*** THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE BALAJI MEDAMALLI**

+W.P.NO. 33955 OF 2014

% 13.11.2026

#Between:

D.Kuppaiah and another

…… Petitioners

$And:

The State of Andhra Pradesh, Rep.by its Principal Secretary, Revenue (Endt-III/I) Department & others

… Respondents

+W.P.NO. 36195 OF 2014

#Between:

A.V. Anantha Charyulu

…… Petitioner

$And:

The State of Andhra Pradesh, Rep.by its Principal Secretary, Revenue (Endt-III/I) Department & others

… Respondents

+W.P.NO. 6649 OF 2023

#Between:

K Bhkthavasthalam

…… Petitioner

$And:

The State of Andhra Pradesh, Rep.by its Principal Secretary, Revenue (Endt-III/I) Department & others

… Respondents

+W.P.NO. 23867 OF 2024

#Between:

Mangala Venugopal and another

…… Petitioners

$And:

The State of Andhra Pradesh, Rep.by its Principal Secretary, Endowments Department & others

… Respondents

!Counsel for the Petitioners : Sri W.B.Srinivas, learned Senior Counsel, assisted by Sri J. Sunil Kumar, learned Counsel for Petitioners,

Sri A. Sreedhar, learned counsel for petitioners in W.P.No.23867 of 2024

^Counsel for the Respondents : SJ Dileep Kumar, learned Government Pleader for Endowments,

Ms. K.V.N Pallavi, learned Assistant Government Pleader for Endowments, and

Smt. V. Dyumani, Standing Counsel for Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams

<Gist:

>Head Note:

? Cases referred:

1. AIR 1996 SC 1665
2. (2008) 8 Supreme Court Cases 648
3. Civil Appeal No.4134 of 2022
4. (2016) 13 Supreme Court Cases 797
5. 2025 SCC Online SC 1095
6. (2014) 5 Supreme Court Cases 101
7. 2024 SCC OnLine SC 3826
8. (2006) 4 SCC 1
9. 2025 SCC OnLine SC 1735

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ANDHRA PRADESH AT AMARAVATI

***

W.P.Nos.33955, 36195 of 2014, 6649 of 2023 &

23867 of 2024

D.Kuppaiah and others

…… Petitioners

And:

The State of Andhra Pradesh & others

….Respondents

DATE OF ORDER RESERVED	**:**	**13.10.2026**
DATE OF ORDER PRONOUNCED	**:**	**13.11.2026**
DATE OF ORDER UPLOADED	**:**	**16.11.2026**

SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL:

THE HON'BLE SRI JUSTICE BALAJI MEDAMALLI

1. Whether Reporters of Local newspapers may be allowed to see the Order? Yes/No
2. Whether the copies of order may be marked to Law Reporters/Journals? Yes/No
3. Whether Your Lordships wish to see the fair copy of the Order? Yes/No

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JUSTICE BALAJI MEDAMALLI

Date of reserved for orders : 13.10.2026
Date of pronouncement : 13.11.2026
Date of uploading : 16.11.2026

APHC010671252014

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
AT AMARAVATI
(Special Original Jurisdiction)

FRIDAY, THE 13th DAY OF NOVEMBER 2026

PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE BALAJI MEDAMALLI

WRIT PETITION NO: 33955 OF 2014

Between:

1. D.Kuppaiah.

2. D. Venkateswarlu.

...Petitioners

AND

1. The State of Andhra Pradesh, Rep.by its Principal Secretary, Revenue (Endt-III/I) Department, Secretariat Buildings, Hyderabad.

2. The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam, Rep.by its Executive Officer, TTD Buildings, Tirupati.

3. Sri Kasivisweswara Swamy Temple, (Taken over by TTD), Bugga Agraharam, Nagari, Tirupati, Chittoor District., Rep. by its Executive Officer. Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, T.T.D Buildings, Tirupati.

...Respondents

Counsel for the Petitioners: JESHTADI SUNIL KUMAR

Counsel for the Respondents: SUNDARI R PISUPATI

Counsel for the Respondents: GP FOR ENDOWMENTS (AP)

Counsel for the Respondents: V.DYUMANI (SC for TTD)

Counsel for the Respondents: Dr MAJJISURI BABU (SC FOR TTD)

WRIT PETITION NO: 36195 OF 2014

Between:

1. A.V. Anantha Charyulu.

...Petitioner

AND

1. The State of Andhra Pradesh Rep by its Principal Secretary, Revenue(Endt-III/I) Department.

2. The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanarn Rep by its, Executive Officer, TTD Buildings, Tirupati.

3. Sri Perumallaswamy Temple / Sri Kariya Manikyaswamy Temple, (Taken over by TTD), Nagari, Tirupati, Chittoor District. Rep.by its Executive Officer. Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, T.T.D Buildings, Tirupati.

