

Date of reserved for orders :

Date of pronouncement :

Date of uploading :

APHC010219532026



**IN THE HIGH COURT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
AT AMARAVATI
(Special Original Jurisdiction)**

[3457]TUESDAY, THE 14th DAY OF JULY 2026**PRESENT****THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE HARINATH.N****WRIT PETITION NO: 10964/2026****Between:**

1.MAA ARTS, REP. BY ITS PROPRIETOR, CH. RAVI KUMAR, S/O. SATYAM BABU, AGED ABOUT 54 YEARS, R/O.D.NO.26-2-33, ANDHRA RATNA ROAD, BESIDE RAJ YUVRAJ THEATRE GANDHI NAGAR, VIJAYAWADA, NTR DISTRICT. PETITIONER

...PETITIONER**AND**

- 1.THE STATE OF AP, REP. BY ITS PRI. SECRETARY, MUNICIPAL-ADMINISTRATION AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT- DEPARTMENT, SECRETARIAT, VELAGAPUDI, AMARAVATHI, GUNTUR DISTRICT. 522237
- 2.THE VIJAYAWADA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, REP BY ITS COMMISSIONER, VIJAYAWADA, NTR DISTRICT. 520001
- 3.THE CHIEF CITY PLANNER, VIJAYAWADA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, VIJAYAWADA, NTR DISTRICT. 520001
- 4.THE ASSISTANT CITY PLANNER, , VIJAYAWADA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, VIJAYAWADA, NTR DISTRICT.

...RESPONDENT(S):

Petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed therewith, the High Court may be pleased to issue a Writ, Order or direction more particularly one in the nature of Writ of Mandamus declaring the action, things and Deeds of Respondents in issuing the Final Order in Rc.G 1-119463/2024 dated 17-04-2026 issued by 3RD Respondent by directing the Petitioner Firm to remove all the LED Display Devices within 24 hours from the receipt of the Final order dated 17-04-2026 (received on 21-04- 2026), which is Illegal, Irregular, Arbitrary, unfair, discrimination, unconstitutional, against to the Principles of Natural Justice, in violation of the Andhra Pradesh Regulation and Control of Display Dives (Promotion of Products and Services) in Urban Local Bodies Rules, 2025 as

well as provisions of the Andhra Pradesh Municipal Corporation Act, 1955 and also in violation of Article 14, 19 (1) (g), 21 and 300-A of Constitution of India consequently direct the Respondents not to remove the LED Display Devices (29) erected by the Petitioner Firm in the permitted locations and to pass

IA NO: 1 OF 2026

Petition under Section 151 CPC praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed in support of the petition, the High Court may be pleased to Suspend the Final Order in Rc.G 1-119463/2024 dated 17-04-2026 issued by 3RD Respondent in directing the Respondents not to remove the LED Display Devices (29) erected by the Petitioner Firm pending disposal of main Writ Petition and pass

IA NO: 2 OF 2026

Petition under Section 151 CPC praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed in support of the petition, the High Court may be pleased May be pleased to direct the Respondents not to obstruct/object for erection 6 new Display Devices as well as for re-erection/restore of 4 Display Devices, thereby direct not to remove the existing LEDs Display Device Boards, further direct the Respondent Authorities to handover the removed three LEDs Display Device Boards pending disposal of the main Writ Petition and to pass

IA NO: 3 OF 2026

Petition under Section 151 CPC praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed in support of the petition, the High Court may be pleased May be pleased to receive the Additional Affidavit by raising additional plea to form part of the original Affidavit filed in support of the Writ Petition in W.P.No.10964/2026 in the interest of Justice and pass

Counsel for the Petitioner:

1. NARASIMHA RAO GUDISEVA

Counsel for the Respondent(S):

1. GP MUNICIPAL ADMN AND URBAN DEV AP

2. S.V.S.S. SIVARAM SC For VMC

ORDER:

1. The petitioner is in the business of displaying advertisement boards and has been in the business for the last 35 years. The petitioner is also in the business of erecting LED display devices and, in that context, has approached the second respondent, seeking permission to install the devices at the specified locations as permitted by the second respondent corporation. It is submitted that the petitioner has applied for grant of permission for displaying 29 LED display devices at the specified location as specified by the respondent No. 2. It is also submitted that the petitioner firm submitted the applications in the month of September 2025 for erection of the 29 LED display devices. It is also submitted that the second respondent has granted the requisite permission to the petitioner for erecting the LED display boards on various dates from 24.11.2025 to 27.02.2026. It is also submitted that the petitioner has also obtained the requisite power connections to the LED display devices, which are in operation.

