

W.M.P.No.25391 of 2016 in W.P.No.37619 of 2015

THE HON'BLE CHIEF JUSTICE
and
R.MAHADEVAN, J.

The application has been preferred on behalf of the administration of Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple, Srirangam and Pundareekaksha Temple at Thiruvellarai, Trichy District.

2.We may note the significance of Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple, Srirangam, in the context of the work done by the UNESCO earlier and the temple being enlisted in the tentative list of the World Heritage sites of UNESCO for 2014, as also suggestions made by UNESCO in this behalf.

3.We do not want to implead all the temples which would be under the HR & CE Department for the reason that it will become impracticable and the HR & CE Department itself would be reporting on the temples. However, in this particular case, keeping in mind the significance of the temple, we permit the administration to intervene.

4.In so far as the prayer made for vacation of interim orders are concerned, the applicant can hardly expect any indulgence in this

behalf keeping in mind what the UNESCO has already opined to the HR & CE Department. The petitioners in various writ petitions have, in fact, drawn the attention of this Court to what the GRH Wright in his UNESCO report qua Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple has said in 1969 itself, which we extract as under:

*" ... Completion of the Raya Gopuram and additions to sculpture. I find quite unacceptable the suggestion that the Raya Gopuram should be partially completed by building up the first of what might be supposed to have been the intended upper stories. **This gateway is an exceedingly impressive and important monument as it stands, to add to it would not improve it but would only decrease its value as a valid monument ..** (emphasis supplied)*

G.R.H. Wright in his UNESCO report on Srirangam Temple has to say (page 33 & 34) the following (inter-alia) regarding unfinished Gopurams:

"The numerous gopuras at Srirangam may be considered in two classes – the finished and the unfinished. The four gopuras in the outermost prakara wall are all incomplete, and these incomplete gopuras present certain peculiar:- problems of conservation. On the other hand, their unfinished condition can be regarded as an asset from the visitor's point of view...

It is not commonly realized how interesting unfinished structures are; particularly when several identically planned units exist. Since so much information is thereby afforded concerning

materials and methods of construction, it is much more interesting and instructive to see one completed feature and several other similar ones in various stages of completion, than it is to view a repetition of identical complete units..."

5. Thus, the Temple Administration cannot do as they please in so far as what they call the repairs are concerned.

6. Miscellaneous Petition, accordingly, stands dismissed.

(S.K.K., CJ.) (R.M.D., J.)
23.08.2016

sra

The Hon'ble Chief Justice
and
R.Mahadevan, J.

(sra)

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