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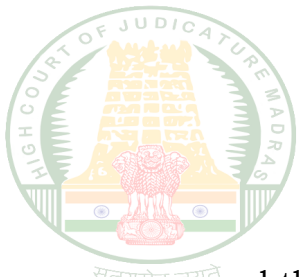
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S.M.SUBRAMANIAM, J.

Pursuant to the interim orders passed by this Court on 03.03.2022, the Joint Commissioner/Executive Officer, Arulmigu Subramania Swamy Temple, Tiruchendur, Thoothukudi District, filed a compliance affidavit stating that adequate measures were taken to implement the report and necessary arrangements were made to control the crowd inside, outside and around the temple premises. However, the Executive Officer has stated that on 07.03.2022, a team of 60 Police Personnel were deployed to control the ingress or egress of the temple premises by the fifth respondent/Superintendent of Police, Thoothukudi District, and the strength was subsequently reduced to 30, which raises a concern.

2. The fifth respondent filed a compliance report stating that necessary arrangements were made to provide bandobust to the devotees and to the temple. 30 Armed Reserve Police personnel are regularly deputed from 09.03.2022 onwards for temple bandobust duties under the direct supervision of the Inspector of Police, Temple Police Station

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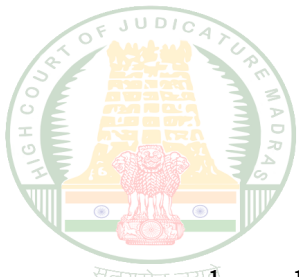
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and the Assistant Superintendent of Police, Tiruchendur. During festival season, additional reinforcement is being arranged from other Sub Divisions in Thoothukudi District and also neighbouring Districts to regulate the crowd. The police personnel have been suitably sensitized to handle the devotees and Thiru Sudhanthirargal (திருசுதந்திரர்கள்) in a proper manner in close coordination with the temple officials. This apart, CCTV camera units were also installed to monitor the activities.

3. The learned Additional Advocate General reiterated the steps taken by the temple administration and by the fifth respondent/Superintendent of Police, Thoothukudi District.

4. Question arises whether it is sufficient for the complete maintenance of the temple activities in a peaceful manner. Various other issues debated before this Court are also to be considered and it is raised by the learned Additional Advocate General and other learned counsels appearing for the parties to the *lis* that VIP darshan creates lot of hindrance to the general public on many occasions. The VIPs, who all are allowed to have darshan without any restrictions of time, are causing inconvenience to the general public. The concern raised undoubtedly to



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be addressed. VIP special darshan, at no circumstances, be caused infringement of the right of the citizen in general. Therefore, this Court thought fit that further orders are required to improve the temple activities for the benefit of the people at large and the devotees who all are visiting the temple. In view of the fact that the temple administration and the Superintendent of Police, Thoothukudi District, have coordinated and cooperating for effective implementation of the orders of this Court, this Court thought fit that further improvements in arrangements are essentially required for the benefit of the general public visiting the temple.

5. There can be no argument that some people deserve special darshan. However, such treatment is reserved only for the special offices which the persons holding, but not for the individual per se. In most developed countries, the State protects only few at the top position, that is, constitutional dignitaries and the rest is to manage its securities. Certain special privileges shall not come in the way of equality of the citizens.



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6. People are frustrated with VIP culture more specifically in closed premises like temple, as the devotees are made to suffer on account of special darshan to VIPs and other important persons. People are lamenting and in fact cursing.

7. The temple administration is duty bound to ensure that VIP darshan is provided without causing any inconvenience to the public darshan. The list of VIPs is already notified by the Government of Tamil Nadu and the said list of VIPs must be maintained by the temple administration.

8. It is made clear that special entry to VIPs should not result in infringement of the right of equality to the devotee/general public waiting for darshan. VIP entry must be restricted only to the VIPs and to their family members, but not the relatives. The VIPs may be accompanied by the security guards deputed along them. However, it is made clear that staff members and other departmental personnel may not be allowed to have special darshan along with VIPs and they must be allowed to have darshan only through paid queue or free darshan queue along with other devotees.

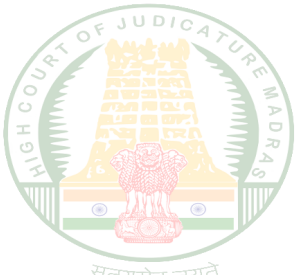


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9. The practice prevailing in the subject temple is that VIPs, their relatives, various Government department staffs, even various department staffs are permitted to sit longer time in front of the deity thereby, depriving the devotees/general public from getting public darshan. The entire system now being in practice must be abolished forthwith and all such persons must be allowed to have darshan either through paid queue or through the queue maintained for free darshan.

