



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

WEB COPY

RESERVED ON : 25.02.2026
PRONOUNCED ON: 23.03.2026

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE B.PUGALENDHI

WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154 and 1167 to 1176 of 2026
and
WMP(MD)Nos.717, 718, 978, 985, 986 981, 983, 976, 977, 886, 887,
890, 891,903, 906, 892, 894, 900, 893, 898, 896, 901,905, 907,895,
897, 916, 918 and 904, 4579, 4591, 4606, 4945, 4946, 4971, 4974, 4976,
4978, 4986, 4989, 5008 and 5138 of 2026

WP(MD)No.896 of 2026

S.Bhavani

... Petitioner

versus

1. The State of Tamil Nadu,
Rep. by its Secretary/Commissioner
Agriculture – Farmer Welfare Department,
Fort St. George,
Chennai – 600 009.
2. The Director of Agriculture,
Directorate of Agriculture,
Ezhilagam,
Chepauk,
Chennai – 600 005.
3. The Director of Horticulture,
Directorate of Horticulture and
Plantation Crops,
Ezhilagam, Chepauk, Chennai – 600 005.



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

4. The Deputy Director of Horticulture,
Sivagangai,
Sivagangai District.

... Respondents

Prayer: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records relating to the impugned G.O.(Ms.)No.252 Agriculture – Farmers (VeNi 4 (2)) Department dated 30.09.2025, G.O.(Ms)No.288, Agriculture-Farmers Welfare (VeNi4(2)) Department dated 28.11.2025 issued by the 1st respondent and transfer order issued by the 3rd respondent/Director of Horticulture in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi. 1/14594/2025-10 dated 17.12.2025 and the consequential relieving order issued by the 4th respondent/Deputy Director in Se.Mu.Aa.No.PaNi2/7600/2025-25 dated 18.12.2025, quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

WP(MD)No.1245 of 2026

K.Mohamed Ashik

... Petitioner

versus

1. The State of Tamil Nadu,
Rep. by its Secretary / Commissioner
Agriculture – Farmer Welfare Department,
Fort St. George,
Chennai – 600 009.



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

2. The Director of Agriculture,
Directorate of Agriculture,
Ezhilagam,
Chennai – 600 005.

3. The Director of Horticulture,
Directorate of Horticulture and
Plantation Crops,
Ezhilagam,
Chennai – 600 005.

4. The Deputy Director of Horticulture
Sivagangai,
Sivagangai District.

... Respondents

Prayer: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records relating to the impugned G.O.(Ms)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi4(2)) Department dated 30.09.2025, G.O.(Ms)No.288, Agriculture-Farmers Welfare (VeNi4(2)) Department dated 28.11.2025 issued by the 1st respondent and the transfer order issued by the Director of Horticulture in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-10 dated 17.12.2025 and the consequential relieving order issued by the 4th respondent Deputy Director in Se.Mu.aa.No.PaNi2/7600/2025-1 dated 18.12.2025, quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

WP(MD)No.1246 of 2026

K.Pavish

... Petitioner

versus

1. The State of Tamil Nadu,
Rep. by its Secretary / Commissioner
Agriculture – Farmer Welfare Department,
Fort St. George,
Chennai – 600 009.

2. The Director of Agriculture,
Directorate of Agriculture,
Ezhilagam,
Chennai – 600 005.

3. The Director of Horticulture,
Directorate of Horticulture and
Plantation Crops,
Ezhilagam,
Chennai – 600 005.

4. The Deputy Director of Horticulture
Sivagangai,
Sivagangai District.

... Respondents

Prayer: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records relating to the impugned G.O.(Ms)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi4(2)) Department dated 30.09.2025, G.O.(Ms)No.288, Agriculture-Farmers Welfare (VeNi4(2)) Department dated 28.11.2025 issued by the 1st respondent and the transfer order issued by the Director of Horticulture in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-10 dated



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

17.12.2025 and the consequential relieving order issued by the 4th respondent Deputy Director in Se.Mu.aa.No.PaNi2/7600/2025-3 dated 18.12.2025, quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

WP(MD)No.1247 of 2026

C.Karthick

... Petitioner

versus

1. The State of Tamil Nadu,
Rep. by its Secretary / Commissioner
Agriculture – Farmer Welfare Department,
Fort St. George,
Chennai – 600 009.

