



W.P.(MD) No.19398 of 2026

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BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED : 10.07.2026

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THE HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE C.SARAVANAN

W.P.(MD)No.19398 of 2026

M.Sokkanathan

... Petitioner

Vs.

1.The Joint Commissioner,
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment Department,
Sivagangai.

2.The Diwan Cum Administrative Officer,
Ramanathapuram Samasthanam and
Devasthanam, Ramanathapuram-623501.

... Respondents

Prayer : Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, for issuance of a Writ of Mandamus directing the second respondent Diwan-cum-Administrative Officer, Ramanathapuram Samasthanam and Devasthanam to permit the petitioner to participate and perform the 2nd day Mandagapadi scheduled during the festival from 13.07.2026 to 23.07.2026 at Kasi Chettiar Charitable Trust Place (Kal Mandapam) by continuing the arrangement already ordered by this Court in W.P. (MD).No.15175 of 2019 dated 04.07.2019, till the final disposal of O.A.No.8 of 2015 pending before the 2nd respondent Joint Commissioner, HR and CE Department, Sivagangai, subject to compliance of the conditions imposed by this Court.

For Petitioner : Ms.S.Mahalakshmi



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For R1 : Mr.R.Parthiban
Government Standing Counsel

For R2 : Mr.S.Ramesh
Standing Counsel

ORDER

The petitioner has approached this Court seeking the following relief in connection with the Temple festival proposed to be held from 13.07.2026 to 23.07.2026 in respect of the subject Temple, namely, Sri Kothandarama Swamy Temple, Ramanathapuram.

"To issue a Writ of Mandamus directing the second respondent Diwan-cum-Administrative Officer, Ramanathapuram Samasthanam and Devasthanam to permit the petitioner to participate and perform the 2nd day Mandagapadi scheduled during the festival from 13.07.2026 to 23.07.2026 at Kasi Chettiar Charitable Trust Place (Kal Mandapam) by continuing the arrangement already ordered by this Court in W.P.(MD).No. 15175 of 2019 dated 04.07.2019, till the final disposal of O.A.No. 8 of 2015 pending before the 2nd respondent Joint Commissioner, HR and CE Department, Sivagangai, subject to compliance of the conditions imposed by this Court."

2. It appears that a dispute is pending among the descendants of late Kasi Chettiar in O.A.No.8 of 2015 on the file of the first respondent, the Joint Commissioner. It is seen that the Joint Commissioner had earlier passed an order under Section 63(e) of the Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious

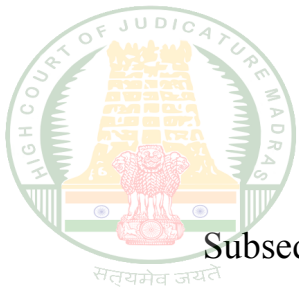


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and Charitable Endowments Act, 1959 on 20.07.2017. The said order was subsequently set aside by the Commissioner in A.P.No.7 of 2018 by order dated 07.06.2020, and the matter was remitted to the first respondent for fresh consideration. Till date, no *de novo* order has been passed by the first respondent.

3. The learned Standing Counsel appearing for the first respondent submits that, notwithstanding the urgency expressed by the petitioner in the present writ petition, the first respondent shall dispose of O.A.No.8 of 2015 within a period of six months from the date of receipt of a copy of this order. The said statement of the learned Standing Counsel is placed on record.

4. Insofar as the petitioner's request relating to Mandagapadi is concerned, a series of orders have been passed by this Court from time to time, having regard to the exigencies of the situation. Earlier, by order dated 21.06.2023 in W.P.(MD)No.14661 of 2023, which was also filed by the present petitioner, this Court directed the second respondent herein (arrayed as the third respondent therein) to permit the conduct of Mandagapadi on payment of a sum of Rs.50,000/- for the ensuing festival.



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Subsequently, the petitioner herein as well as one Balakrishnan, who also claims descent from late Kasi Chettiar, filed W.P.(MD)Nos.14789 and 14947 of 2024. By a common order dated 04.07.2024, this Court observed as follows:

"14. Therefore, there shall be a direction to the third respondent to give equal rights to all the three great-great-grandsons of Kasi Chettiar namely, the petitioner in W.P.(MD) No.14789 of 2024, the petitioner in W.P.(MD) No.14947 of 2024 and the fourth respondent in the respective W.Ps. subject to each of them paying Rs.50,000/- to the third respondent for the 2nd day Mandagapadi proposed to be held on 07.07.2024."

5. The learned Standing Counsel appearing for the second respondent submits that there has been a substantial escalation in the expenditure involved in conducting the Mandagapadi and, therefore, this Court may consider enhancing the amount fixed earlier, taking note of the prevailing costs.

6. At this stage, the learned counsel for the petitioner invited the attention of this Court to Paragraph 12 of the affidavit filed in support of the present writ petition, wherein the petitioner has undertaken to comply with all the conditions that may be imposed by this Court, to pay such contribution or charges as may be fixed by the second respondent

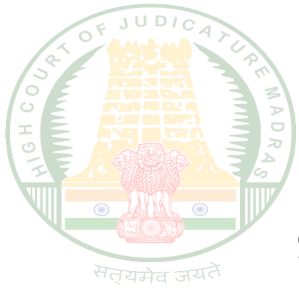


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Devasthanam for the performance of the Mandagapadi, not to claim any special privilege, and to participate peacefully in the second day's Mandagapadi along with Chandrasekaran and Balakrishnan by strictly adhering to the orders of this Court. The undertaking contained in Paragraph 12 of the affidavit is placed on record.

7. Since the other interested persons are not before this Court and the Temple festival is scheduled to commence on 13.07.2026, necessitating the passing of urgent orders, this Court is not inclined to deviate from the order dated 04.07.2024 passed in W.P.(MD)Nos.14789 and 14947 of 2024. Accordingly, paragraph 14 of the said order shall govern this year's Mandagapadi as well.

8. It is, however, made clear that the first respondent, the Joint Commissioner, while adjudicating O.A.No.8 of 2015, shall decide the proceedings independently and on their own merits, uninfluenced by the interim arrangement or the permission granted by this Court from time to time with regard to the conduct of the Mandagapadi.



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9. The Writ Petition stands disposed of accordingly. There shall be

WEB COPY no order as to costs.

NCC : Yes / No

10.07.2026

Note:- Issue order copy on 14.07.2026.

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To

- 1.The Joint Commissioner,
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment Department,
Sivagangai.
- 2.The Diwan Cum Administrative Officer,
Ramanathapuram Samasthanam and
Devasthanam, Ramanathapuram-623501.



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C.SARAVANAN, J.

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