

**IN THE HIGH COURT FOR THE STATE OF TELANGANA
AT HYDERABAD**

CC. No. OF 2025

IN

W.P. No. 6335 OF 2022

BETWEEN:

1. Kancherla Venkata Ramana S/o Late Sri Kancherla Mallikharjuna Rao,
Aged About 52 years, R/o Plot No. 230,
H. No. 42-878/2, Sri Jawahar Nagar Colony,
Moula Ali, Hyderabad – 500040, India.

...PETITIONER/ PETITIONER

AND

1. Smt. Shailaja Ramaiyer, IAS
Principle Secretary, Endowment Department,
State of Telangana.

...CONTEMNOR/ RESPONDENT NO. 1

2. Sri Harish, IAS
The Commissioner of Endowment,
Office at Abids, Hyderabad, Telangana.
3. Sri Jitesh V Patil, IAS
The District Collector,
Bhadradi Kothagudem District, At Kothagudem.

4. Sri Damodar Rao,
Sri Seetha Ramachandraswamy Vaari Devasthanam,
Rep. by its Executive Officer
At Bhadrachalam, Bhadradi Kothagudem District.
(2-4 are Not Necessary Parties)

...RESPONDENTS/ RESPONDENTS

AFFIDAVIT

I, Kancherla Venkata Ramana, S/o Late Sri Kancherla Mallikharjuna Rao, aged about 53 years, R/o Plot No. 230, H. No. 42-878/2, Sri Jawahar Nagar Colony, Moula Ali, Hyderabad – 500040, India. Do hereby solemnly affirm and state on oath as follows:

1. I am the petitioner herein and acquainted through the facts of the case. The above contempt case is filed as the Principal Secretary, Endowment Department, 1st respondent herein willfully and deliberately failed to comply with the directions issued by this Hon'ble court in order dated 15.04.2024 in W.P. No. 6335 of 2022 and batch.

Briefly stated by the facts of the case are as follows:

2. It is humbly submitted that I filed the W.P. No. 6335 of 2022 praying for issuance of a writ of Mandamus for declaring as illegal, arbitrary and in violation of Articles 14, 25 and 26 of the Constitution of India in distorting the history and age old tradition of Sri Sitharamchandraswami vari Devasthanam, Bhadrachalam by improperly addressing the deity's as *Sri Ramanarayana* and *Sri Sitamahalakshmi* reciting inappropriate *gotra and pravara* during performance of the annual *kalyanotsavam* of *Sri Sitaramachandra Swamy and Sri Sitha Devi*. Srirama Navami day and for a consequential directions to the Respondents to preserve the sanctity of the original names of the principal deities of *Sri Sitaramachandra Swamy vari Devasthanam* Bhadrachalam Temple and recite the correct pravara and gotra of the principal deities and for further reliefs.

3. I humbly submit that instead of reproducing the contents of the affidavit filed in support of the writ petition I crave leave of the Hon'ble court to set out a concise statement of facts narrated herein:

A. History of Bhadrachalam Temple:

- I. Sri Sitharamachandra Swamy Vari Devasthanam in Badrachalam is known as the Ayodhya of south and one of the holiest shrines in the state of Telangana.
- II. The significance of the holy place Bhadrachalam dates back to the Ramayana era. Bramhanda Puranam refers to the Badrachala Mahatyam

as per the said purana Bhadra was born out of a boon sought by his parents to have pious son who is a fervent devotee of lord Rama.

- III. Gauthami Mahatyam in Bramhanda Purana elaborates on the historical existence of the Bhadrachalam. Bhadrachalam derives its name from the hill Bhadra on the banks of river Godavari where Lord Rama with Sitha Matha and Laxmana took rest during their excile.

Lord Rama to fulfil the promise made to Bhadra manifested himself on the hill after Ramavatar.

- IV. In the 17th Century a pious lady named Dhammakka had a dream about the location of the idols of Sri Rama and Sitha Matha and Laxmana in the forest in Badrachalam. She constructed a pandal and regularly worshipped Lord Rama.
- V. In the year 1674AD one Kancharla Gopanna (who was also known as Bhaktha Ramadas) the then Tahsildar of 'Palvoncha Paragana" during the reign of Nawab of Golkonda, constructed the Temple and installed the Idols of Sri Rama and Sitadevi and Laxmana and the temple came to be known as 'Sriramachandraswamy Temple'.
- VI. Bhakta Rama Dasa would perform the Kalyana Utsavam of Lord Sri Rama and Sitha Matha by chanting the Pravara and Gotras of Lord Rama Son of Dasharatha and Sithadevi D/o. Janaka Maharaja in their human incarnation and the lineage as indicated in Ramayana, this practice continued thereafter.
- VII. The temple has been registered as "Sriramachandraswamy Devasthanam" under Section 25 of Madras Hindu religious and Charitable Endowments Act, 1951 which was in force from 28.05.1951.

