



W.P.(MD)No.17458 of 2025

WEB COPY BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 19.02.2026

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE Mr. JUSTICE KRISHNAN RAMASAMY

W.P.(MD)No.17458 of 2025
and WMP(MD) Nos.13314 and 13316 of 2025

St George Church,
Rep by its Administrator,
J.Rajesh, S/o.D.Jeyaraj,
No.24, Greetings House,
P.M. Thevar Nagar,
Jeeva Nagar, Jaihindpuram,
Madurai - 625 011.

...Petitioner

vs.

1. The Backward Classes,
Most Backward Classes and
Minorities Welfare (Mwru) Department,
Rep by its Principal Secretary,
Fort St.George, Chennai - 600 005.
2. The State Minorities Commission,
Rep by its Chairman,
State Minorities Commission,
Khalasa Mahal,(Heritage Building)
1st Floor, Chepauk,
Chennai - 600 005.
3. The District Backward Class and Minorities Welfare Officer,
O/o the District Backward Class and Minorities Welfare Office,
Collectorate Campus, Madurai District.



W.P.(MD)No.17458 of 2025

WEB COPY

4. The Revenue Divisional Officer,
O/o. the Revenue Divisional Officer,
Madurai, Madurai District.

5. The Indian Overseas Bank,
Rep by its Senior Manager,
Iob - Bullion Bazaar,
Madurai District.

6. Rev.Dr. W. Milton Jeganathan

...Respondents

Prayer: Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of Constitution of India, praying to issue a Writ of Certiorarified Mandamus to call for the records pertaining to the Impugned order in Na.Ka.No. 9694/2023/PN1, dated 14.05.2025 on the file of the Respondent No.3 and quash the same as illegal and consequently direct the respondent no 3 to permit the petitioner to carryout the renovation works for the St.George Church, Main guard square, Madurai and pass orders within the time frame stipulated by this Court.

For Petitioner : Mr.M.Mahaboob Fazil

For Respondent : Mr.S.Shanmugavel for R1 to R4
Additional Government Pleader

Mr.M.Senthilkumar for R5

Mr.S.Suresh Kumar Isaac Paul for R6



W.P.(MD)No.17458 of 2025

WEB COPY

ORDER

This Writ Petition has been filed challenging the impugned order of the third respondent in Na.Ka.No.9694/2023/PN1, dated 14.05.2025 and to direct the third respondent to permit the petitioner to carryout the renovation works for St.George Church, Main guard square, Madurai.

2.1. The learned counsel appearing for the petitioner would submit that the impugned order has been passed by the third respondent to freeze the bank account of the petitioner and to transfer a sum of Rs.77,50,000/- along with interest to the account of the third respondent. The reason for passing of such order is that there was an election dispute among two rival groups in the petitioner Church. According to the learned counsel, the impugned order is the communication sent by the third respondent to the Bank. Based on the said communication, the Bank, in turn, has sent a communication to the petitioner citing the reason for freezing. He would submit that the impugned order has been passed without issuing any notice to the petitioner and conducting enquiry. Therefore, the petitioner is constrained to challenge the order of the third respondent.



W.P.(MD)No.17458 of 2025

WEB COPY

2.2. It is the submission of the learned counsel for the petitioner that for the purpose of administration of funds, receiving cheques, spending amount and maintaining the accounts, a separate committee, namely, Adhoc committee has been formed as early as on 14.05.2025. Even assuming that there is an election dispute, that is no way going to affect the functioning of the Church and renovation work. Hence, issuance of the impugned order would affect the interest of the petitioner, as it is passed without issuing notice and hearing the petitioner.

2.3. The learned counsel for the petitioner would also submit that in the present case, sanction order was passed on 26.04.2023 and disbursal was made on 11.07.2024. Thereafter, the account was freezed by virtue of the order dated 28.08.2024. Therefore, even though sanction order stipulates 3 months time for completion of work, virtually, the petitioner was allowed to utilise the funds for one and half months only. He, therefore, submitted that the impugned order is liable to be set aside.



W.P.(MD)No.17458 of 2025

WEB COPY

3. Counter has been filed by the official respondents. Referring to the counter affidavit, the learned Additional Government Pleader appearing for the respondents 1 to 4 would submit that, in the present case, there was an election dispute between two rival groups in the Church, which culminated in preferring a criminal complaint. In this regard, Revenue Divisional Officer/4th respondent has conducted an enquiry and only based on the said report, the third respondent passed the impugned order. Even though the amount was disbursed to the petitioner as early as on 11.07.2024, till date, the petitioner has not utilized any of the amount for renovation work. Till date, the details of Adhoc committee said to have been formed in the petitioner Church were not furnished to the authorities. Since the amount involved in this matter is huge i.e., a sum of Rs.77,50,000/-, he seeks short accommodation to take further instructions.

