



W.P.No.19213 of 2026

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

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DATED: 19.06.2026

CORAM :

THE HONOURABLE MR. SUSHRUT ARVIND DHARMADHIKARI,
CHIEF JUSTICE

AND

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE G.ARUL MURUGAN

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&

W.M.P.Nos.20489 & 20491 of 2026

N.Raja
S/o Late Natarajan
Koodakallanur Village
Tholasampatti Post, Omalur Taluk
Salem District.

Petitioner(s)

Vs

1. The Returning officer cum PA
to the District Collector, (Lands), Salem
No.84, Omalur Constituency
Salem.
2. The Revenue Divisional Officer
Office of the Revenue Divisional Officer
Mettur Dam, Mettur Taluk
Salem District.
3. The Tahsildar
Taluk Office, Omalur
Salem District.



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4. Inspector of Police
Tholasampatti Police Station

5. P. Manickam
S/o Late Perumagounder
Koodakallanur Village, Manathal Village
Omalur Taluk, Salem District.

Respondent(s)

Prayer : Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India seeking a writ of Certiorari to call for the records and quash the order dated 1.4.2026 in Na.Ka.No.200/1/2023/AA3 passed by the 1st respondent herein prohibiting the performance of annual Panguni festival in Sri Sakthi Mariamman Temple, Kooda Kallanur, Manathal Village, Omalur Taluk, Salem District.

For Petitioner(s): Mr.T.S.Vijaya Raghavan

For Respondent(s): Mr.Tarun Rao Kallakaru for R1
Mr.K.Kumaran
Government Pleader for R2 & R3
Mr.N.Palanival
Government Advocate (Crl. Side) for R4
Mr.J.Jayan for R5

ORDER

(Order of the Court was made by
the Hon'ble Chief Justice)

This writ petition has been filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India challenging the order dated 01.04.2026 passed



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by first respondent, whereby, conduct of the festival of Sri Sakthi Mariamman Temple, Koodakallanur, Manathal Village, Omalur Taluk, Salem District has been prohibited.

2. The brief fact of the case is that the dispute between the parties has already been referred to the Revenue Divisional Officer, Mettur, who, vide proceedings dated 19.02.2026 passed an order to conduct the festival as per the conditions earlier imposed.

3. During the election period, one of the parties had approached first respondent, who, passed the impugned order dated 01.04.2026, wherein, the relevant portion reads as under:

“In the light of the foregoing and noting that Original Suit No.46/2026 regarding the aforementioned temple remains pending before the Honorable Omalur District Civil Court to date, as well as the potential for law and order issues to arise while the Model Code of Conduct is currently in force, I hereby submit that appropriate measures regarding the conduct of the festival at the Arulmigu Sri Sakthi Mariamman Temple in Koodakkallanur, Manathal Village, Omalur Taluk, can be undertaken only based upon the final verdict of the Honorable Court.”



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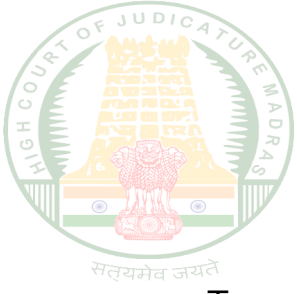
4. The Returning Officer could not have directed that appropriate measures regarding the conduct of the festival at the Sri Sakthi Mariamman Temple can be undertaken only based upon the final verdict of the Court, as, first respondent had no power to pass such an order during the period of Model Code of Conduct.

5. We find that first respondent has exceeded his jurisdiction. Accordingly, the impugned order is quashed. The writ petition is allowed. There shall be no order as to costs. Consequently, the interim applications are closed.

(SUSHRUT ARVIND DHARMADHIKARI,CJ) (G.ARUL MURUGAN,J)
19.06.2026

Index : Yes/No
Neutral Citation : Yes/No

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THE HON'BLE CHIEF JUSTICE
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