...Respondents

Counsel for the Petitioner: JESHTADI SUNIL KUMAR

Counsel for the Respondents: SUNDARI R PISUPATI

Counsel for the Respondents: V.DYUMANI (SC for TTD)

Counsel for the Respondents: GP FOR ENDOWMENTS (AP)

WRIT PETITION NO: 6649 OF 2023

Between:

1. K BHKTHAVASTHALAM.

...Petitioner

AND

1. The State of Andhra Pradesh, Rep.by its Principal Secretary, Revenue (Endt-III/I) Department.

2. The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam, Rep.by its Executive Officer, TTD Buildings, Tirupati.

3. Sri Siddeswara Swamy Temple, (Taken over by TTD). Tallapaka Village and Post, Rajampeta Mandal, Annamayya District, Rep.by The Epxecutive Officer. Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, T.T.D Buildings, Tirupati.

...Respondents

Counsel for the Petitioner: JESHTADI SUNIL KUMAR

Counsel for the Respondents: GP FOR REVENUE

Counsel for the Respondents: V.DYUMANI (SC for TTD)

WRIT PETITION NO: 23867 OF 2024

Between:

1. MANGALA VENUGOPAL,

2. Mangala Narasimhulu,

...Petitioners

AND

1. THE STATE OF AP, Rep by its Principal Secretary, Endowments Department,

2. The Commissioner, Endowments Department, Gollapudi, Vijayawada, NTR District.

3. The Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam, rep., by its Executive Officer, Tirupathi, Tirupati District.

4. Sri Pattabhi Ramaswamy Vari Temple, rep., by its Temple Inspector, (taken over by TTD) Vayalpad, Annamayya District

Counsel for the Petitioners: A SREEDHAR

Counsel for the Respondents: GP FOR SERVICES II

Counsel for the Respondents: V.DYUMANI (SC for TTD)

The Court made the following order:

THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE BALAJI MEDAMALLI

WRIT PETITION NO.33955 OF 2014

WRIT PETITION NO.36195 of 2014

WRIT PETITION NO.6649 OF 2023

&

WRIT PETITION NO.23867 OF 2024

COMMON ORDER:

1) Writ Petition Nos.33955, 36195 of 2014 & 6649 of 2023 have been filed by Petitioners seeking to declare the action of Respondent Nos.1 & 2 in not implementing G.O.Ms.No.855 Revenue (Endowment-I) Department, dated 08.10.1997, and in not extending the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) pay-scales of Archakas in terms of the said G.O. and to declare G.O.Ms.No.1536 Revenue (Endowment-II) Department, dated 20.12.2008, and consequential proceedings of Respondent No.2, dated 21.06.2010, as contrary to Law and G.O.Ms.No.855 Revenue (Endowment-I), dated 08.10.1997, Hon'ble Apex Court Judgment in A.S. Narayanadikshitulu and Section 2(28) of Act. 30/87 and to declare Petitioners are entitled to TTD pay scales and emoluments.

2) Writ Petition No.23867 of 2024 came to be filed by Petitioners to declare the action of Respondent Nos.2 to 4 in not regularizing the services of Petitioners in pursuance of the orders passed in W.P.No.7945 of 2001, dated 30.08.2012, for framing and finalization of service conditions of Petitioners duly treating Respondent No.4 temple as part of Respondent No.3 temple as

per the Section 145 of Andhra Pradesh Charitable and Hindu Religious Institutions and Endowments Act 1987 as illegal, arbitrary and against Article 311 of the Constitution of India and consequential direction to Respondent Nos.2 to 4 to regularize Petitioners services forthwith in pursuance of the orders passed in W.P.No.7945 of 2001 dated 30.08.2012 duly framing service conditions of Petitioners who were taken over from the Sri Pattabhi Ramaswamy Vari Temple Under taken by TTD Vayalpad Annamayya District in the Management of Respondent No.3 as provided under Section 145 said Act.

3) Brief facts in Writ Petition Nos.33955& 36195 of 2014 of 2023 are as under:

a) Petitioners' father was the hereditary Archaka of Respondent No.3 Temple. After his demise, Petitioners continued to manage the affairs of the said Temple in their capacity as "Mirasidars". Pursuant to Resolution No.454, dated 12.08.1990, the Government issued G.O.Ms.No.558, Revenue (Endowments-III) Department, dated 03.06.1992, notifying Respondent No.3 Temple as an institution belonging to Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams ("**TTD"**) and including it in the First Schedule to Act No.30 of 1987 by inserting Entry XV therein.

b) On 21.10.1994, TTD took over the Inam lands of Respondent No.3 Temple, along with its staff and Archakas. Subsequently, vide Proceedings No.Ts.3/35731/90, dated 10.07.1995, Respondent No.2

took a policy decision to absorb the staff and Archakas of the said Temple into the services of TTD. However, the said decision was not implemented.

c) The abolition of hereditary rights of Archakas and Mirasidars was challenged before the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***A.S.Narayanadikshitulu v. State of Andhra Pradesh*** [1] . While upholding the abolition of hereditary rights, the Hon'ble Supreme Court directed the Government to formulate a scheme for fixing the pay scales and salaries of Archakas by constituting a committee to examine the rationalisation of pay scales under TTD. Pursuant thereto, the Government issued G.O.Ms.No.855, Revenue (Endowment-I) Department, dated 08.10.1997, prescribing the pay scales and cadre strength of Archakas and other personnel working in TTD temples, as specified in the Annexure appended thereto.