2. The Director of Agriculture,
Directorate of Agriculture,
Ezhilagam,
Chennai – 600 005.

3. The Director of Horticulture,
Directorate of Horticulture and
Plantation Crops,
Ezhilagam,
Chennai – 600 005.

4. The Deputy Director of Horticulture
Sivagangai,
Sivagangai District.

... Respondents



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

Prayer: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records relating to the impugned G.O.(Ms)No.252 Agriculture-Farmers (VeNi 4(2)) Department, dated 30.09.2025 issued by the 1st respondent, quash the same as illegal in so far as the petitioner is concerned.

WP(MD)No.1248 of 2026

S.Nivetha

... Petitioner

versus

1. The State of Tamil Nadu,
Rep. by its Secretary / Commissioner
Agriculture – Farmer Welfare Department,
Fort St. George,
Chennai – 600 009.

2. The Director of Agriculture,
Directorate of Agriculture,
Ezhilagam,
Chennai – 600 005.

3. The Director of Horticulture,
Directorate of Horticulture and
Plantation Crops,
Ezhilagam,
Chennai – 600 005.

4. The Deputy Director of Horticulture
Sivagangai,
Sivagangai District.

... Respondents



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

Prayer: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records relating to the impugned G.O.(Ms)No.252 Agriculture-Farmers (VeNi 4(2)) Department, dated 30.09.2025 issued by the 1st respondent, quash the same as illegal in so far as the petitioner is concerned.

WP(MD)No.1154 of 2026

S.Balamurugan

... Petitioner

versus

1. The State of Tamil Nadu,
Rep. by its Secretary / Commissioner
Agriculture – Farmer Welfare Department,
Fort St. George,
Chennai – 600 009.

2. The Director of Agriculture,
Directorate of Agriculture,
Ezhilagam,
Chennai – 600 005.

3. The Director of Horticulture,
Directorate of Horticulture and
Plantation Crops,
Ezhilagam,
Chennai – 600 005.

4. The Deputy Director of Horticulture
Sivagangai,
Sivagangai District.

... Respondents



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

Prayer: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records relating to the impugned G.O.(Ms)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi4(2)) Department dated 28.11.2025 issued by the 1st respondent and the transfer order issued by the 3rd respondent Director of Horticulture in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-10 dated 17.12.2025 and the consequential relieving order issued by the 4th respondent Deputy Director in Se.Mu.aa.No.PaNi2/7600/2025-9 dated 18.12.2025, quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

For Petitioner : Mr.K.Ragatheesh Kumar
for M/s.Issac Chambers
For Respondents : Mr.Ajmal Khan,
Additional Advocate General
Assisted by
Mr.G.V.Vairam Santhosh,
Additional Government Pleader
in WP(MD)Nos.896,1245 to 1248,
1154 /2026

WP(MD)Nos.1167 to 1176 of 2026

V.Murugan	... Petitioner in W.P.(MD)No.1167 of 2026
R.Nadhiya	... Petitioner in W.P.(MD)No.1168 of 2026
M.Dhanushpandi	... Petitioner in W.P.(MD)No.1169 of 2026
S.Muthumani	... Petitioner in W.P.(MD)No.1170 of 2026
M.Mohamed Idhris Raja	... Petitioner in W.P.(MD)No.1171 of 2026



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

R.Abdul Harish

... Petitioner in

W.P.(MD)No.1172 of 2026

K.Ajith

... Petitioner in

W.P.(MD)No.1173 of 2026

S.Jeyabalan

... Petitioner in

W.P.(MD)No.1174 of 2026

K.Tamil Selvan

... Petitioner in

W.P.(MD)No.1175 of 2026

M.Arjun

... Petitioner in

W.P.(MD)No.1176 of 2026

versus

1. The Agriculture Production Commissioner/
Secretary to Government,
Department of Agriculture,
Secretariat, Fort St. George,
Chennai – 600 009.
2. The Director,
Department of Agriculture,
Ezhilagam, Chepauk,
Chennai – 600 005.
3. The Director,
Department of Horticulture and
Hill Plantation Crops,
Ezhilagam, Chepauk,
Chennai – 600 005.
4. The Deputy Director of Horticulture,
O/o. The Deputy Director of Horticulture,
Madurai District,
Madurai – 625 002.



