



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

WEB COPY

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 16.02.2026

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE KRISHNAN RAMASAMY

W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

and

All connected Miscellaneous Petitions

W.P.(MD)No.3978 of 2026:

Ganesan

... Petitioner

Vs.

1.The District Collector,
Kanniyakumari District,
At Nagercoil.

2.The Commissioner,
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department,
119, Uthamar Gandhi Road,
Thirumurthy Nagar, Nungambakkam,
Chennai – 600 006.

3.The Joint Commissioner / The Executive Officer,
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department,
Suchindram, Kanniyakumari District.

1/16



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

4.The Commissioner,
Kanniyakumari Municipality,
Kanniyakumari District.

5.The Manager,
Arulmigu Bhagavathiyamman Thirukoil,
Kanniyakumari District.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying to issue a Writ of Certiorari, to call for the records relating with the impugned notice dated 23.01.2026 in Na.Ka.No. 2852/2025/D3 issued by the third respondent and quash the same as illegal.

For Petitioner : Mr.T.Ramesh
For Respondents 1 & 2 : Mr.K.Balasubramani
Special Government Pleader
For Respondents 3 & 5 : Mr.R.Shankar Ganesh
For Respondent No.4 : Mr.H.Arumugam
[In all Writ Petitions]

COMMON ORDER

Challenge has been made against the impugned orders dated 23.01.2026 passed by the third respondent.



WEB COPY

2.By consent, these Writ Petitions are taken up for disposal at the admission stage itself.

3.Learned Counsel appearing for the petitioners would submit that in a batch of Writ Petitions, this Court has passed the following order:

“2.The learned counsel appearing for the respective petitioners would submit that the Manager, Arulmigu Bhagavathiammam Temple (hereinafter called as “Temple”) had constructed buildings in the form of shops in the subject premises and leased out the same to the respective petitioners. Now, the Joint Commissioner, HR&CE Department made an attempt to remove the petitioners's shops by stating that the said buildings are unauthorized constructions and in this regard, he had issued notices to the petitioners directing them to vacate the premises and handover the possession to the Temple Authorities within a period of 3 days.

3.Further, they would submit that the properties were constructed by the Temple and leased out to the petitioners and now, the Temple is in the process of making an application for getting



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

regularisation, since the building was constructed without approval. Under these circumstances, without providing any opportunities to the petitioners, the Kanyakumari Municipality had proceeded to demolish the constructions made by the Temple, in which the petitioners are running shops and duly paying the rent.

4.Further, the learned counsel appearing for the Temple would also submit that in this case, there is no need for getting any approval since these constructions were put up few decades ago. After all, these are all leased out properties, for which, the petitioners are duly paying the lease amount.

5.By referring the order passed by the Hon'ble Division Bench in WP(MD)No.17868 of 2014 dated 09.12.2025, he would submit that the said order was passed for removal of unauthorised constructions made by a particular occupant on the ground of encroachment of the Temple property without obtaining any approval. However, taking into cognizance of the said order, the Commissioner, Kanyakumari Municipality had applied the same yard stick for all the shop owners, to whom the constructions were leased out by the Temple, and issued the impugned notice to vacate the premises. Hence, he requests this Court to quash the



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

proceedings initiated by the Commissioner, Kanyakumari Municipality. In support of his contentions, he referred to the order passed by the Hon'ble Apex Court in Civil Appeal Nos.3461 to 2505 of 2019 (S.Kumar vs. The Commissioner and others).

6.On the other hand, the learned Special Government Pleader for the Commissioner, Kanyakumari Municipality, had strongly opposed the submissions made by the petitioners and would submit that the constructions were made by the Temple without obtaining any approval and hence, the Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court, vide the order dated 09.12.2025 in WP(MD).No.17868 of 2014, issued a direction for removal of unauthorised constructions. Subsequently, vide order dated 19.01.2026, the Hon'ble Division Bench had granted time limit for removal of the said unauthorised constructions till 23.01.2026 and the same was extended till tomorrow (30.01.2026). In such case, the Commissioner, Kanyakumari Municipality, is bound to comply the said order, otherwise it would amount to contempt of the Court. Hence, he would suggest that if the petitioners are aggrieved over the said notice, they can very well file an appeal before the Hon'ble Apex Court.



