



W.A.No.384 of 2026

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 18.02.2026

CORAM :

THE HONOURABLE MR. MANINDRA MOHAN SHRIVASTAVA,
CHIEF JUSTICE

AND

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE G.ARUL MURUGAN

WA No.384 of 2026
and CMP No.3501 of 2026

1. Ravichandran
S/o.Govindarajan,
No.7/25, Bharathidasan Nagar
Main Road, Adambakkam,
Chennai-600008.
2. Baby
W/o.Ramasamy
Door No.168, SBI Officers Colony
Meyyanur, Salem-636004.
3. Balu
S/o.Govindarajan
Kamarajar Nagar, Egapuram Village
Sankari Taluk
Salem District-637502.

Appellant(s)

Vs

1. Suseela
W/o.Govindarajan (Late)
14/149, Valaiyachettipatti
Madadhur Edangansalai Bit-I Village
Salem-637503.



W.A.No.384 of 2026

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2. The Collector
Salem District.
3. The District Revenue Officer
Salem District.
4. The Revenue Divisional Officer
Sankari Division, Salem District.
5. The Tahsildar
Sankari Taluk, Salem District.
6. The Village Administrative Officer
Idanganasalai Bit-I Village
Sankari, Salem District.
7. Chitra
S/o.Chandran
4/12C1, Egapuram Village
Sankari Taluk, Salem District.

Respondent(s)

PRAYER: Appeal under Clause 15 of the Letters Patent to allow this appeal by setting aside the order in W.P.No.9183 of 2025 dated 25.07.2025 passed by the learned Single Judge.

For Appellant(s): Mr.S.Krishnasamy

For Respondent(s): Mr.L.Ramanathan
for R1

Mr. M.Habeeb Rahman
Government Advocate
for R2 to R6



W.A.No.384 of 2026

JUDGMENT
(Delivered by the Hon'ble Chief Justice)

With the consent of the parties, the appeal is heard finally.

2. This appeal is directed against the order passed by the learned Single Judge, whereby the learned Single Judge has recorded a finding that the first respondent/Suseela was the legally wedded wife of the deceased Govindarajan and was, therefore, entitled to issuance of legal heirship certificate, reversing the findings recorded by the revenue authorities.

3. Learned counsel for the appellants would submit that after the death of Govindarajan on 8.7.2011, legal heirship certificate was not issued in favour of the first respondent/Suseela, as it was seriously disputed by the appellants herein stating that she was not the legally wedded wife. The Revenue Divisional Officer as well as the appellate authority both recorded a concurrent finding that the first respondent/Suseela was not the legally wedded wife of



W.A.No.384 of 2026

Govindarajan and, therefore, she was not entitled to issuance of legal heirship certificate.

3. Learned counsel for the appellants further submitted that the learned Single Judge has upset the findings of the revenue authorities on the basis that first respondent/Suseela was receiving pension as she was recognised by the department as the legally wedded wife of the deceased; the pension account passbook and the pension payment order show the name of Govindarajan as her husband. He would submit that once a finding was recorded by the revenue authorities based on evidence, the said finding of fact cannot be substituted by the learned Single Judge.

4. On the other hand, learned counsel for the first respondent would submit that order of the learned Single Judge is based on a specific finding that the aadhar card; family card; pension payment order; and the pension account passbook show the name of the first respondent/Suseela as wife of the deceased Govindarajan and, therefore, the first respondent/Suseela is, undisputedly, the legally



W.A.No.384 of 2026

wedded wife of the deceased Govindarajan. Therefore, there is no illegality in the order passed by the learned Single Judge.

5. We find that when the first respondent/Suseela sought issuance of legal heirship certificate in her favour, it was examined and the Revenue Divisional Officer, on the basis of the materials placed before him, held that the first respondent/Suseela was not the legally wedded wife of the deceased and, therefore, legal heirship certificate could not be issued to her. The revision filed by the first respondent/Suseela before the District Revenue Officer was also dismissed.

6. The learned Single Judge has upset the aforesaid orders and findings of the revenue authorities by substituting his own finding of fact based on the aadhar card; family card; pension payment order; and the pension account passbook.

In our considered view, these documents may have limited use for the purpose of justifying certain entries. However, the proceedings before the revenue authorities as well as writ proceedings are not substitute to proceedings before the civil court.



W.A.No.384 of 2026

The order of the learned Single Judge, to the extent it upsets the orders of the revenue authorities, may be justified only for the purpose of issuance of legal heirship certificate. However, no finding could be recorded that the first respondent was the legally wedded wife without there being proper adjudication in a duly constituted suit before the court of competent jurisdiction declaring the legal status of the first respondent as such.

7. For the aforegiven reasons, though we are not inclined to interfere with the conclusion arrived at by the learned Single Judge in so far as issuance of legal heirship certificate is concerned, we give the appellants liberty to file a suit to seek appropriate declaration in the matter. If any such suit is filed, the observations made by the learned Single Judge shall not come in the way as they are not conclusive findings on the legal status of the first respondent and limited only to decide the legality and validity of the orders and proceedings of the revenue authorities.



W.A.No.384 of 2026

The appeal is partly allowed in the manner and to the extent indicated above. There shall be no order as to costs. Consequently, interim application stands closed.

(MANINDRA MOHAN SHRIVASTAVA, CJ) (G.ARUL MURUGAN,J)
18.02.2026

Index : Yes/No
Neutral Citation : Yes/No
sasi

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W.A.No.384 of 2026

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