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

5. The Deputy Director,
O/o. The Deputy Director of Horticulture,
Dindigul District,
Dindigul.

... Respondents in
all W.Ps.

Prayer in W.P.(MD)No.1167/2026: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records pertaining to the impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi 4(2)] Department, dated 30.09.2025 and the consequential impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.288, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)] Department, dated 28.11.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.1, the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-7 dated 17.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.3 and the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.A2/8307/2025(3) dated 18.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No. 4 and quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

Prayer in W.P.(MD)No.1168/2026: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records pertaining to the impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi 4(2)] Department, dated 30.09.2025 and the consequential impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.288, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)] Department, dated 28.11.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.1, the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-7 dated 17.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.3 and the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.A2/8307/2025(12) dated 18.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.4 and quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

Prayer in W.P.(MD)No.1169/2026: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records pertaining to the impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi 4(2)] Department, dated 30.09.2025 and the consequential impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.288, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)] Department, dated 28.11.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.1, the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-7 dated 17.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.3 and the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.A2/8307/2025(9) dated 18.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No. 4 and quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

Prayer in W.P.(MD)No.1170/2026: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records pertaining to the impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi 4(2)] Department, dated 30.09.2025 and the consequential impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.288, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)] Department, dated 28.11.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.1, the



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-7 dated 17.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.3 and the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.A2/8307/2025(7) dated 18.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No. 4 and quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

Prayer in W.P.(MD)No.1171/2026: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records pertaining to the impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi 4(2)] Department, dated 30.09.2025 and the consequential impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.288, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)] Department, dated 28.11.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.1, the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-7 dated 17.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.3 and the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.A2/8307/2025(2) dated 18.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No. 4 and quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

Prayer in W.P.(MD)No.1172/2026: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records pertaining to the impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi 4(2)] Department, dated 30.09.2025 and the consequential impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.288, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)]



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

Department, dated 28.11.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.1, the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-7 dated 17.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.3 and the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.A2/8307/2025(13) dated 18.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.4 and quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

Prayer in W.P.(MD)No.1173/2026: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records pertaining to the impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi 4(2)] Department, dated 30.09.2025 and the consequential impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.288, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)] Department, dated 28.11.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.1, the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-7 dated 17.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.3 and the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.A2/8307/2025(15) dated 18.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.4 and quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

Prayer in W.P.(MD)No.1174/2026: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records pertaining to the impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi 4(2)] Department, dated 30.09.2025 and the consequential impugned order in



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

G.O.(Ms.)No.288, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)] Department, dated 28.11.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.1, the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-7 dated 17.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.3 and the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.A2/8307/2025(10) dated 18.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.4 and quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

Prayer in W.P.(MD)No.1175/2026: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records pertaining to the impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi 4(2)] Department, dated 30.09.2025 and the consequential impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.288, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)] Department, dated 28.11.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.1, the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-7 dated 17.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.3 and the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.A2/8307/2025(8) dated 18.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No. 4 and quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

Prayer in W.P.(MD)No.1175/2026: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying this Court to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records pertaining to the impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.252, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare (VeNi 4(2)]



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

Department, dated 30.09.2025 and the consequential impugned order in G.O.(Ms.)No.288, Agriculture – Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)] Department, dated 28.11.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.1, the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.KaPaNi1/14594/2025-7 dated 17.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.3 and the consequential impugned order in Se.Mu.Order No.A2/8307/2025(11) dated 18.12.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.4 and quash the same as illegal insofar as the petitioner is concerned.

For Petitioner : Mr.T.Lajapathy Roy,
Senior Counsel
for M/s.Roy and Roy Associates
For Respondents : Mr.Ajmal Khan,
Additional Advocate General
assisted by
Mr.G.V.Vairam Santhosh,
Additional Government Pleader
in WP(MD)Nos.1167 to 1176/ 2026

COMMON ORDER

The petitioners are Assistant Horticultural Officers, working at the field level, who were transferred from the existing place of service to other districts pursuant to the implementation of the Government Orders in G.O.Ms.Nos.252, Agriculture - Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)] Department, dated 30.09.2025 and in G.O.Ms.No.288, Agriculture - Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)], Department dated 28.11.2025. These writ



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

petitions have been filed challenging the orders of redeployment, the relieving orders along with the above Government Orders.

