



W.P.(MD)No.10974 of 2026

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 17.04.2026

CORAM :

THE HONOURABLE MR. SUSHRUT ARVIND DHARMADHIKARI,  
CHIEF JUSTICE

AND

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE G.ARUL MURUGAN

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B.Dayanidhi,  
Senior Citizen,  
Railway Retirement,  
No.36, Alakarasan Nagar,  
Nagai Road, Thanjavur - 613 001.

Petitioner(s)

Vs

1.The Chief Electoral Officer,  
State of Tamil Nadu  
Public (Elections) Department,  
Secretariat, Fort st. George,  
Chennai - 600 009. Tamil Nadu.

2.The Returning Officer,  
174-Thanjavur Assembly Constituency &  
Revenue,  
Divisional Officer, Thanjavur.

Respondent(s)

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India  
seeking issuance of a writ of certiorarified mandamus to call for the



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records relating to the impugned order issued by the 2<sup>nd</sup> respondent in R.C.64/2026/B3 dated 07.04.2026 and quash the same as illegal and consequently direct the 2<sup>nd</sup> respondent to accept the petitioner's nomination for contesting in the General Elections to the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, 2026 from 174-Thanjavur Assembly Constituency.

For Petitioner(s): M/s.S.Devasena

For Respondent(s): Mr.Niranjana Rajagopalan  
Standing Counsel

ORDER

(Order of the Court was made by G.ARUL MURUGAN, J.)

Calling into question the rejection order dated 07.04.2026, by which the nomination filed by the petitioner was rejected, the present writ petition is filed. A further direction is sought to include the name of the petitioner in the list of valid candidates for the General Election scheduled on 23.04.2026.

2.1. Learned counsel for the petitioner submitted that the rejection of nomination of the petitioner was on the ground that Part A-7(B)(V) and 8(ii) in Form 26 affidavit were left blank. She added that the petitioner has disclosed the financial particulars in



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the other columns and merely because one column which is only a breakup is left blank, the same cannot be construed as non disclosure. Further, the column in 8(ii) only pertains to format and it is not a suppression. She further submitted that, in any event, there is no suppression of fact regarding the actual details that are to be furnished.

2.2. Learned counsel for the petitioner further submitted that as per Section 36(4) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, the Returning Officer shall not reject any nomination paper on the ground of any defect which is not of a substantial character. However, the nomination of the petitioner was rejected owing to simple defects and, therefore, the rejection is liable to be set aside.

2.3. In support of the aforesaid submissions, learned counsel for the petitioner placed reliance on the decisions of the Supreme Court in (i) *Election Commission of India v. Ashok Kumar and others*<sup>1</sup>; and (ii) *Kisan Shankar Kathore v. Arun Dattatray Sawant and others*<sup>2</sup>.

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1 (2000) 8 SCC 216

2 (2014) 14 SCC 162



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3. Per contra, learned Standing Counsel for the respondents submitted that a writ petition challenging the alleged improper rejection of nomination papers is not maintainable, as the jurisdiction of the High Court in such matters stands excluded by Article 329 of the Constitution of India. To fortify the said plea, reliance is placed on a decision of the Supreme Court in *N.P.Ponnuswami v. Returning Officer, Namakkal Constituency and others*<sup>3</sup>.

4. It is apposite to refer to the following provisions:

"Article 329(b) of the Constitution of India:

*329. Bar to interference by Courts in electoral matters.-*

*Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution—*

*(a) ...*

*(b) no election to either House of Parliament or to the House or either House of the Legislature of a State shall be called in question except by an election petition presented to such authority and in such*

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<sup>3</sup> (1952) 1 SCC 94



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*manner as may be provided for by or under any law made by the appropriate Legislature."*

"Section 100(1)(c) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951

*100. Grounds for declaring election to be void.—*

*(1) Subject to the provisions of sub-section (2) if the High court is of opinion—*

*(a) or (b) ...; or*

*(c) that any nomination has been improperly rejected..."*

5. A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court on interpreting the provisions of the Constitution of India and Representation of the People Act, 1951, in *N.P.Ponnuswami v. Returning Officer, Namakkal Constituency and others* held thus:

**"20. It was argued that since the Representation of the People Act was enacted subject to the provisions of the Constitution, it cannot bar the jurisdiction of the High Court to issue writs under Article 226 of the Constitution. This argument however is completely shut out by reading the Act along with Article 329(b). It will be noticed**



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***that the language used in that article and in Section 80 of the Act is almost identical, with this difference only that the article is preceded by the words "notwithstanding anything in this Constitution". I think that those words are quite apt to exclude the jurisdiction of the High Court to deal with any matter which may arise while the elections are in progress."***

*[emphasis supplied]*

6. While considering an identical challenge rejecting the nomination, referring to the aforesaid decision of the Supreme Court, a Division Bench of this Court in *M.Shanmugasundaram v. The Chief Election Commissioner and others*<sup>4</sup>, held thus:

*"7. Clause (b) of Article 329 is very clear on this point. It is manifest that no election to either House of Parliament or to the House or either House of the Legislature of State shall be called in question except by an election Petition presented before the authority empowered under the law.*

***8. Section 100 of the Representation of People Act, 1950, lays down the ground for declaring the election to be void. One of the grounds for***

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<sup>4</sup> (2011) 4 CTC 766



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***declaring election to be void is the rejection of the nomination improperly.***

9. In our opinion, the instant case is squarely covered by the Constitution Bench judgment of the Supreme Court in the case of *N.P. Ponnuswami v. Returning Officer, Namakkal Constituency, Namakkal*, (1952) 1 SCC 94 : AIR 1952 SC 64.

***10. After giving our anxious consideration, we are of the definite opinion that the question regarding the improper rejection of nomination cannot be gone into by this Court in exercise of Writ jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution. ... "***

*[emphasis supplied]*

7. It is trite that once the election process has commenced with the issuance of election notification, the invocation of judicial remedy has to be postponed till the completion of proceedings in elections.

8. Even though learned counsel for the petitioner submitted that the defect is not of a substantial character, in view of the



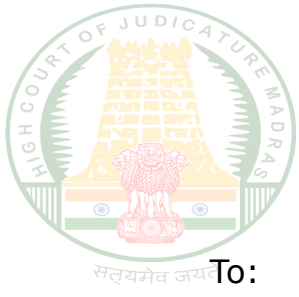
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constitutional bar and Constitution Bench judgment of the Apex Court in *N.P.Ponnuswami v. Returning Officer, Namakkal Constituency and others* (supra) and the decision of a co-equal bench of this court in *M.Shanmugasundaram v. The Chief Election Commissioner and others* (supra), we are not inclined to invoke our jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution of India. That apart, Section 100(1)(c) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 stipulates that improper rejection of nomination is a ground to declare the election void. It is for the petitioner to work out his remedy at an appropriate stage before the appropriate forum in accordance with law.

For the aforegiven reasons, the writ petition is dismissed.  
There shall be no order as to costs.

(SUSHRUT ARVIND DHARMADHIKARI,CJ) (G.ARUL MURUGAN,J)  
17.04.2026

Index : Yes/No  
Neutral Citation : Yes/No  
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To:

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