



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 17-08-2026

CORAM

THE HON'BLE MR JUSTICE C. SARAVANAN

WP(MD) No. 23948 of 2026

V.N.Vijayaraghavan
S/o.Natarajan,
Melavalavu Post,
Melur Taluk,
Madurai District.

..Petitioner(s)

Vs

1. The Joint Commissioner,
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments,
Ellis Nagar, Madurai.
2. The Hereditary Trustee
Arulmigu Nevilinatha Ayyanar Temple,
E.Malampatti,
Melur Taluk, Madurai.
(Formal Party)
3. The Inspector of Police,
Keelavalavu Police Station,
Madurai District.
4. Chinnaiah,
S/o.Andar Ambalam,
Vachampatty,
Keelavazhavu Post,
Melur Taluk, Madurai District.

..Respondent(s)

Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this court to issue a Writ of Mandamus, directing the 1st respondent to dispose of O.A.No.4 of 2025 under Section 63(e) of the Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act, 1959, within a time frame fixed by



this Hon'ble Court and consequently the respondents Nos.1 to 3, to permit the petitioner and the devotees belonging to the five communities from the 168 Villages to perform the customary Aadi worship and connected religious practices, including Annathanam by following Kidai Vettu, at the 2nd respondent temple on or before 17.08.2026 and grant such other and further relief which this Hon'ble Court deems fit and proper in the circumstances of this case and thus render justice.

For Petitioner(s): Mr.Rm.Arun Swaminathan

For Respondent(s): Mr.S.Venkatesh
Additional Government Pleader for R1

Mr.P.Vetrivel
Government Advocate (Criminal side) for R3

Mr.S.Vellaichamy for R4

ORDER

This is the third round of litigation before this Court. The details of the earlier proceedings have been set out in the order dated 12.08.2025 passed in W.P.(MD)No.20214 of 2025. There is no dispute that a proceeding under Section 63(e) of the Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act, 1959 (hereinafter referred to as “the H.R. & C.E. Act”) is pending as on date before the first respondent / Joint Commissioner at the instance of the petitioner, seeking the very same relief.

2. The petitioner had earlier approached this Court in connection with the goat sacrifice (Kidai Vettu) in W.P.(MD)No.20214 of 2025 and secured an



order dated 12.08.2025, wherein the following order was passed:

“10. Considering the overall facts and circumstances of the case, and particularly, taking into account that the temple festival is to be held on 14.08.2025 and 15.08.2025, which includes “கிடா வெட்டு” (goat sacrifice) as was permitted during August 2024 pursuant to the order dated 13.08.2024 in Rev.Aplw.(MD)No.152 of 2024, this Court is inclined to direct the respondents to permit the petitioner to proceed with “கிடா வெட்டு” (goat sacrifice) on 14.08.2025 and 15.08.2025.

11. This order is passed without prejudice to the rights and contentions of the fourth respondent in O.A.No.4 of 2025 pending before the fifth respondent herein.

12. The fifth respondent / Joint Commissioner, Madurai, shall dispose of O.A.No.4 of 2025 within a period of six (6) months from the date of receipt of a copy of this order, in order to avoid any ambiguity or confusion during the ensuing festival in the year 2026.’’

3. This was in the background of the earlier order passed in W.P. (MD)No.19221 of 2023, wherein an order came to be passed on 08.08.2023. The said order was the subject matter of review in Review Application (MD)No.152 of 2024. After considering the submissions made, this Court, on 13.08.2024, passed the following order in the said Review Application:

“(i) The Review Applicant is permitted to conduct Annathanam only for one day, i.e., on 15.08.2024 [Friday]. In the said Annathanam, only 1750 members are allowed with 75 goats for ‘கிடா வெட்டு’.
(ii) however, he is restrained from ‘சாமி ஆடல்’ and other customary functions related to such Thiruvizha. This restriction shall be followed scrupulously without any deviation.

(iii) This permission of conducting Annathanam is granted only for the year 2024 Aadi alone.

(iv) And this permission to conduct Annathanam cannot be construed as conducting Thiruvizha.

(v) The Review Applicant is directed to establish their customary rights to conduct Aadi Thiruvizha by submitting appropriate petition before appropriate forum. Until then the Review Applicant cannot claim any right for conducting the Aadi Thiruvizha for the coming years.