2.The Uzhavar Aluvalar Thodarbu Thittam (UATT) scheme was introduced by the government vide GO.Ms.No.264, Agriculture (AP2) Department dated 17.11.2020 with an object of streamlining the field extension visits by the Assistant Agricultural Officers and the Assistant Horticultural Officers and also to improve the dissemination of technical information to the farmers. The impugned Government Order in G.O.Ms.No.252 Agriculture - Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)] Department, dated 30.09.2025 is an improved version of the above scheme.

3.The main grievance of the petitioners, who are working under the Horticulture Department is that they have been deployed to the Agriculture Department to carry out the work of the Assistant Agricultural Officers vide the impugned government orders and that their service conditions would be affected. The respective learned Senior Counsel appearing for the petitioners submit that while the Assistant Agricultural Officers are governed by the Tamil Nadu Agricultural



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

Extension Subordinate Service Rules, the State has framed separate Special Rules for the Tamil Nadu Horticulture Service and the Tamil Nadu Horticulture Subordinate Service. Therefore, the executive instructions and the government orders cannot override the Statutory Service Rules. Further, the respective learned Senior Counsel appearing for the petitioners have also canvassed the following points in support of the writ petitions:

(i)The administrative set up and the nature of work of the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments are different. Therefore, clubbing the Assistant Officers in the departments together in the name of extension officers is unreasonable and not beneficial to the farmers.

(ii)The required qualifications for the Assistant Horticultural Officers is pass in Higher Secondary and two years Diploma Course in Horticulture in the institutions approved by the Tamil Nadu Agriculture University/ Gandhigram Rural University/ Director of Horticulture and Plantation Crops or a Diploma Course in Horticulture awarded by the Annamalai University. This is different from the qualifications required for Assistant Agricultural Officers. Further, the methods to maintain the agricultural and horticultural crops is entirely different and therefore, the



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

Assistant Horticultural Officers would not be capable enough to provide proper guidance with regards to Agriculture.

(iii)The impugned government orders and transfer orders are also irrational and arbitrary in as much as the Assistant Horticultural Officers have been transferred to the other districts and therefore, the Horticulture Department would be weakened in several districts. This would affect the Horticulture farmers at large scale and would affect the production of Horticulture crops.

4.The learned Senior Counsel have also placed reliance on the decisions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Partha Das and others vs. State of Tripura and others [2025 SCC OnLine SC 1844]*** and ***Brij Mohan Lal vs. Union of India [(2012) 6 SCC 502]*** in support of their contention that executive instructions cannot override statutory rules and the state cannot frame policies in an arbitrary manner. Therefore, they pray for appropriate orders.

5.On the other hand, the learned Additional Advocate General appearing for the respondents submits that under the UATT 2.0 scheme



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

introduced vide the impugned government orders, the field officers have been fairly redistributed based on the net cultivable area so that field extension activities can be undertaken in an effective manner. He also submits that the government orders safeguard the administrative seniority, promotion prospects and salary benefits of all the field officers and there is no change in the service conditions as contended by the petitioners. By referring to the common counter affidavits filed by the respondents, he further submits as under:

(i)The UATT 2.0 scheme is a policy decision aimed at strengthening agricultural extension activities, ensuring equitable distribution of work among the field officers and delivering information about technology and machinery to the farmers.

(ii) Prior to the implementation of these government orders, each Assistant Agricultural Officer was expected to cover 8-10 villages and each Assistant Horticultural Officer was expected to cover 10-15 villages. These separate visits resulted in disproportionate workload and also delay in farmers receiving timely information. Therefore, the scheme envisages the redeployment of field extension officer to correct the above inefficiencies and delay so that the field level officers can make visits to



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

an average extent of 1,183 hectares.

WEB COPY

(iii)The scheme was introduced only after detailed consultations with farmer leaders and with the cadre controlling authorities.