2. It is submitted that the Third respondent has issued a show cause notice dated 11.04.2026 holding that the LED display devices which are erected do not comply with the norms and as such treated them as unauthorised erections and issued show cause notices calling upon the petitioner to submit explanation along with the supporting documentary evidence. The issue of structural stability was raised by the 2nd respondent. It is submitted that the petitioner submitted a detailed explanation, which was acknowledged by the second respondent. It is also submitted that the

petitioner had furnished the structural stability certificates for the erected display devices and also expressed the willingness for joint inspection of the erected display devices.

3. It is submitted that the petitioner was granted permission to erect the display boards from November 2025, and the petitioner erected the LED display devices as and when the required preparatory work was completed. The petitioner also submitted an explanation to the second respondent, duly bringing to the notice of the second respondent that the second respondent cannot call upon the petitioner for paying the license fee from April 2025 onwards till March 2026 as the petitioner had not applied for the permissions for erecting the LED display devices in the month of April 2025. The petitioner has submitted an application for permission, and the permissions were granted on various dated from 27.11.2025 to 27.02.2026. As such, there was no justification in the respondents calling upon the petitioners to pay for the period during which they did not exist on ground under a valid permission issued by the second respondent.

4. It is submitted that the second respondent has issued the impugned notice dated 17.04.2026, whereby the earlier demand notices are also referred to, and it is observed that there are deficiencies in structural compliance, apart from the petitioner being alleged to have not remitted the full fee within a stipulated period of time and erection of display devices at locations not covered under the applied areas, including prohibited central

mediums. The respondents have resorted to high-handed acts of ignoring the explanation submitted by the petitioner. removing the display devices without following the standard technical process of deactivating them and removing them in a technical manner for re-erecting them. However, the respondents have deployed their unskilled labour and removed one display device.

5. It is submitted that the petitioner has also filed Writ Appeal 503 of 2026, aggrieved by this Court's denial of interim protection. The learned Division Bench of this Court in WP WA 503 of 2026 directed the petitioner herein to deposit 50% of the amount demanded under the impugned notice within a period of 2 weeks. The petitioner was further directed to furnish the structural stability certificates in accordance with the rules. The petitioner could not deposit the 50% amount on account of the petitioner falling ill and being hospitalized; as such, the petitioner sought extension of time, and the learned Division Bench in IA No. 3 of 2026 in WA 503 of 2026 permitted the petitioner to deposit the amounts in terms of the order dated 23.04.2026 within a period of 2 weeks from 07.05.2026. It is submitted that the petitioner has complied with the orders of the Division Bench and also submitted the structural stability certificates. It is submitted that the second respondent is also aware that the petitioner has not generated any revenue; however, the petitioner has paid the amounts demanded by the second respondent. It is also submitted that 3 of the newly erected LED display devices.

6. Learned standing counsel appearing for the second respondent has filed a counter affidavit. It is submitted that the petitioner has approached this court with unclean hands and suppressing of material facts. It is submitted that the petitioner has failed to submit the structural stability certificate and also erected the display devices on the central median, which are not permitted. It is submitted that the petitioner erected only 12 boards prior to filing of the writ petition, for which permissions had lapsed on 31.03.2026. It is also stated in the counter that the petitioner failed to pay the demanded amount, and, as such, the final notice dated 17.04.2026 was issued. It is also submitted that the petitioner has instead challenged the impugned notices, rather than complying with the requirements of the second respondent and paying the amount. It is submitted that the petitioner would be liable to pay the license fee for the financial year from 2025 to March 2026 as per the resolution of the council of the 2nd respondent. It is submitted that, unmindful of the permissions granted to the petitioner in the month of November 2025 to February 2026, the petitioner would be liable for payment of license fee for the financial year 2025 to 2026 in pursuance of the resolution passed by the council. It is also submitted that on 24.05.2026, on account of heavy gale of winds, one of the sign boards erected collapsed and the same was reported to the Jurisdictional Police Station.

7. It is submitted that the petitioner thereafter voluntarily removed three digital devices. It is submitted that the respondent got the structural stability report secured from the competent structural engineers of the Civil

Engineering Department of V R Siddhartha School of Engineering on 22.06.2026. It is submitted that the petitioner had submitted the structural stability certificate issued by the licensed engineer of the second respondent. However, the structural stability certificates issued by V.R Siddhartha School of Engineering Department have identified several stability issues on the various LED display devices erected by the petitioner. It is submitted that the second respondent is concerned about public safety, as the sign boards which are erected would have to withstand the heavy gales of wind during the monsoon period, and there are instances which resulted in heavy gales, resulting in the collapse of heavy sign boards, and at times the said incidents result in loss of lives as well as damage to several properties. It is submitted that, in order to ensure public safety, the petitioner was called upon to ensure that the pillars and the sign boards are stable and in accordance with the safety norms.

