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WP No. 13176 of 2



IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 21-04-2026

CORAM

THE HON'BLE MR JUSTICE M.DHANDAPANI

WP No. 13176 of 2024

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WMP NOs. 14317 OF 2024 &

WMP NO. 14318 OF 2024

Venkatesh Sowrirajan
S/o.Sri.V.Sowrirajan, No. 3/106, South Mada
Vilagam, Thirukkanapuram, Nagapattinam
District, Pincode-609 704.

..Petitioner

Vs

1. The State Of Tamilnadu
Rep. By Its Secretary, Department Of Tourism,
Culture And Religious Endowments, Secretariat
Fort St. George, Chennai 9
2. The Commissioner
Hindu Religious And Charitable Endowments
Department, 119 Uthamar Gandhi Salai,
Nungambakkam, Chennai-34.
3. The Joint Commissioner,
Hindu Religious And Charitable Endowments
Department, 64/2 Neela South Street,
Nagapattinam, 611 001
4. The Executive Officer
Sri.Sowriraja Perumal Temple,
Thirukkannapuram,
Nagapattinam District-609 704.
5. The Fit Person
Sri.Sowriraja Perumal Temple,
Thirukkannapuram,
Nagapattinam District-609 704.
6. Kannan,
S/o. Shri Venkata Varadhachari, No.3/107,
South Madavilagam, Thirukkannapuram,
Nagapattinam District – 609704.
(R6 Impleaded Vide Order dated 18.11.2025



made In WMP.No.15045/2025 in
WP.No.13176/2024 By PBBJ)

..Respondents

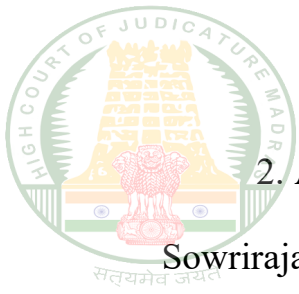
Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for issuance of Writ of Mandamus forbearing the respondents from in any manner carrying out the processions of Hamsa Vahana (Swan Vahana) on any day particularly on account of Akshaya Thrithyai by altering established practices and consequently direct the respondents to perform the procession in madavilagam, by carrying the Utsavar in Tholukiniyaan also called as Padisattam as per established practices in Shri Sowriraja Perumal Temple, Thirukkannapuram, Nagapattinam District.

For Petitioner : Mr. P. Swaminathan

For Respondents : Mr.S.Ravichandran
Addl. Govt. Pleader (HR & CE)
Mr.P.T.S.Vijaya Raghavan for R6

ORDER

This Writ Petition is filed by the petitioner forbearing the respondents from in any manner carrying out the processions of Hamsa Vahana (Swan Vahana) on any day particularly on account of Akshaya Thrithyai by altering established practices and consequently direct the respondents to perform the procession in madavilagam, by carrying the Utsavar in Tholukiniyaan also called as Padisattam as per established practices in Shri Sowriraja Perumal Temple, Thirukkannapuram, Nagapattinam District.

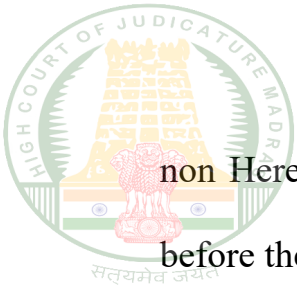


2. According to the petitioner, the petitioner is the devotee of Arul Mighu Sowriraja Perumal. He is a Sthalathar and Mudhal Theerthakarar of the Thirukkannapuram Sowriraja Perumal Temple, Nagapattinam District, which is in existence for more than 1000 years. Every year during Akshaya Thrithiyai, processions will be carried out for the presiding deity in the Mada Vilagam situated around the Thirukulam (sacred pond) of the subject temple. The Utsavar idol will be carried in the Tholukiniyaan fondly called as Padisattam and the said practice has been followed since time immemorial and has become an undisputed custom of the Temple. The Temple Panchangam of the year 2023-2024 published by the office of the 5th respondent also states that during Akshaya Thrithiyai, Thirumanjanam (Abhishekam) will be performed for the chief deity in the morning and that processions will be carried out in the evening around the Mada Vilagam in the manner stated above. While that being so, to the dismay of bakthas and the villagers, the Utsavar idol for the very first time was taken on a procession in a new Hamsa (swan) Vahana on 02.05.2014 during Akshaya Thrithiyai. The procession was carried out around the mada veedhi (mada Streets) as opposed to the mada vilagam, thereby violating the age-old customs established in the Temple. Pursuant to objections raised by Sthalathars and public, the then Executive Officer of the Temple agreed to shelve the Vahana and thereafter the vahana was not taken for the processions in the subsequent years. Whiles, to the utter shock and surprise, announcements were made about the procession of the hamsa Vahana by the 4th respondent and



on 23.04.2023, much against the established customs, it was decided that the chief diety was to be paraded on 23.04.2023 on Akshaya Trithiyai on the very same Hamsa vahana that garnered public backlash. In spite of the objections of villagers, as decided, on 23.04.2023, the procession was arbitrarily carried out by the respondents in Hamsavahana by violating the customary norms of the temple, which amounts to hurting of religious sentiments of villagers and Ubayadharars. The respondents have once again come forward with a proposal to carry out the procession in Hamsa Vahana on Akshaya Thrithyai which falls on 10.05.2024. Since, there is an imminent urgency pertaining to the interference of the respondents into the religious affairs of the temple, the petitioner is constrained to file the present writ petition.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner submitted that on 20.04.2026 which is Akshaya Trithiyai day, procession was again carried out in Hamsa vahana much against the customs of the Temple. He further submitted that every year, the 5th respondent, without consulting any expert committee and obtaining expert opinion, has been conducting the procession in Hamsa Vahana on Akshaya Trithiyai day on their own, which is against the customary practice of the temple and the same is ex-facie illegal and not sustainable one and on the sole ground, the present writ petition is filed. Stating so, learned counsel for the petitioner submitted that this court may permit the petitioner and other interested persons to file an application for appointment of Trustees- either



non Hereditary Trustees or Hereditary Trustees in the manner known to law before the Joint Registrar/3rd respondent.

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4. He further submitted that this Court may direct the 3rd respondent to consider the petitioner's application and pass appropriate orders in terms of the HR and CE Act and this Court may also issue a direction to the 5th respondent to conduct Hamsa Vahana procession on Akshaya Trithya day in consultation with the Temple Battachariyar.

5. Recording the submissions of the learned counsel for the petitioner, the writ petition is disposed of with the following directions;

(i) The 5th respondent is directed to conduct Hamsa Vahana Procession on Akshaya Trithya day in consultation with Temple Battachariyar.

(ii) The petitioner shall make appropriate application before the 3rd respondent for appointment of the Trustees either non Hereditary Trustees or Hereditary Trustees in the manner known to law and on such application, the 3rd respondent shall pass orders on the same within a period of (12) twelve weeks from the date of receipt of a copy of this



order.

No costs. Consequently, the connected miscellaneous petitions are closed.

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Index;yes/no

Internet;yes/no

To

1. The Secretary,
Department Of Tourism, Culture And Religious
Endowments, Secretariat Fort St. George,
Chennai 9
2. The Commissioner
Hindu Religious And Charitable Endowments
Department, 119 Uthamar Gandhi Salai,
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