(iv)The scheme provides for adequate training and capacity-building programmes and technical assistance would be provided from the Block Level Officers, Assistant Directors and scientists from the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University ensuring that no field level officer is placed in a position beyond their competence.

(v)During the restructuring of the Agriculture and Horticulture departments in the year 2007, the officers and field level functionaries, who were graduates in Agriculture, were transferred to the Horticulture Department. Therefore, many of the Assistant Horticultural Officers in the Tamil Nadu Horticultural Subordinate Service previously worked in the Tamil Nadu Agricultural Subordinate Service and the nomenclature were changed only due to the formation of Special Rules in the Horticulture Department. Further, the Assistant Horticultural Officers, who have studied diploma in Horticulture, includes Agriculture as an ancillary subject in their curriculum and these officers would be given refresher training in Agriculture and Horticulture when required.



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

(vi)The impugned government orders do not change the cadre controlling authority or the departmental structure and only establish a coordination mechanism for the effective implementation of farmer centric welfare schemes. Therefore, the scheme is not arbitrary or unreasonable requiring the intervention of this court.

6.This Court paid its anxious consideration to the rival submissions made and perused the materials placed on record.

7.The Uzhavar Aluvalar Thodarbu Thittam (UATT) 2.0 implemented vide the impugned government orders was introduced with the object of improving the contact between the farmer and the officers of the Agriculture/Horticulture Departments, which would improve the efficiency and productivity of the farmers. It aims to provide technical assistance to the farmers through regular field visits by the Assistant Agricultural Officers and the Assistant Horticultural Officers. Prior to the implementation of the impugned government orders, the officers of Agriculture and Horticulture departments would make separate visits to the farmers and this resulted in inefficiency and also the



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

duplication of efforts. Therefore, all the Assistant Agricultural Officers and Assistant Horticultural Officers have been fairly distributed under this scheme based on the net cultivable area and vested with the responsibility of making field visits to an average extent of 1,183 hectares so as to offset the shortcoming of unequal segregation of jurisdiction which existed previously.

8.The Assistant Agricultural Officers and Assistant Horticultural Officers have been assigned with the following duties as per the annexure provided to G.O.Ms.Nos.252 Agriculture - Farmers Welfare [VeNi4(2)] Department, dated 30.09.2025:

(1)Field Level Visits should be conducted to assess the situation with regards to the crops, the farming techniques to be followed, the use of pesticides, crop diseases and appropriate advice should be provided to the farmers.

(2)Officials should meet with all the farmers of the village and enquire with about the issues they face. If any specific issue is expressed by any farmer, then they should be provided with required advice on the very same day.



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

(3)The required training with regards to the use of farming techniques should be provided to farmers within 15 days of approaching the contact centre. They should be provided with information regarding the schemes introduced by the state government.

(4)Weather related announcements should be provided to the farmers once every 15 days.

(5)The field level officers are responsible for the proper implementation of the schemes related to farmers in the villages allotted to them. They are responsible for providing awareness to farmers about government schemes, selection and registration of beneficiaries and monitoring whether the schemes are actually useful to the beneficiaries.

(6)The field level officers are also required to upload the details regarding their visits such as the number of farmers visited and the information about farming techniques and pesticides provided to them. Such details would be monitored using real time technology and dashboard.

9.The main contention of the petitioners, who are working under the Horticulture Department, is that they are now deployed to the



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

Agriculture Department to carry out the work of the Assistant Agricultural Officers. Therefore, they claim that their service conditions are affected and they are also not equipped to meet out the requirements of the farmers with regards to agricultural activities. The apprehension of the petitioners have already been addressed in the government orders itself, as they safeguard the seniority, promotion prospects, salary benefit and service benefits of all field level officers. In fact, the government orders specifically provide that there would be no change with regard to the leave sanctioning and salary disbursing authority and that promotion and retirement aspects would be dealt with as per the procedures already in place. It also provides that disciplinary action would be taken as per the procedure already in place and there would no change with regards to the reporting authority. Therefore, there is no change in the departmental structure or cadre management and all services conditions are continued as per the procedures already in force.