B. Role Of the State Government In Kalyanam Rituals;

Initially pearls and other gifts were offered by the rulers of Golkonda for the Kalyanotsavam to the deities, this practice continued during the time of the Nizam's and also subsequently by the State Government.

C. Age Old Traditions of Kalyanam Rituals;

The Pravara (Invocation of illustrious Ancestors) & Gotra (Clan/Original Ancestor) in the rituals was always recited having regard to their human incarnation and the lineage indicated in Ramayana.

D. Deviation in the recital from the name of Lord Rama during the Kalyanam rituals;

- a. Contrary to the established tradition and practice Lord Rama is being referred to as 'Ramanarayana' and Sitadevi is being referred to as 'Sita Mahalakshmi and Pravara and Gotra of Sri Mavishnu and Mahalxmi are being chanted instead of Sri Rama and Sitadevi.
- b. As there was lot of protest and objections to the said deviation in the age old practice and tradition, the Joint Commissioner and Executive officer addressed Letter dated 09.06.2014 to the Principal Secretary Endowments department, Hyderabad to resolve the above issue. However, no action was taken in furtherance to the above issue.

In such circumstances W.P. No. 6335, 37898 and 13168 of 2022 came to be filed before this Hon'ble Court contending that the principal deities of Sri Sitaramachandra Vari Devasthanam, Bhadrachalam are Lord Rama son of Dasharatha King of Ayodhya and Sri Sitha Devi Daughter of Janaka king of Mithila as per epic Ramayana, hence the deities are referred as Sri Rama Son of Dasharatha and Sitha Devi D/o Janaka Maharaja and appropriate Pravara and Gotra to be chanted as has been done since centuries and deviation from the essential religious practice constitute violation of the rights of the petitioner under Article 14, 25 and 26 of the Constitution of India.

4. On 15.04.2024 this Hon'ble Court passed an order in W.P. No. 6335 of 2022 and batch directing the 1st respondent to constitute a committee comprising 5 experts who are very well versed with the customs and traditions and *sthalapuranam* of sri Sitaramachandra Swamy vari Devasthanam, bhadrachalam temple as to how kalyanosthavam had been performed all these years and verify the *gotra and pravara* chanted in the kalyanostavam before 2012 and after 2012 and further clarify all aspects which arise in Writ Petition and file detailed report before The Principal

Secretary Endowments Department, Government of Telangana, who shall in turn and file a detailed affidavit before the court for the further adjudication. The report was directed to be filed before the Hon'ble Court within 1 month thereafter, the operative part of the order is here to be extracted:

In view of all the above and also taking into consideration the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court (cited supra), the Principal Secretary, Endowments Department is directed to constitute a Committee comprising of five (5) experts who are very well versed with the spiritual customs, traditions and also the Sthalapuram of Bhadrachalam Temple and the general concern of the folklore of Bhadrachalam Temple as to how the Kalyanotsavam. has been performed all these years and also verify what was the Gothram and Pravara revered in the Kalyanotsavam before 2012 and after 2012 and clarify all the aspects which are raised in all these writ petitions and file a detailed report before the Principal Secretary, Endowments Department, who shall inturn examine the same and shall file a detailed affidavit before this Court for further adjudication.

It is made clear that the said constituted Committee shall give a detailed report to the Principal Secretary within a period of two months from the date of receipt of a copy of this order and the Principal Secretary shall examine the same and file a detailed affidavit before this Court within one month thereafter. It is also made clear that Principal Secretary shall also ascertain as to how the Gothram and Pravara of Sri Sitarama Chandra Swamy is revered in Sita Rama Chandra Swamy Temples in the entire State of Telangana at the time of Kalyanotsavam and the same shall also be referred in the report and affidavit.

It is also made clear that the committee shall consider all the issues raised in the letter of Joint Commissioner to Principal Secretary and the issues raised in these writ petitions also without being influenced by any sections of the society and shall file report in a sealed cover before the Principal Secretary.

It is left open to the committee that if required, it may also take the inputs or assistance from all the stakeholders subject to their requirement.

5. It is respectfully submitted that in terms of the aforesaid directions a committee was constituted comprising the following 5 members Sri. Dr. Rejeti Venkata Venugopal Acharyulu, Sri. Dr. Dorbhala Prabhakara Sharma, Sri. Chintapalli Subramanya Sharma, Sri. Dr. V. Rajagopala Chakravarthy, Sri. Satyanarayana Charyulu are the following persons.

6. It appears that the committee conducted a detailed enquiry seeking information from various authorities and visited various places including Gouthami Grandhalayam, Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, Saraswati Niketana, Vetapalem, Andhra Pradesh, Sanskrit academy Hyderabad, as also research institutes in oriental languages in Tamil Nadu and other places. The committee also visited the temple and recorded the statements of the staff, Archakas and also devotees. A detailed report appears to be prepared and submitted to the 1st respondent on 20.06.2024.