d) Though the Board of Respondent No.2 had taken a decision in the year 1992 to absorb Petitioners into the services of TTD, Respondent Nos.1 and 2 failed to permanently absorb them into TTD service. Instead, Petitioners were extended the benefits of the Revised Pay Scales (RPS), 2005, but were denied the benefits of RPS, 2010, which had been extended to the Archakas of TTD. Petitioners contend that several representations were made to Respondent No.1 requesting permission to TTD to regularise the services of employees of the

[1]AIR 1996 SC 1665

temples taken over by it. However, instead of permitting such regularization and integration of their services into TTD, Respondent No.1 issued G.O.Ms.No.1536, Revenue (Endowment-II) Department, dated 20.12.2008, directing TTD to release grants-in-aid to the taken-over temples towards salaries and other expenses, without integrating the services of their employees into TTD.

e) G.O.Ms.No.855, Revenue (Endowment-I) Department, dated 08.10.1997, was issued pursuant to the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***A.S. Narayanadeekshitulu*** (1st supra)**.** However, Petitioners contend that G.O.Ms.No.1536, Revenue (Endowment-II) Department, dated 20.12.2008, issued by Respondent No.1, is contrary to G.O.Ms.No.855, the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, and the order passed in W.A.No.514 of 2000, dated 11.06.2008. Aggrieved thereby, Petitioners have separately filed the present Writ Petitions.

4) <u>W.P.No.6649 of 2023</u>:

(a) Petitioner's grandfather, N. Subbaramaiah, was the Mirasidars and hereditary Archaka of Sri Chennakesava Swamy Group Temples, Tallapaka, of which respondent No.3 Temple is the part and parcel of the said temple. Respondent No.2 TTD had taken over agricultural land in an extent of Ac.2.78 cents in Tallapaka village. Upon the demise of petitioner's grandfather, his father, K. Mallaiah, succeeded to the mirasidars rights and hereditary Archakatvam and continued to perform

Archakatvam at respondent No.3 Temple.Subsequently, respondent No.3 Temple was taken over by respondent No.2–TTD, along with the services of petitioner's father. Upon his father's death on 20.03.1998, petitioner, who was qualified and had assisted his father in performing Archakatvam, was appointed as Archaka with effect from 16.01.1999 pursuant to a resolution of the TTD Board. Thereafter, he was extended the benefit of RPS-2010 vide proceedings dated 19.05.2013 and has continued to perform Archakatvam at the Temple.

(b) 2nd Respondent repeatedly requested 1st Respondent, through letters dated 12.02.2008, 18.02.2009, 05.06.2009 and 02.02.2010, to approve regularization of employees of temples taken over byTTD and extend TTD pay scales and service benefits. However, G.O.Ms.No.1536, dated 20.12.2008, directed release of grants-in-aid towards salaries and maintenance without integrating their services into TTD. By proceedings dated 21.06.2010, the 2nd Respondent extended benefits applicable to Endowments Department staff.

(c) Petitioner relies upon G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, issued pursuant to the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in A.S. Narayana Deekshitulu v. State of Andhra Pradesh, the orders in W.P.No.26294 of 2000, dated 20.09.2005, and the judgment in W.A.No.514 of 2000, dated 11.06.2008, besides the interim directions dated 23.03.2015 in W.P.Nos.33955 and 36195 of 2014.Accordingly,

petitioner claims regularization in TTD service with effect from 14.03.1991, together with applicable pay scales, allowances and other service benefits, contending that the denial thereof is discriminatory and contrary to the aforesaid Government Order and judicial decisions.

5) Writ Petition No.23867 of 2024:

a) Petitioners were engaged as “Melam” staff by Respondent No.4 Temple, which was taken over by Respondent No.3 vide G.O.Ms.No.704, dated 22.08.1986. Subsequently, Respondent No.3 issued Proceedings in Roc.No.TS3/10173/97, dated 14.12.1997, providing for payment of wages to the staff of Respondent No.4 Temple. Further, vide Board Resolution No.730, dated 30.11.1997 and 01.12.1997, Respondent No.3 resolved to pay monthly wages to Petitioners.

b) Pursuant to the judgment of the Hon’ble Supreme Court in W.P.No.638 of 1987, dated 19.03.1996, the Government issued G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, providing for the rationalisation of pay scales of Archakas. As Petitioners were being paid a meagre amount of Rs.400/- per month, they filed W.P.No.7945 of 2001, seeking payment of salaries in accordance with G.O.Ms.No.855. Though Respondents preferred a Writ Appeal challenging the said proceedings, no interim orders were granted therein.

c) Despite the specific direction issued by this Court in W.P.No.7945 of 2001, dated 30.08.2012, Respondents have not taken any steps towards framing and finalizing the service conditions of the employees of the temples taken over by Respondent No.3. Petitioners contend that the inaction of Respondent No.3 in finalizing and fixing the service conditions of such employees is arbitrary and contrary to the directions issued by this Court.