10.The scheme only provides for a co-ordinating mechanism so that the field level visits are more effective. Further, the impugned government orders provide that committees would also be set up at the



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

district level to coordinate the activities of various officers and provide expert advice, if required. During the restructuring of the Agriculture and Horticulture departments in the year 2007, many field officers working at the Agriculture Department were transferred to the Horticulture Department and they are now serving as Assistant Horticultural Officers. Hence, the officers are having the required knowledge and it is also claimed by the respondents that the officers would also be provided with refresher training in agriculture.

11.Further, these government orders were also challenged by the Tamil Nadu Assistant Horticulture Officers Association and the Tamil Nadu Horticultural Officers Welfare Association before the Principal Seat of this court in WP.Nos.35946 and 50416 of 2025 and 2987 of 2026. This Court by order dated 03.03.2026 has dismissed the writ petitions as under:

“29. The main grievance canvassed on behalf of the petitioner is that the AAOs in the Horticulture Department are interchanged with the Agriculture Department and that they are made to do the work of the Agriculture Department. In essence, the cadre of the staff



WEB COPY



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

members of the Horticulture Department is sought to be made over to the Agriculture Department and, therefore, there is cadre change, which is impermissible according to the service rules governing the different departments.

30. The scheme envisaged under the aforesaid Government Orders relates to the contact between the farmer and the officers of the Agriculture/Horticulture Departments, which is for better improving the efficiency and productivity of the farmers. Though it is the stand of the petitioner that agriculture and horticulture are two different faculties and both require specialised training and education and one is not interchangeable with the other, there is no quarrel with regard to the said position. Agriculture and Horticulture are two different faculties relating to cultivation, but farming is a unified action, which is undertaken in both agriculture and horticulture. May be the manner in which farming is done may vary slightly, but farming is the predominant activity in both and the persons, who undertake the work are predominantly farmers. Therefore, differentiating agriculture and horticulture in terms of farming may not be proper and, therefore, if the scheme is floated and the officers of both the departments have been utilised for the purpose of educating the farmers and also providing them



WEB COPY



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

with support to increase their effectiveness and productivity, which in turn will have a lasting impact on the growth and sustainable development of the community, such an act undertaken by the Government cannot be said to be impermissible or against the provisions of the relevant service rules.

31. In this backdrop, this Court perused the Government Orders, which have been issued and which are put in issue before this Court through which the Horticulture officers as also the Agriculture Officers have been utilised to carry on unified work of increasing the efficiency of the farmers and also to help the farming community, there is a clear cut prescription in the manner in which the utilisation of the officers of the two different departments have been planned to be undertaken.

32. In fact, there is a specific provision in the Government Orders, which make it necessary for creating a group for each taluk which is to be manned by the respective Assistant Director from both the Horticulture and Agriculture Departments. Therefore, the scheme clearly enumerates that the staff members and officers of both the departments will be put to work under their respective heads and that there is no transgression of



work or the authority to whom they would be reporting. Therefore, whatever work that is entrusted to be performed by the said staff/officers relates to a farming activity, which squarely falls within the activity, which is to be undertaken by the said officers and the expert studies, which have been undergone by the said officers would not in any way affect the functioning of the said officers, when the scheme only envisages that better efficiency in handling technologies and upliftment of farming sector alone is the criteria under the scheme.

33. The last of the contentions advanced on behalf of the petitioner relate to change in cadre and the non-application of the respective service law to the said cadre, which strikes at the service condition of the petitioners.

34. In this regard, a look at the Government Orders, which have been issued clearly shows that administrative directions have been issued governing the working conditions of the staff members of both the agriculture and horticulture department. A perusal of the same reveals that the service conditions, leave, salary, promotion, etc., of the staff members of the respective departments are safeguarded and have been retained with the authorities under the respective departments, meaning



WEB COPY



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

thereby, that there is no transgression of the responsibilities of one department by the other department. Therefore, the apprehension raised by the petitioners with regard to alteration of their service condition is clearly a misconceived notion.

35. Further, it is to be pointed out that based on intelligent differential, persons from two cadres can be allowed to discharge a particular work and there could be no embargo on adopting such a course so long as the different cadres are maintained in the same sphere without there being any transgression. In the present case, the Government Orders clearly stipulates that the service conditions of the different cadres will remain the same and there will be no transgression and the authority to whom they report along with their service conditions relating to appointment, promotion, transfer would be the same and such being the specific case, the contention advanced on behalf of the petitioners cannot be countenanced and the decisions relied on, on behalf of the petitioners, which have been noted above, would not be of any benefit to advance the case of the petitioners.