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

7.Further, he would submit that the order passed by the Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court would apply to all the persons, who are running shops in the unauthorised constructions. In these cases, the petitioners and the Temple had admitted that the buildings at the subject premises were constructed without obtaining any approval. When such being the case, if these petitions are entertained, the same will certainly amount to violation of the order dated 19.01.2026 passed by the Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court. Hence, he prays for dismissal of these petitions.

8.Heard all the respective learned counsel and perused the entire materials available on record.

9.In the cases on hand, upon perusal of the affidavits and other relevant documents furnished by the petitioners, it appears that the constructions at the subject premises were put up by the Temple in the form of shops and the same were leased out to the petitioners. The petitioners are in enjoyment of the said shops and running their business, for which, they are duly paying the rents to the Temple. There is no dispute on the above aspect.



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

10. Under these circumstances, pursuant to the order dated 19.01.2026 passed by the Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court in WP(MD)No.17868 of 2014, now, the Commissioner, Kanyakumari Municipality is taking steps to demolish the unauthorised buildings, which were constructed without approval and leased out to the petitioners by the Temple.

11. Upon perusal, it appears that in the said Division Bench order, it has been categorically stated that inspite of the notice issued on 11.11.2025, no steps were taken by the petitioners and the Temple to remove the unauthorised constructions and vacate the premises. Under these circumstances only, a direction was issued to the Commissioner, Kanyakumari Municipality, to take an immediate action for removing the unauthorised constructions and file a report on or before 23.01.2026. The said order is extracted hereunder :

"The status report file by the Commissioner, Kanyakumari District, indicates that many of the unauthorised constructions particularly put up by the temple has not been removed in spite of the notice issued on 11.11.2025. Immediate action for removing the unauthorized



construction should be taken and report be filed on or before 23.01.2026. Post on 23.01.2026."

12.A perusal of the above makes it clear that the Commissioner, Kanyakumari Municipality had already put up a notice on 11.11.2025 to the petitioners. In spite of the same, no steps were taken for removal of the said unauthorised constructions.

13.Further, the fact remains that the said constructions are unauthorised constructions and the same were put up without obtaining any approval. According to the Commissioner, Kanyakumari Municipality, this aspect was already brought into the knowledge of the Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court, wherein the requests made by the petitioners were rejected after due consideration of all the aspects. Under these circumstances only, pursuant to the order passed by the Hon'ble Division Bench, the 4th respondent had issued the impugned notice dated 23.01.2026. Aggrieved over the same, the petitioners filed the present petitions.

14.As rightly contended by the Commissioner, Kanyakumari Municipality, the Hon'ble Division



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

Bench of this Court had already duly considered all the aspects raised by the petitioners and the Temple while passing the orders dated 09.12.2025 & 19.01.2026 for removal of unauthorised constructions at the subject premises. When such being the case, now, it is not proper for this Court to entertain these petitions and interfere with the impugned notice, which was issued by the Commissioner, Kanyakumari Municipality, pursuant to the aforesaid order dated 19.01.2026.

15.Further, a submission was also made on behalf of the street vendors. At this juncture, this Court feels that it would appropriate to make it clear that the order passed by the Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court is only with regard to the illegal and unauthorised constructions at the subject premises. When such being the case, it is needless to state that the interest of the street vendors, who are running their shops at the empty spaces, will not at all get affected by virtue of the said order.

16.A reference was made by the petitioner to the order passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Civil Appeal Nos.3461-3505. The relevant portion of the said order reads as follows:

“6. These appellants individually claim that they have been doing their



WEB COPY



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

business either as licensee or/and with the permission of the Temple Authorities. In substance, the claim of the appellants is that they have been in lawful possession of the land for doing their business and, therefore, the respondents-the State Authorities and the Temple Management cannot dispossess any of them from their individual shops without following the due process of law.