6) Heard Sri W.B.Srinivas, learned Senior Counsel, assisted by Sri J. Sunil Kumar, learned Counsel for Petitioners, Sri A. Sreedhar, learned counsel for petitioners in W.P.No.23867 of 2024, SJ Dileep Kumar, learned Government Pleader for Endowments, Ms. K.V.N Pallavi, learned Assistant Government Pleader for Endowments, and Smt. V. Dyumani, Standing Counsel for Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams.

7) W.P.No.33955 of 2014 is taken up as the lead case, and all the Writ Petitions are disposed of by this Common Order.

8) Learned Senior Counsel appearing for Petitioners submits that Petitioners were working at Sri Kasi Visweswara Swamy Temple, Bugga Agraharam, Nagari. The said Temple, along with its properties, jewellery and staff, was taken over by TTD, vide proceedings in RoC No.37/Sri_Dat/94, dated 31.07.1995. Thereafter, the Government constituted a Committee to rationalize the pay-scales of Archakas. The Committee recommended the rationalization of pay-scales and payment of honorarium to Archakas, Potu

workers and other religious staff. Upon accepting the said recommendations, the Government issued G.O.Ms.No.855, Revenue (Endowments-I), dated 08.10.1997. As per the Annexure to the said G.O., the pay-scale of Archakas was fixed at Rs.2,375-75-2,750-90-3,200-110-3,750-130-4,411-160-5,040.

9) Learned Senior Counsel further submits that the Annexure to the said G.O. specifies the posts of Archakas taken over along with the respective temples, namely, Sri Annapurna Sametha Kasi Visweswara Swamyvari Temple, Bugga Agraharam; Sri Kariyamanikya Swamyvari Temple and its sub-temple, Nagari; Sri Chennakesava Swamyvari Temple, Thallapaka; and Sri Venugopalaswamy Temple and its sub-temple, Karvetinagaram. One post of Archaka at Sri Kariyamanikya Swamyvari Temple and two posts at each of the remaining three temples were taken over, and their pay-scales were fixed on par with those attached to the post of Senior Assistant in TTD. It is further submitted that, pursuant to the said proceedings and the takeover of the services of the staff of the said temples, TTD forwarded proposals to the government for regularization of their services.

10) G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, deals with the rationalization of pay-scales and payment of honorarium to Archakas, Potu workers and other religious staff. The relevant portion of paragraph 4 of the said G.O. is extracted hereunder:

> *"In the reference 4th read above, the Committee recommended the rationalization of the pay scales and payments of honorarium to the Archakas, Potu workers and other religious staff, Sri Pedda Jeeyangar and Sri Chinna Jeeyangar relating to Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams. The Government have decided to accept the*

> *recommendation of the Committee subject to allowing full freedom to revise the cadre strength, emoluments, incentives, etc., to be offered to its religious staff depending on the exigency of work, administrative convenience, etc."*

11) The said G.O. was also placed before the Hon'ble Apex Court in ***A.S. Narayana Deekshitulu v. State of Andhra Pradesh***. Learned Senior Counsel submits that the said G.O. was issued in accordance with the scheme contemplated in the aforesaid judgment and, accordingly, had the approval of the Hon'ble Apex Court.

12) Learned Senior Counsel, relying upon the aforesaid G.O., submits that the temples were taken over along with their properties, jewellery and staff, and the pay-scales of the staff were also fixed on par with those applicable to regular employees of TTD. Despite the same, the services of Petitioners have not been regularized.

13) It is further submitted that TTD recommended the regularization of the services of Petitioners vide proposals submitted by its Executive Officer in RoC No.TS3/26750/2003, dated 12.02.2008, furnishing the requisite particulars of the staff taken over along with the said temples and seeking sanction for an additional 21 posts on a Sambhavana basis.

14) Learned Senior Counsel further submits that the Executive Officer of TTD addressed another letter dated 18.02.2009, reiterating the request for regularization of the services of Petitioners, subsequent to issuance of G.O.Ms.No.1536, dated 20.12.2008, whereby the Government directed that the services of the staff of the taken-over temples should not be integrated

into TTD. Thereafter, TTD continued to pursue the matter with the Government through subsequent correspondence dated 05.06.2009, 02.02.2010 and 15.02.2010, seeking regularization of the services of the said staff. It is also submitted that TTD extended the minimum time-scale under the Revised Pay Scales, 2010, applicable to the staff of the Endowments Department, to Petitioners, while continuing to reiterate its request for regularization of their services.

15) Petitioners are aggrieved by G.O.Ms.No.1536, dated 20.12.2008, whereby the Government directed TTD to release grant-in-aid to the taken-over temples, out of which the salaries and maintenance expenses of the respective temples were to be met. The Government further directed that the staff of the said temples be paid salaries equivalent to the minimum of the time-scale, subject to protection of their existing pay, without integrating their services into the service establishment of TTD. Consequently, the recommendations made by TTD for regularization of the services of Petitioners or their absorption into the services of TTD were not accepted, thereby denying Petitioners the benefit of such regularization or absorption.

