cost involved in all those constructions.

The Committee humbly submitting the report as directed by the Hon'ble Court."

4. A perusal of the report reveals that there is no substance in the allegation that the temple properties or funds are likely to be misused. Though it is true that short-term tenders have been issued, the decision to undertake the works had already been taken by the Board of Trustees through a duly passed resolution. The delay occurred only at the stage of obtaining Government approval. Merely because short-term tenders were issued prior to the elections, it cannot be inferred that the tender process was initiated with any ulterior motive.



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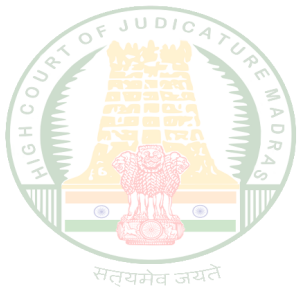
The report clearly indicates that there is no possibility of misuse of funds and that the tender amounts have been earmarked solely for the construction of the main building and for providing additional amenities to the Arulmigu Palaniandavar Women's Arts and Science College, Ottanchathiram Taluk. We do not find any material to suggest any improper motive behind the proposed works.

5. Recording the findings contained in the report, this writ petition stands disposed of. We also request the Committee to monitor the works undertaken by the authorities pursuant to the seven tenders. If any deviation is noticed, the Committee may either bring the same to the notice of this Court or issue appropriate instructions to the authorities concerned as and when necessary. No costs. Consequently, connected miscellaneous petitions are closed.

[N.S.K.,J.] [M.J.R.,J.]
08.06.2026

NCC : Yes / No
Index : Yes / No
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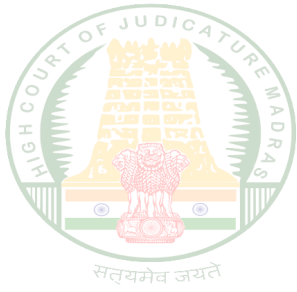
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To

- 1.The State of Tamilnadu
Represented by its Secretary,
Tourism Culture and Hindu
Religious Charitable Endowment
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Fort St. George,
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N.SATHISH KUMAR, J.
and
M.JOTHIRAMAN, J.

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ORDER MADE IN
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DATED : 08.06.2026

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