7 to 11

12. In our considered opinion, the issue raised in these appeals is governed by the provisions of the Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act, 1959 (for short "the Act, 1959). Chapter VII of the Act, 1959 deals with the cases of encroachment on the land belonging to religious institutions. This chapter consists of Sections 77 to 85.

13. Section 77 of the Act, 1959 deals with transfer of lands appurtenant to or adjoining religious institutions prohibited except in special cases. Section 78 deals with encroachment by persons on land or building belonging to charitable or religious institution or endowment and the eviction of encroachers. Section 79 deals



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

with mode of eviction on failure of removal of the encroachment as directed by the Joint Commissioner. Section 79-A deals with encroachment by groups of persons on 6 land belonging to charitable religious institutions and their eviction. Section 79-B deals with penalty for offences in connection with encroachment. Section 79-C deals with recovery of moneys due to religious institution, as arrears of land revenue. Section 80 deals with eviction of lessees, licensees or mortgagees with possession in certain cases. Section 81 provides for an appeal against Joint Commissioner or the orders of Deputy Commissioner passed under Section 80. Section 82 provides for payment of Compensation. Section 83 deals with constitution of Tribunal. Section 84 deals with suits against the award. Section 85 provides for protection of action taken under Chapter VII of the Act, 1959.”

17.The above order had been passed in favour of the occupant since the respondents therein had failed to follow the due process of law. However, in this case, the Commissioner, Kanyakumari Municipality, had already provided



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

an opportunity to the petitioners by virtue of notice dated 11.11.2025 and the said aspect was duly recorded in the order dated 19.01.2026 passed by the Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court. After considering all the aspects, the order for removal of unauthorised constructions came to be passed. In such case, the question of not following the due process of law will not at all come into picture and hence, the said case law will not be applicable to the present petitions."

4.Learned Counsel for the petitioner referring to paragraph No.15 of the order would submit that the petitioners are street vendors and only open space was let out by the temple. This aspect was considered by this Court in the petitioners' case in W.P. (MD)No.13877 of 2022 and passed the following order:

"8.Considering the submissions and on perusal of the materials, it is seen that the petitioners representation is under consideration. The primary income of the temple is by letting out the open space for small traders. The petitioners admittedly carrying on their business from the year 1996. the only objection appears to be that the petitioners have put up permanent structures which is in gross violation and contrary to the licence



condition. Further, the Government had a proposal for “Swadesh Darshan” in Kanyakumari District which is a policy decision and for successful implementation of the policy decision, the petitioners cannot be an obstructors. In such view of the matter, the Commissioner, H.R.&C.E. Department, if needed to constitute a Committee, and take decision, otherwise to take a decision of the petitioners representation without further delay, preferably within a period of six weeks from the date of receipt of a copy of this order.”

5.Therefore, learned Counsel for the petitioners would submit that they come under the exclusion category as observed by this Court in paragraph No.8 of the above order.

6.This Court is of the view that if the petitioners are the street vendors and only open space has been let out, in such case, the above order passed will not apply and the exclusive clause mentioned in paragraph No.15 will apply.



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

WEB COPY

7. Accordingly, observing the same, these Writ Petitions stand dismissed. There shall be no order as to costs. Consequently, all connected miscellaneous petitions are closed.

16.02.2026

Index: Yes/No

Internet: Yes/No

Neutral Citation: Yes/No

MR



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

WEB COPY

To

1.The District Collector,
Kanniyakumari District,
At Nagercoil.

2.The Commissioner,
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department,
119, Uthamar Gandhi Road,
Thirumurthy Nagar, Nungambakkam,
Chennai – 600 006.

3.The Joint Commissioner / The Executive Officer,
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department,
Suchindram, Kanniyakumari District.

4.The Commissioner,
Kanniyakumari Municipality,
Kanniyakumari District.

5.The Manager,
Arulmigu Bhagavathiyamman Thirukoil,
Kanniyakumari District.



WEB COPY



W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

KRISHNAN RAMASAMY, J.

MR

W.P.(MD)Nos.3978 to 4010 of 2026

16.02.2026