16) Learned Counsel for Petitioners submits that there is no dispute that the aforesaid temples were taken over under different proceedings and Government Orders, along with their properties, jewellery and the staff working therein at the relevant time. Learned Counsel further submits that the impugned G.O. itself clearly indicates that two (02) posts of Archakas were taken over in each of the following temples, namely, Sri Chennakesava

Swamy Temple, Tallapaka; Sri Venugopala Swamy Temple, Karvetinagaram; and Sri Annapoorna Sametha Kasi Visweswara Swamy Temple, Bugga Agraharam, and one (01) post of Archaka was taken over in Sri Kariyamanikya Swamy Temple, Nagari.

17) Learned Counsel for Petitioners submits that, as evident from the impugned G.O. itself, the services of the employees working in the taken-over temples were taken over by TTD along with the properties and jewellery of the respective temples. It is further submitted that, under G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, which also covered the said taken-over temples, the Government, upon consideration of the Committee's report dated 19.11.1996, accepted its recommendations and vested TTD with the discretion to revise the cadre strength, emoluments, incentives and other service-related benefits of the religious staff, having regard to the exigencies of work and administrative convenience.

18) Learned Senior Counsel further submits that, instead of exercising the aforesaid powers and absorbing Petitioners into the services of TTD, Respondent No.2 addressed a letter to the Government, purportedly invoking Rule 10 of the TTD Employees Service Rules, which provides that the fixation of cadre strength in respect of all posts in TTD vests with the Government.

19) Learned Counsel for Petitioners submits that, in view of the powers conferred upon TTD under G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, in respect of the taken-over temples, the Executive Officer of TTD ought to have

independently considered the question of absorption of Petitioners into the cadre strength of TTD, instead of referring the matter to the Government. However, Respondent No.2 submitted proposals to the Government seeking its decision on the issue, and the Government, in turn, issued the impugned G.O. dealing with the said proposals.

20) Learned Senior Counsel further submits that, under G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, the Government had already empowered TTD to determine the cadre strength in respect of the taken-over temples. However, without taking the said G.O. into consideration, the Government issued the impugned G.O., directing TTD not to integrate the services of the staff of the taken-over temples into its service establishment, which, according to the learned Senior Counsel, is contrary to the object and purport of the earlier G.O. issued for the said purpose

21) Learned Senior Counsel further submits that TTD continued to address communications to the Government seeking regularization of the services of Petitioners even after issuance of the impugned G.O. In such circumstances, Respondent No.2 cannot now deny Petitioners' claim for absorption into the services of TTD, particularly when it had itself pursued their regularization with the Government.

22) Respondent No.1 filed a counter-affidavit along with an application seeking vacation of the interim orders. In its counter-affidavit, Respondent No.1 contends that, pursuant to the directions of the Hon'ble Apex Court, the

Government of Andhra Pradesh constituted a Committee to examine the rationalization of pay-scales in various temples. Pursuant thereto, G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, was issued, providing for the creation of posts of Archakas at taken over temples. Respondent No.2 has also admitted that the temples were taken over along with their properties, jewellery and staff.

23) It is further contended that, in compliance with Rule 10 of the TTD Employees Service Rules, Respondent No.2 addressed a letter to the Government seeking sanction for additional cadre strength and absorption of Petitioners into the services of TTD. However, the Government rejected the said proposal and directed TTD not to integrate the services of the staff taken over along with the temples, but to extend the benefit of the minimum time-scale to them. Respondent No.1 further contends that, as Petitioners are not employees of TTD, they are not entitled to claim any benefits under G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, and, consequently, cannot seek implementation of the said G.O.

24) Further contended that the impugned G.O. embodies its clear and final decision to release grant-in-aid to the taken-over temples to meet the salary and maintenance expenses, with the staff being paid salaries equivalent to the minimum of the applicable time-scale, subject to protection of their existing pay. It is further contended that the services of the employees of the taken-over temples shall not be integrated into the services of TTD. The Government asserts that the said decision was taken in accordance with its

administrative and financial policy to maintain separate cadres for the employees whose services were taken over along with the respective temples.

25) Respondent No.1 further denies that G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, was intended to provide for the absorption or regularization of Petitioners into the services of TTD. According to the Government, the said G.O. was issued pursuant to the rationalization exercise undertaken in compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble Apex Court and covered the taken-over temples. The inclusion of the posts of Archakas and the corresponding pay-scales in the sanctioned cadre strength, by itself, cannot be construed as an individual order of appointment, absorption or regularization of Petitioners into the services of TTD.

26) It is also contended that, upon consideration of the proposals submitted by TTD in respect of the employees of the taken-over temples, the Government issued G.O.Ms.No.1536, dated 20.12.2008, solely to provide for the release of grant-in-aid to the respective temples and payment of salaries equivalent to the minimum of the applicable time-scales, subject to protection of the existing pay of the employees. The said G.O. expressly stipulates that the services of the employees of the taken-over temples shall not be integrated into the services of TTD.

27) With regard to the averments made in the Writ Petition and the reliance placed on the Order passed in W.A.No.514 of 2000, Respondents contend that the said case concerned the employees of Sri Prasanna Venkateswara

Swamy Temple, whose absorption into the services of TTD was effected with the specific approval of the Government vide G.O.Ms.No.709, dated 12.07.1989. It is, therefore, contended that the factual circumstances and the basis for absorption in the said case are materially different from those in the present case, and the principle laid down therein cannot be mechanically applied to Petitioners.

