



W.P.(MD)No.35521 of 2025

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

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DATED: 29.01.2026

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE **DR.JUSTICE G. JAYACHANDRAN**
AND
THE HONOURABLE **MR.JUSTICE K.K. RAMAKRISHNAN**

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Karthick Kannan

... Petitioner

Vs.

- 1.The State of Tamil Nadu Rep by its:
The Chief Secretary,
Tourism, Culture & Hindu Religious and Charitable
Endowments Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-600 009.
- 2.The Commissioner,
Hindu Religious & Charitable Endowments Department,
119, Uthamar Gandhi Salai,
Nungambakkam, Chennai-600 034.
- 3.The joint Commissioner,
HR &CE Department, Nagercoil,
Kanniyakumari District.
- 4.The Executive Officer,
Sri Thanumalayan Temple,
Suchindram, Kanniyakumari District.
- 5.The Director,
Tamil Nadu Archaeology Department,
Tamil Valarchi Valagam,



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Tamil Salai,
Egmore, Chennai-600 008.

6.The District Collector,
Kanniyakumari District,
Collectorate, Nagercoil-629 001.

7.The Superintendent of Police,
Kanniyakumari District,
Office of the Superintendent of Police,
Nagercoil-629 001.

8.Mr.Sanjay ... Respondents

PRAYER:- Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, to issue a Writ of Mandamus, directing the respondents 1 to 7 to constitute a Heritage Expert Committee consisting of Tamil Nadu Archaeology Dept., HR & CE Heritage Wing, IIT/Anna University Civil Heritage Engineers, and District authorities to scientifically assess and restore the Suchindram Sri Thanumalayan Temple Teppakulam to its original 14th Century design and consider and dispose of the petitioner's representation dated 18.11.2025 to the respondents within the time limit that may be stipulated by this Court.

For Petitioner	: Mr.W.Cleetus
For R1,R2,5&6	: Mr.P.Thilak Kumar, Govt., Pleader
For R3 to R4	: Mr.R.Shankar Ganesh
For R7	: Mr.K.Gnanasekaran Govt, Advocate (Crl.side)



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ORDER

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Alleging that under the guise of renovation of Temple Tank, the Temple Tank is being damaged, the present writ petition is filed.

2.This Court, after pursuing the averments made in the affidavit, passed the following order, dated 11.12.2025:

“Public Interest Litigation filed being aggrieved by the act of the respondents in damaging the 14th century Teppakulam (Temple tank) at Suchindram Sri Thanumalayan Temple under the guise of renovation.

2.According to the writ petitioner, the HR&CE Department, under the guise of renovating the Teppakulam had engaged a Contractor to remove the ancient stones and damaged wall unmindful of the Heritage Protection Law. Though it was assured by the respondents that damaged portion of the Teppakulam will be restored, no action so far has been taken and therefore, a representation dated 18.11.2025 was given to the respondents for appropriate action including constituting an expert committee in consultation with Engineers so as to restore the originality of the Teppakulam.

3.The learned standing counsel for the respondents 3 and 4, namely, Joint Commissioner and



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Executive Officer, HR&CE Department, submitted that the Joint Commissioner has submitted a report to the District Collector stating that Teppakulam wall got damaged during the course of de-silting and thereafter expert committee has been constituted and the report is awaited. On receipt of the expert committee report, necessary estimation will be prepared and the Teppakulam will be restored.

4.From the records, we find that on 28.09.2024, tender for renovating the Teppakulam was confirmed and consequently vide communication dated 12.03.2024, the Contractor by name Shri Sanjay, Shanti Constructions, Panchalingapuram, Kanyakumari District was identified as a Contractor for work estimation of Rs.32,81,174/-. One of the tender condition is that the renovation work must be carried out without affecting the ancient heritage nature of the structure. Further one of the conditions specifically mandates that structure design of the work to be carried out after obtaining necessary certificate from the Structural Engineers (refer vide Commissioner letter No. 31204/G1/2023 dated 16.06.2023 as per the temple renovation in January 2023 edition). The communication of the Joint Commissioner to the District Collector, Kanyakumari District dated 21.11.2025 does not reveal that the work has been carried out by the contractor after getting certificate from the Structural Engineer as contemplated in the tender condition. We find that only after



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causing damage to the Teppakulam and uproar from the public, the HR and CE Department had sought for the advice from experts in the Public Works Department as well as the Anna University and we also understand that till date, the report has not been received and only temporary arrangement to prevent further damage for the Teppakulam is carried out by the HR & CE Department.

5.This is a classic case how the HR&CE department ruined the ancient structure under the guise of renovation. Even after public uproar, they are not sensitive to the issue but protracting the restoration process without any reason, which has prompted the writ petitioner to approach this Court.

6.The respondents are directed to file an action taken report including the action against the Contractor, who has caused damage to the ancient structure and the officials responsible for not following the tender condition without ensuring the protection of the ancient structure. Action taken report to be filed on or before 08.01.2026. Post the matter on 08.01.2026.”

3.Pursuant to the above said order, the Joint Commissioner, HR&CE, Kanniyakumari Distgrict, has filed a status report dated 07.01.2026, wherein he has explained the reasons for the damage to the tank and also submitted that steps are taken to get reports and clearance



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from the Archaeology Department and other authorities and thereafter, tenders will be floated for completing the renovation work. It would also stated in the status report that earlier tenderer did not properly execut the work.

4.Today when the matter is listed again for assessing the progress, a second status report has been filed wherein it is stated as follows:

“5.I respectfully submit that after the fateful collapse of the wall the stones of the cut stone masonry walls are document and no stone removed from the tank so far. It is further submitted that there was no Perumal statue in the maiyamandam and the statue partly sunk in the water is not the statue stood in the mandabam as alleged by the petitioner and the said statute is a damaged one thrown by some strangers according to their beliefs. Since renovation works stalled the tank has been filled with water and hence the statue again sunk in the water, and when we were taking steps to remove the statue, we were not able to remove the same due to heavy water and slit in the tank. The earlier tender already sanctioned for renovation of tank has been cancelled and now new tender has been floated after completion tender process during the course of renovation the said Perumal statue will be removed and preserved by following Agama Rules.



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6. Now we floated the tender through publication on 08.01.2026 in Dinamani Tamil Daily Decon Chronicle in English Daily and we have received bids from two tenderers and among them one R.B.Rahul declared as successful bidder on 28.01.2026. Now we have submitted all particulars before the on Commissioner, Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments tomorrow i.e., 30.01.2026 to approve the tender and the same is under scrutinization. Based on the approval, the renovation works will be completed expeditiously as possible before commencement of Theppam Festival.”

5. Across the Bar, it is stated by the learned counsel that the Theppam Festival of the Temple is scheduled to be conducted during the Tamil month of Chithirai and confirms that the renovation work is proposed to be completed before the said Festival.

6. Recording the same, this Writ Petition stands disposed of. No costs.

[G.J., J.] & [K.K.R.K., J.]
29.01.2026

Index : Yes/No
Internet : Yes
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DR.G. JAYACHANDRAN, J.
AND
K.K. RAMAKRISHNAN, J.

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To

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