4. I have given due consideration to the submissions made on either sides.

5. In the present case, admittedly, for the purpose of renovation of



W.P.(MD)No.17458 of 2025

WEB COPY

Church, a sum of Rs.77,50,000/- was sanctioned by virtue of order dated 26.04.2023 and it was disbursed on 11.07.2024. Subsequently, the third respondent, by stating that there is an election dispute between two rival groups in the Church and it ultimately landed in a private complaint to the police, requested the Bank to freeze the account on 28.08.2024, pursuant to the same, the account was also freezed. According to the learned Additional Government Pleader, the Revenue Divisional Officer conducted an enquiry and passed orders and only based on the same, the third respondent has taken steps to freeze the account of the petitioner Church. However, this Court is at a loss to understand as to how the impugned order was passed without there being a notice nor an enquiry by the third respondent.

6. The present issue is with regard to renovation works in the Church. After commencement of renovation works, if such type of orders are passed, the amount so far spent will be of no use. Without taking into consideration all those aspects, in a mechanical manner, the impugned order has been passed. The contention of the petitioner is that Adhoc committee was formed for the purpose of administering the funds



W.P.(MD)No.17458 of 2025

WEB COPY

received from the third respondent and maintaining the accounts.

Therefore, when such a committee has been formed, certainly, the election dispute is no way going to affect the renovation works. The dispute is purely internal affairs of the Church and it has nothing to do with the functioning and administration of the Church. Such being the case, if notice was issued to the petitioner Church and an opportunity was provided, they would have substantiated their case that the election dispute has nothing to do with the renovation works and would have also provided the details of the Adhoc committee. Under such circumstances, this Court is of the view that the impugned order is liable to be set aside.

7. It is also submitted that the 6th respondent, being the elder of the Church, who had received the entire amount on behalf of the Committee, was appointed as Adhoc Committee member. Under these circumstances, the committee would report to the District Collector periodically, ie., once in a month and bring it to the notice of the District Collector with regard to the details of the formation of the Adhoc Committee within a period of one week along with the manner in which they are going to utilise funds already received, kept in the bank account for the purpose of



W.P.(MD)No.17458 of 2025

WEB COPY

renovation of the Church and to complete the renovation work.

8. Taking into consideration all these aspects, this Court is inclined to set aside the impugned order. Accordingly, the impugned order is set aside and the writ petition stands disposed of with the following directions:

(i) the account of the petitioner maintained in the 5th respondent bank is directed to be de-freezed and 5th respondent is directed to permit the adhoc committee through its authorised representative to operate the bank account;

(ii) the petitioner Church as well as the 6th respondent are directed to provide the resolution passed by the Adhoc Committee for operating the bank account with the 5th respondent to the administrator of the Adhoc Committee of the petitioner's Church; and

(iii) The petitioner Church is directed to furnish the details about the formation of Adhoc Committee including the authorization given for the Adhoc committee member to operate the bank account along with the schedule for the completion of renovation work and also amount to be spent within a period of one week from the date of receipt of a copy of this court to the District Collector, Madurai District and thereafter, as per



W.P.(MD)No.17458 of 2025

WEB COPY

the direction of the District Collector, they are directed to furnish the details from time to time for the duration of the completion of the renovation of the Church.

No costs. Consequently connected Miscellaneous Petitions are closed.

19.02.2026

NCC : Yes/No

Index : Yes/No

RR

To

1. The Principal Secretary,
Backward Classes, Most Backward Classes and
Minorities Welfare (Mwru) Department,
Fort St.George, Chennai - 600 005.
2. The Chairman,
State Minorities Commission,
Khalasa Mahal,(Heritage Building)
1st Floor, Chepauk, Chennai - 600 005.
- 3.The District Collector
Madurai.
4. The District Backward Class and Minorities Welfare Officer,
O/o the District Backward Class and Minorities Welfare Office,
Collectorate Campus, Madurai District.
5. The Revenue Divisional Officer,
O/o. the Revenue Divisional Officer, Madurai, Madurai District.

9/10



WEB COPY



W.P.(MD)No.17458 of 2025

KRISHNAN RAMASAMY, J.

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W.P.(MD)No.17458 of 2025

19.02.2026