28) Respondents further contend that Petitioners have challenged the G.O., issued in 2008 and the consequential proceedings issued in 2010 only in the year 2023, without furnishing any satisfactory explanation for the inordinate delay. It is also contended that the subsequent representations made by Petitioners would not give rise to a fresh cause of action to challenge the G.O. issued in 2008. On these grounds, Respondents seek dismissal of the Writ Petition, contending that Petitioners are not entitled to any of the reliefs sought therein.

29) As stated above, even as per the impugned G.O., the temples in which Petitioners were working were taken over by TTD, along with their properties, jewellery and the staff working therein. Thus, the takeover encompassed the temples and their assets, together with the staff serving at the relevant time.

30) Petitioners were working in the said temples under the Mirasidar system and that, upon its abolition and the subsequent takeover of the temples, their services were also taken over by TTD. However, no formal orders regularizing their services were issued. Pursuant to the judgment of the Hon’ble Apex

Court in ***A.S. Narayana Deekshitulu*** (1st supra) the Government issued G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, accepting the recommendations of the Committee, dated 19.11.1996, and permitting TTD to revise the cadre strength and other service conditions of the staff taken over. Therefore, the responsibility of considering their absorption into the cadre strength of TTD rested with TTD. Instead of issuing orders in that regard, TTD submitted proposals to the Government, purportedly in compliance with Rule 10 of the TTD Employees Service Rules.

31) Government, without duly considering G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, issued the impugned G.O., directing that the services of the staff of the taken-over temples should not be integrated into the services of TTD. It is contended that TTD continued to pursue the matter with the Government for absorption of Petitioners, whose services had been taken over along with the temples. Their pay-scales and emoluments had also been rationalized under the said G.O., with the pay-scale of Archakas fixed on par with that of Senior Assistants in TTD. According to Petitioners, the cadre strength and corresponding pay-scales having already been provided for under G.O.Ms.No.855, only formal orders of absorption remained to be issued. However, TTD's proposals resulted in the issuance of the impugned G.O., denying such absorption.

32) With regard to the objection of “delay and laches”, learned Senior Counsel submits that Petitioners had been pursuing their claim for absorption with TTD, which, in turn, continued to submit proposals to the Government for

regularization of their services. Petitioners contend that they became aware of the rejection of their claim only when consequential proceedings were issued by TTD pursuant to the impugned G.O. As the relevant orders were not communicated to them and they were unaware of the rejection of their claim, the delay in approaching this Court cannot be attributed to them. Having exhausted the available course of pursuing the matter with TTD and the Government having failed to reconsider the matter in the light of G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, Petitioners approached this Court seeking appropriate relief. Accordingly, they contend that the Writ Petition is not liable to be dismissed on the ground of delay and laches.

33) Learned Senior Counsel appearing for Petitioners places reliance on paragraph 7 of the judgment of the Hon'ble Apex Court in ***Union of India and Others v. Tarsem Singh***[2], wherein the Hon'ble Apex Court observed as follows:

> *"Para 7……..Where a service related claim is based on a continuing wrong, relief can be granted even if there is a long delay in seeking remedy, with reference to the date on which the continuing wrong commenced……..."*

34) Learned Senior Counsel further submits that the impugned proceedings issued by the Government on the recommendations of TTD, to which Petitioners were not parties. As their services had been taken over by TTD, Petitioners continued to pursue their claim for absorption with TTD. In such

[2](2008) 8 Supreme Court Cases 648

circumstances, it is contended that no delay or laches can be attributed to Petitioners.

35) Learned Senior Counsel further places reliance on the judgment of the Hon'ble Apex Court in ***Rushibhai Jagdishchandra Pathak v. Bhavnagar Municipal Corporation***[3], wherein the Hon'ble Apex Court considered the principle of continuing cause of action giving rise to recurring causes of action, particularly in matters relating to salary and pension. Referring to the principles laid down in ***Union of India v. Tarsem Singh*** (4th supra), the Hon'ble Apex Court elucidated the distinction between "continuing" and "recurring" causes of action while considering the objection of delay and laches.

36) Learned Senior Counsel further places reliance on the judgment of the Hon'ble Apex Court in ***Asger Ibrahim Amin v. Life Insurance Corporation of India***[4], wherein, relying on the principles laid down in ***Union of India v. Tarsem Singh*** (supra), the Hon'ble Apex Court observed that"*limitation will not thwart the claim so long as the claim, if allowed, does not have any adverse repercussions on the settled third-party rights".*

37) Learned Senior Counsel further places reliance on the judgment of the Hon'ble Apex Court in ***Vijay Kumar Joshi v. Akash Tripathi and Others***[5], wherein the Hon'ble Apex Court, in paragraph 20, held as follows:

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[3]Civil Appeal No.4134 of 2022
[4](2016) 13 Supreme Court Cases 797
[5]2025 SCC Online SC 1095