36. The scheme that has been floated by the Government is for the betterment of the farming



WEB COPY



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

community, which would, in turn, lead to the betterment of the standard of living and livelihood of the common man and only with that object in mind, the scheme has been framed and the agriculture and horticulture departments, which are entrusted with the task related to farming have been roped in to train the farmers and make them utilise the beneficial technological innovations for better productivity. May be the number of staff in the agriculture department is much more than those in the horticulture department, but when the service sought to be done through the scheme envisaged in the Government Orders is one that squarely falls within the activity which is also being done by the Horticulture Department, merely because the farmers, who do agriculture have been sought to be equipped by the members from the horticulture department, it cannot be said that there is change in work and cadre, which is not what the Government Order reflects. May be the work turn out in the agriculture department is much more than what is done by the horticulture department due to the vast expanse of the lands in which agricultural activity is being undertaken. However, when the Government, as a policy decision, for the betterment of its citizen has crafted a scheme in and by which the farming community is targeted to be uplifted, this Court cannot scuttle the



WEB COPY



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

process by pricking holes in the scheme and make the same unachievable. What is sought to be done by the petitioner is only to put spokes in the wheels of proper movement of the scheme, which has been devised for the upliftment of the farmers. Therefore, this Court, for the reasons aforesaid, does not find any infirmity or perversity or arbitrariness in the Government Orders impugned herein and the said Government Orders are also not violative of Article 14 of the Constitution of India and, therefore, the same does not require any interference at the hands of this Court.

37.In the result, all the writ petitions fail and, accordingly, the same are dismissed. Consequently, connected miscellaneous petitions are closed. There shall be no order as to costs.”

12.This Court is also in agreement with the above findings rendered in WP.Nos.35946 and 50416 of 2025 and 2987 of 2026, vide order dated 03.03.2026.

13.The state government has taken a policy decision to streamline the field level visits of the Assistant Agricultural Officers and Assistant Horticultural Officers. In line with the above decision, some of the



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

officers have been redeployed to other districts. The same has been done only for better implementation of the farming schemes. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has time and again held that the courts cannot interfere in the policy decision of the State, unless it is established that the same is irrational, arbitrary or unreasonable. The petitioners have not made out any such circumstance warranting the interference of this court in these writ petitions. The petitioners, being government servants, have to realise their responsibility to implement the schemes of the government effectively by making field visits and they cannot claim a vested right to serve in one particular place where they are comfortable.

14.Considering the fact that the object with which the scheme was introduced requires re-deployment of the officers and that similar writ petitions were already dismissed by this court, this court is not inclined to entertain these writ petitions. Accordingly, these writ petitions are dismissed. Consequently connected miscellaneous petitions are closed and the interim orders already granted stand vacated. No costs.

23.03.2026

DSK

32/34



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

To

WEB COPY

1. The Agriculture Production Commissioner/
Secretary to Government,
Department of Agriculture,
Secretariat, Fort St. George,
Chennai – 600 009.
2. The Director,
Department of Agriculture,
Ezhilagam, Chepauk,
Chennai – 600 005.
3. The Director,
Department of Horticulture and
Hill Plantation Crops,
Ezhilagam, Chepauk,
Chennai – 600 005.
4. The Deputy Director of Horticulture,
O/o. The Deputy Director of Horticulture,
Madurai District,
Madurai – 625 002.
5. The Deputy Director,
O/o. The Deputy Director of Horticulture,
Dindigul District, Dindigul.
6. The Director of Horticulture,
Directorate of Horticulture and
Plantation Crops,
Ezhilagam,
Chennai – 600 005.
7. The Deputy Director of Horticulture
Sivagangai,
Sivagangai District.



WEB COPY



WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248, 1154, 1167 to 1176 of 2026

B.PUGALENDHI, J.

DSK

WP(MD)Nos.896, 1245 to 1248,
1154 and 1167 to 1176 of 2026

23.03.2026