(vi) *It is made clear no devotees can be restrained to visit the temple and worship the deity.*

(vii) *And devotees are entitled to 'கிடா வெட்டு' as per customary rights. But the devotees cannot be permitted to conduct Thiruvizha, but they can do only 'கிடா வெட்டு' with their family alone.*

(viii) *During the Annathanam, (i). The Superintendent of Police, Madurai District (ii) The Deputy Superintendent of Police, Melur and (iii) The Inspector of Police, R-3 Police Station, Keelavalavu, are directed to provide necessary police protection.*

8. Accordingly, this Review Application is disposed of. No Costs. Consequently, connected miscellaneous petition is closed."

4. The petitioner thereafter approached the second respondent and secured protection for the goat sacrifice for the present year. The said event was scheduled to be held on 13.08.2026 and 14.08.2026. However, only a symbolic goat sacrifice (Kidai Vettu) was permitted, in view of the prevailing commotion.

5. It is informed by the learned counsel for the petitioner that certain persons, namely, Murugesan, Rajaram, Veerannan and Subbiah, had filed an application seeking to implead themselves in I.A.No.2 of 2026 in O.A.No.4 of 2025. The said application came to be dismissed by the first respondent/Joint Commissioner on 21.07.2026.

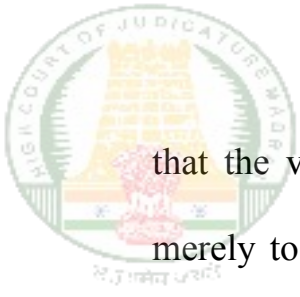
6. It is submitted that the petitioner is required to be cross-examined in the said O.A.



7. The learned Additional Government Pleader appearing for the first respondent would submit that, insofar as the subject Temple is concerned, it does not fall within the purview of the H.R. & C.E. Department as on date. The learned Additional Government Pleader would further submit that, as per the invitation issued by the second respondent, it has been clearly stated that only one goat per village would be permitted for sacrifice.

8. On the other hand, the learned counsel for the petitioner would submit that there are about 65 goats from different villages presently stationed in and around the Temple along with the devotees. It is further submitted that, since only a symbolic sacrifice had taken place on 15.08.2026 (Saturday), the learned counsel for the petitioner seeks permission for the Kidai Vettu to be conducted.

9. The learned counsel for the fourth respondent would submit that the fourth respondent is the head of the Karaikarars and that the petitioner is attempting to introduce a new custom which has never existed in the Temple. It is submitted that the subject Temple has only one festival in a year, during the Tamil month of Panguni, known as the “Puruvi Eduppu Thiruvizha”. It is submitted that the said festival involves the preparation of a horse made of mud and a procession to the Temple and that there is no known history of any goat sacrifice, particularly, during the Tamil month of Aadi. It is further submitted



that the villagers are also aggrieved and that the attempt of the petitioner is merely to introduce and organise a goat sacrifice in the Temple for monetary gain, thereby, creating a law and order situation.

10. Having considered the submissions made by the learned counsel for the petitioner, the learned Additional Government Pleader appearing for the first respondent and the learned counsel for the fourth respondent, and taking note of the orders passed earlier in W.P.(MD)No.19221 of 2023 dated 08.08.2023, the order passed in Review Application (MD)No.152 of 2024 dated 13.08.2024, and the order passed by this Court in W.P.(MD)No.20214 of 2025 dated 12.08.2025, and further taking note of the invitation issued by the second respondent in connection with the Temple festival, I direct the third respondent to provide police protection for the Temple festival (Kidai Vettu) as a one-time measure for the present year. The entire exercise shall be completed by the end of the day today. All further activities relating to the goat sacrifice (Kidai Vettu) for the ensuing period shall be subject to the outcome of O.A.No.4 of 2025 filed by the petitioner under Section 63(e) of the H.R. & C.E. Act. It is made clear that no further writ petition shall be entertained at the last minute in connection with the ensuing Temple festival during the Tamil month of Aadi in 2027.

11. The first respondent is directed to complete the enquiry and pass appropriate orders under Section 63(e) of the H.R. & C.E. Act in O.A.No.4 of



2025 within a period of six months from today, so that there is no confusion during the next year.

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12. This Writ Petition stands disposed of accordingly. There shall be no order as to costs.

17-08-2026

Index: Yes/No

Speaking/Non-speaking order

Neutral Citation: Yes/No

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Note:- Issue order copy on 17.08.2026.

To

1. The Joint Commissioner,
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments,
Ellis Nagar, Madurai.
2. The Hereditary Trustee
Arulmigu Nevelinatha Ayyanar Temple,
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C.SARAVANAN, J.

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