"20. The employees, once absorbed, are required to be treated on par with other employees of the MPSEB, as held by this Court in the case of ***Panchraj Tiwari vs. Madhya Pradesh State Electricity Board and Others****. This judgment recognises that upon merger or absorption, the original identity of the service ceases to exist and complete functional integration must follow. Paragraph 6 of the aforesaid judgment is reproduced hereunder:*

> *"6. Integration/merger of services means creation of a homogenous service by the merger of service personnel belonging to different services:*
>
> *6.1. Though it is difficult to have a perfect coalescence of the services on such merger, the principle of equivalence is to be followed while absorbing the employees, to the extent possible.*
>
> *6.2. Though integration of services thus postulates equation of posts, it is not invariably necessary to prepare the seniority list on the basis of the pay drawn by the incumbent in the equated category. It is always open to the authority concerned to adopt a just and the equitable principle on fixation of seniority.*
>
> *6.3. Once a service is merged with another service, the merged service gets its birth in the integrated service and loses its original identity. There cannot be a situation, where even after merger, absorption or integration, such services which were merged or absorbed, still retain their original status. If so, it is not an absorption or merger or integration, it will only be a working arrangement without any functional integration."*

38) Placing reliance on the aforesaid judgment, learned Senior Counsel submits that employees, once absorbed into a service, are required to be treated on par with other employees of the same service. It is further submitted that integration or merger of services entails the creation of a homogeneous service by merging personnel belonging to different services. In the present case, as TTD had already taken over the services of Petitioners, who continue to discharge the same functions as Archakas in the respective temples, they cannot be treated as a distinct class of employees. Accordingly,

learned Senior Counsel contends that the services of Petitioners are required to be integrated with those of TTD by merging them into its service establishment.

39) Learned Senior Counsel further places reliance on the judgment in ***Panchraj Tiwari v. Madhya Pradesh State Electricity Board and Others***[6], wherein the principle governing the integration or merger of services was considered. It is submitted that such integration entails the creation of a homogeneous service by merging personnel belonging to different services. Upon such merger, the employees are required to be absorbed while protecting their designation and pay-scales and are entitled to all consequential service benefits, on par with the employees of the parent department.

40) As noted above, Petitioners were taken over by TTD, along with the properties and jewellery of the respective temples, pursuant to the Government Orders issued in that regard. Consequently, the takeover extended to the temples and their staff. Upon consideration of the Committee's report, dated 09.11.1996, the Government, vide G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, permitted TTD to revise the cadre strength and service benefits of the staff of the taken-over temples. In view of the said authorization, the Government could not subsequently disregard the powers conferred upon TTD under the said G.O. while considering the absorption of Petitioners. Therefore, the proposals and recommendations submitted by

[6](2014) 5 Supreme Court Cases 101

TTD, including Board Resolution No.619, dated 21.09.2008, and the letters of the Executive Officer dated 12.02.2008 and 09.05.2008, cannot, by themselves, confer upon the Government any authority to override the arrangement contemplated under G.O.Ms.No.855. Having taken over the temples along with their assets and staff, the benefits arising from such takeover cannot be denied to Petitioners while retaining the properties and jewellery of the respective temples.

41) As held by the Hon'ble Apex Court in the judgments relied upon by Petitioners, integration of their services into TTD would not, in the circumstances of the present case, affect the existing service rights of the employees of TTD. Therefore, Petitioners' claim for absorption cannot be rejected merely on the grounds of delay and laches or on the apprehension that such integration would adversely affect the service conditions of the existing employees of TTD.

42) It is further evident from the proposals submitted by TTD that the proposed absorption would not impose any additional financial burden upon the Government, as the expenditure would be borne by TTD. In such circumstances, the rejection of the proposal cannot be sustained, particularly when G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, contemplated revision of cadre strength and service benefits in respect of the staff of the taken-over temples. Accordingly, G.O.Ms.No.1536, dated 20.12.2008, cannot be construed as a bar to TTD considering and effecting the absorption of Petitioners in accordance with the powers available under G.O.Ms.No.855.

43) G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, was issued pursuant to the directions of the Hon'ble Apex Court and the recommendations of the Committee for rationalization of the service conditions and pay-scales of the staff of the taken-over temples. The said G.O. provided for the fixation of pay-scales and the revision of cadre strength in respect of the religious staff concerned. In the circumstances, Petitioners contend that the consequential exercise of integrating their services into the establishment of TTD ought to have been undertaken in accordance with the said G.O.