8. The learned counsel appearing for the petitioner, in the reply, submits that the second respondent has targeted the petitioner and has been troubling the petitioner in one way or another. It is also submitted that the second respondent tried to remove the LED display device situated at Mahanadu Road Junction by weakening the structure of the said LED display device, which has resulted in its collapse on 24.05.2026, on account of a heavy gale of wind. It is submitted that the LED display device was completely damaged, and the petitioner firm sustained substantial losses. It is also submitted that on the said day, on account of heavy wind and rain, several holdings and trees

collapsed and that the other LED display devices erected by the petitioners in Vijayawada were completely intact. It is submitted that the petitioner had also submitted the structural stability certificate for LED display devices erected by a competent, approved structural engineer of the second respondent. It is also submitted that the structural stability assessment was conducted by V R Siddhartha College of Engineering in the absence of the petitioner and without considering the structural stability certificates furnished by the petitioner for the various LED display devices.

9. Heard the learned counsel for the petitioner. Learned Standing Counsel for the second respondent, perused the record. The petitioner is indisputably granted the requisite permissions to erect the 29 LED display devices at the locations specified in the permission letters. The second respondent had granted the requisite permissions to the petitioner on various dates for the erection of LED sign devices. It is also undisputed that the petitioner has erected about 14 LED display devices and is yet to erect the remaining devices. It is submitted that 3 of the boards were removed by the petitioner and one board at the Mahanadu Junction had collapsed.

10. There is force in the second respondent's contention that the petitioner must comply with structural stability requirements to ensure the safety of citizens. It is also equally pertinent to note that the petitioner has stated that they have been in the similar business for the last 40 years and that it is their bound duty to ensure that the LED display devices are properly erected. It is

also stated that each such device would cost more than Rs 70,00,000/- and that any damage caused to the device would severely impact the petitioner financially. As such, the petitioner ensures that the erected devices are properly erected by duly complying with all the structural norms.

11. At any rate, neither the petitioner nor the respondent can be permitted to compromise on the structural stability issues of the LED display devices which are erected by the petitioner. It is in the interests of the citizens that the business conducted by the petitioner and the permissions granted by the respondent do not cause any harm to the life and limb of the citizens. The safety of the citizens is paramount; it is essential for both the petitioner and the respondents to ensure that the LED display devices erected by the petitioner comply with all structural stability requirements. In this regard, it would be appropriate to direct the petitioner and the respondents to jointly inspect the petitioner's installed LED display devices, accompanied by a team of structural engineers. After conducting an inspection, the structural engineering team shall identify any additional safety measures required for each LED display device.

12. The petitioner shall comply with the suggestions of the Structural Engineer's Team for stabilizing the LED display devices and ensure that the devices are erected strictly in accordance with the norms. This direction is issued in the interest of the general public and the safety of the general public. Insofar as the respondents' demand is concerned, seeking the license fee for

the financial year 2025-2026, the petitioner was admittedly granted permission from November 2025 till February 2026 on various dates. In such circumstances, the demand for levy of fee for the period during which the petitioner did not apply for the license and the respondent had not issued the license for erection of the display devices is irrational. The Andhra Pradesh Municipal Corporation Act does not empower the respondent No.2 to levy license/permission fee for the entire financial year irrespective of the dated month from which the licenses were issued. In such, a scenario the respondent Nos.2 to 4 cannot rely upon the recommendation of the Council for levying the license/permission fee on the petitioner for the financial year 2025-2026. The respondent Nos.2 to 4 would have to levy the applicable permission fee for the LED Digital Display Devices from the date of grant of permission/license and not for any period prior to such date.

13. The petitioner has already deposited 50% of the demanded amount in compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court. The petitioner has lost substantial time due to the delay on part of the concerned electricity department in supplying power to the display devices, the petitioner also could not run the devices on account of lack of power connections. In light of these considerations, and given that the petitioner has already deposited 50% of the demanded amount, the second respondent shall not insist the petitioner to pay the remaining demanded amount until November, 2026.

14. In the meanwhile, the petitioner shall have to comply with the requirements of taking additional measures for stabilizing the already erected LED devices as pointed out by the team of structural engineers if any and shall comply with the structural designs as prescribed by the team of engineers for the remaining LED devices which are to be erected by the petitioners. Needless to mention, the petitioner shall have to comply with the suggestions for stabilizing the LED Display Devices within a period of four (4) weeks from the date of notifying of the additional safety measure for stabilizing the structural stability of the LED Display Devices.

15. The Impugned proceedings are hereby set aside, leaving it open for the 2nd respondent to take appropriate steps in the event the petitioner fails to comply with the recommendations of the structural engineers for ensuring safety and structural stability of the LED display devices of the petitioners.

16. With these observations, the writ petition stands disposed off. There shall be no order as to costs.

Pending miscellaneous petitions, if any, shall stand closed.

JUSTICE HARINATH.N

Date: .07.2026

NKA

Whether the order is :

Speaking Yes/No / Reasoned Yes/No

Reportable Yes/No / Non-Reportable Yes/No

THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE HARINATH.N

WRIT PETITION NO: 10964 of 2026

Date: .07.2026

NKA