10. The devotees are worshiping the God on religious faith. Thus, there cannot be any discrimination amongst the devotees, as the VIPs are also attending the temple for darshan as devotee. God alone is VIP. If any VIP causes any inconvenience to the public devotees, then such VIP is committing religious sin, which will not be forgiven by the God. Thus, the conscious of the VIPs plays a pivotal role, while causing such inconvenience to the general public more specifically in Temples, Churches and Mosques. Therefore, the list of VIPs notified by the Government of Tamil Nadu, Government of India and other State Governments across the country must be maintained by the temple administration and the protocol provided for such VIPs alone are to be allowed by the temple administration and not in respect of any other



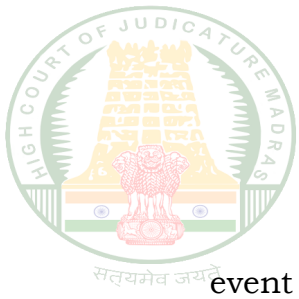
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person. Thus, it is made clear that the public servants, from various Government departments, who all are not falling under the category of VIP, or any other person, devotees or donors shall not be allowed to have special darshan by creating a separate queue system or along with VIP in the temple.

11. Special Darshan “Abishega Kattalai (அபிஷேக கட்டளை)” is to be provided only for 10 minutes and the crowd in front of the deity is also to be regulated in such a manner without causing any inconvenience to the devotees.

12. There are frequent allegations from the public that Pujaris and Thiru Sudhanthirargal are standing inside the temple and using filthy and abusive languages against the devotees and the staff members deployed. However, in the event of any such incident, the police officials must institute all appropriate actions by following the procedures as contemplated under law.

13. The police personnel, temple staff, Pujaris and Thiru Sudhanthirargal are directed to treat the devotees with dignity and in the



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event of any quarrel by the devotees, the police personnel has to initiate appropriate action in the manner known to law.

14. It is made clear that the staff of various Government departments including Police Department, Revenue Department and HR & CE Department shall not be permitted to take special entry for special darshan and they shall be treated on par with all other devotees in general.

15. Thiru Sudhanthirargal committing illegality and misconduct or misbehaving inside the temple or in temple premises shall be prosecuted through the jurisdictional police. In the event of repeating the misconduct or offence, all appropriate actions are to be initiated to debar the persons from entering into the temple.

16. The Executive Officer is directed to keep adequate number of dustbins/garbage boxes both inside and outside the temple premises with adequate sign boards. The temple premises in entirety must be maintained properly and cleaned regularly. The seashore area is to be maintained properly and cleaned regularly. The Naali Kinaru



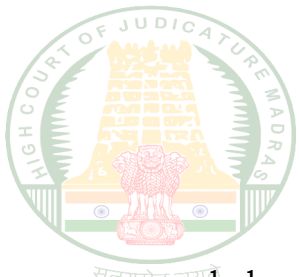
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(நாழி கிணறு) is to be maintained neatly and cleanly at all times and adequate hygiene facilities must be provided to the devotees for changing of dresses. Number of toilets to be increased, if necessary, considering the crowd visiting the temple premises.

17. The roads and streets falling under the control of the Trichendur Municipality are to be maintained by the Municipal Authorities cleanly and neatly and the garbage are to be removed on day-to-day basis. In this regard, the **Commissioner, Tiruchendur Municipality, Tiruchendur, Thoothukudi District**, is *suo motu* impleaded as sixth respondent in this writ petition to ensure that the roads and streets are maintained cleanly for the benefit of the public at large, as large number of crowd are visiting the temple premises. The Joint Commissioner shall conduct inspections regarding such maintenance of roads and streets reaching the temple premises.

18. Adequate drinking water units are to be provided by the Joint Commissioner in the temple premises in strategical locations. The temple administration should ensure the quality of Annadhanam (அன்னதானம்) to be served to the devotees. The cottages and rooms



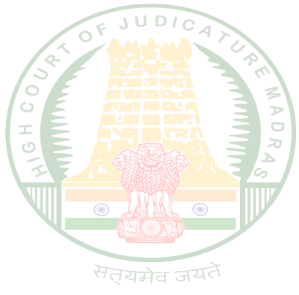
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times.

belonging to the temple administration are to be maintained cleanly at all

19. The special entry passes or other passes issued by the temple administration shall not be allowed to be misused by any person including temple employees, police personnel who all are deployed inside the temple and other Government department employees etc., and in the event of any such misuse, the Joint Commissioner may initiate all appropriate actions. If such misuse is committed by the Government officials, then proper complaint shall be filed before the authority concerned for initiation of disciplinary action against such officials, who misused the passes issued by the temple administration.

20. With reference to the interim order dated 03.03.2022, the first respondent/Commissioner, HR & CE Department, Nungambakkam, Chennai, issued orders on 07.03.2022 permitting the Joint Commissioner to carryout and implement the report submitted before this Court. Pursuant to the instructions of the Commissioner, the Joint Commissioner has acted.



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21. Accordingly, the respective respondents are directed to implement the above directions within a period of three weeks. The fifth respondent is directed to provide 40 Armed Reserve Police personnel at present and the strength, if necessary, may be increased based on the field requirements. The increase of strength shall be provided with effect from 24.03.2022.

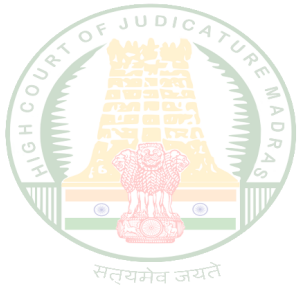
22. List the matter 'for reporting compliance' on 18.04.2022 before this Court.

23.03.2022

Note to Office:

- (i) Carry out impleadment suitably.
- (ii) Issue order copy today.

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