44) Learned counsel for petitioners also placed reliance on the judgment of Hon'ble Apex Court in ***Jaggov. Union of India***[7], wherein it held as follows:

> ***26.*** *While the judgment in Uma Devi (supra) sought to curtail the practice of backdoor entries and ensure appointments adhered to constitutional principles, it is regrettable that its principles are often misinterpreted or misapplied to deny legitimate claims of long-serving employees. This judgment aimed to distinguish between "illegal" and "irregular" appointments. It categorically held that employees in irregular appointments, who were engaged in duly sanctioned posts and had served continuously for more than ten years, should be considered for regularization as a one-time measure. However, the laudable intent of the judgment is being subverted when institutions rely on its dicta to indiscriminately reject the claims of employees, even in cases where their appointments are not illegal, but merely lack adherence to procedural formalities. Government departments often cite the judgment in Uma Devi (supra) to argue that no vested right to regularization exists for temporary employees, overlooking the judgment's explicit acknowledgment of cases where regularization is appropriate. This selective application distorts the judgment's spirit and purpose, effectively weaponizing it against employees who have rendered indispensable services over decades.*
>
> ***27.*** *In light of these considerations, in our opinion, it is imperative for government departments to lead by example in providing fair and stable employment. Engaging workers on a temporary basis for extended periods, especially when their roles are integral to the organization's functioning, not only contravenes international labour standards but also exposes the organization to legal challenges and undermines employee morale. By ensuring fair employment practices, government institutions*

[7] 2024 SCC OnLine SC 3826

> *can reduce the burden of unnecessary litigation, promote job security, and uphold the principles of justice and fairness that they are meant to embody. This approach aligns with international standards and sets a positive precedent for the private sector to follow, thereby contributing to the overall betterment of labour practices in the country.*

45) Placing reliance on the above, learned counsel submits that the Hon'ble Apex Court, while referring to the judgment in ***Secretary, State of Karnataka v. Uma Devi***[8]*,* observed that the principles laid down therein, intended to curb backdoor appointments and ensure compliance with constitutional requirements, are often misinterpreted or misapplied to deny legitimate claims of long-serving employees.

46) Learned counsel for petitioners further submits that, having continued petitioners in the said post for a considerable period, respondents cannot now deny the benefit of regularization against the available vacancies. Such denial amounts to an unfair employment practice, subjects the institution to unnecessary litigation, and undermines job security among employees.

47) Learned counsel for petitioner also placed reliance on the judgment of Hon'ble Apex Court in ***Dharam Singh* v. *State of Uttar Pradesh***[9], wherein it held as follows:

> ***20.*** *We have framed these directions comprehensively because, case after case, orders of this Court in such matters have been met with fresh technicalities, rolling "reconsiderations," and administrative drift which further prolongs the insecurity for those who have already laboured for years on daily wages. Therefore, we have learned that Justice in such cases cannot rest on simpliciter directions, but it demands imposition of clear duties, fixed timelines, and verifiable compliance. As a constitutional employer, the State is held to a higher standard and therefore it must organise its perennial workers on a sanctioned footing,*

[8](2006) 4 SCC 1
[9]2025 SCC OnLine SC 1735

> *create a budget for lawful engagement, and implement judicial directions in letter and spirit. Delay to follow these obligations is not mere negligence but rather it is a conscious method of denial that erodes livelihoods and dignity for these workers. The operative scheme we have set here comprising of creation of supernumerary posts, full regularization, subsequent financial benefits, and a sworn affidavit of compliance, is therefore a pathway designed to convert rights into outcomes and to reaffirm that fairness in engagement and transparency in administration are not matters of grace, but obligations under Articles 14, 16 and 21 of the Constitution of India.*

48) Placing reliance on the aforesaid, learned counsel for petitioners submits that the vacancies in question are perennial in nature and that petitioners have been working against those vacancies. As a constitutional employer, the State is held to a higher standard and must ensure that employees engaged in perennial posts are placed on a sanctioned footing, and appropriate directions may be issued for making the necessary budgetary provisions for lawful regularization, together with the consequential financial benefits.

49) Learned senior counsel further submits that in the present case, petitioners have been working in the said posts since the takeover of the institution by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) and even prior to. Pursuant to the Government's decision, the institution, along with its properties, jewellery and staff, became part of the TTD. Accordingly, petitioners cannot be denied the benefit of regularization.

50) In view of the foregoing discussion, TTD is required to give effect to G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997, in respect of Petitioners and extend the applicable pay-scales and service benefits to them by considering their

integration into the service establishment of TTD. G.O.Ms.No.1536, dated 20.12.2008, shall not preclude TTD from undertaking such an exercise in accordance with G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997.

51) Accordingly, the Writ Petitions are ***allowed***, declaring that G.O.Ms.No.1536, dated 20.12.2008, issued by respondent No.1, shall not operate as a bar to respondent No.2–TTD for considering and effecting the absorption of the petitioners into its service establishment in accordance with G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997. Consequently, respondent No.2 is directed to absorb / integrate the services of the petitioners herein in their respective cadres in accordance with G.O.Ms.No.855, dated 08.10.1997 with all consequential benefits in accordance with law. There shall be no order as to costs.

As a sequel, miscellaneous petitions, pending if any, shall stand closed.

JUSTICE BALAJI MEDAMALLI

Date: 13.11.2026

SM / SAK

Whether the order is:

Speaking	☑	Reasoned	☑
Reportable	☑	Non-reportable	

THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE BALAJI MEDAMALLI

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WRIT PETITION NO.33955 OF 2014

WRIT PETITION NO.36195 of 2014

WRIT PETITION NO.6649 OF 2023

&

WRIT PETITION NO.23867 OF 2024

Dated: 13.11.2026

SAK