7. It is respectfully submitted that the sthanacharyulu questioned the order dated 15.04.2024 in W.P. No. 6335 of 2022 and batch in W.A. No. 338 of 2024. The chief priest who was erred as respondent 5 in W.P. No. 37898 of 2022 filed in W.A. No. 697 of 2024. The Division Bench of this Hon'ble Court by an interim order dated 27.02.2025 directed the Principal Secretary Endowment Department, State of Telangana not to take further steps in pursuance in the said report. It is humbly submitted that the Division bench of this Hon'ble Court by order dated 07.02.2025 disposed off the above W.A. No. 338 and 697 of 2024 by a common order only on the question of maintainability of Writ Appeal without going into the merits holding as follows:

10. The Supreme Court laid down the litmus test to determine whether order impugned is a judgment' within the meaning of Letters Patent. If the present matter is examined on the anvil of said principles, it will be clear that (i) by impugned order the learned Single Judge has not finally decided the question or issue in controversy in the main case, (ii) the impugned order has not decided any issue which materially or directly affects final decision in the Writ Petitions, (iii) the impugned order does not have any impact on a collateral issue or question which was not subject matter of main case.

11. We have no doubt that the learned Single Judge before touching upon the merits of the case will deal with maintainability of the Writ Petitions by taking into account the judgment of Supreme Court Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (supra). In our opinion, the Writ Appeals against the impugned interlocutory order are not tenable.

12. With the observation mentioned hereinabove, these Writ Appeals are disposed of. There shall be no order as to costs. Miscellaneous applications, if any, pending shall stand closed.

Therefore, the interim direction granted by this Hon'ble Court directing the 1st respondent not to take steps on furtherance of the report stands dissolved. The 1st respondent is therefore required to tender the aforesaid report along with her affidavit to the credit of W.P. No. 6335 of 2022 and batch. In as much as no action had been taken in this regard, I was constrained to make representation dated 15.09.2025 to the 1st respondent requesting to act in compliance with the direction in W.P. No. 6335 of 2022.

8. It is humbly submitted that as the 1st respondent did not comply with the direction of this Hon'ble Court by filing report and further representation dated 24.10.2025 was made to the Hon'ble minister for endowments bringing to her notice the unrest among devotees in continuing to refer to Sri Sitaramachandra swamy as Sri Ramanarayana and Sri Sita Devi as Sri Sita Mahalakshmi and requested the intervention of Hon'ble Minister in the matter of complying with the direction of the Hon'ble Court.

9. It is humbly submitted that notwithstanding the above, the 1st respondent has so far not taken any action in the matter failure to file the report as directed by the Hon'ble Court constitutes willful and deliberate disobedience on the said order amounting to contempt of court within the meaning of section 10 and 12 of Contempt of Court Act.

10. In as much as a Division Bench of this Hon'ble Court by order dated 27.02.2025 in W.A. No. 338 and 697 of 2024 initially directed the State Government not to take any steps in furtherance of the aforesaid report, the order dated 15.04.2024 could not be implemented. Consequent on the disposal off the W.A. No. 338 and 697 of 2024 the miscellaneous application stood closed thereby the interim order was dissolved. Thereupon the order dated 15.04.2024 in W.P. No. 6335 of 2022 and batch became operative and the 1st respondent was required to give effect to the said order. The said order in Writ Appeal came to be dispatched on 03.04.2025. Even after receipt of the said order the 1st respondent failed to implement the order dated 15.04.2024 in W.P. No. 6335 of 2022 hence the 1st respondent has acted in violation of the order in the 1st week of April 2025 as also and continued in violation of the same on 16.09.2025 after receipt of the representation submitted by me.

11. I am advised to submit that the 1st respondent was required to implement the order dated 15.04.2024 in W.P. No. 6335 of 2022. As already submitted, the Division Bench of Hon'ble Court in W.A. No. 338 and 697 of 2024 came to a conclusion that the above Writ Appeals were not maintainable as the learned single judge did not finally decide the question or issue in controversy in the main case by the order dated 15.04.2024 in W.P. No. 6335 of 2022 which was appealed

against. Hence the above contempt lies only against order dated 15.04.2024 in W.P. No. 6335 of 2022.

12. Hence, this contempt is within time, in terms of Section 20 of Contempt of Courts Act, 1971.

13. Therefore, it is most respectfully prayed before this Hon'ble Court, in the interest of justice, may be pleased to punish Respondent No.1 for willful and deliberate violation of order dated 15.04.2024 in W.P. No. 6335 of 2022 under sections 10 and 12 of Contempt of Courts Act, 1971 and pass further order which deems fit and necessary and proper in the circumstances of the case.

14. In the interim, it is most respectfully prayed that this Hon'ble Court may be pleased to **direct** appearance of the Respondent No.1 to file or submit into court the report of 5-members committee before this Hon'ble Court and pass such other or further order as this Hon'ble Court deems fit and proper in the circumstances of the case.

Sworn & signed before me
On this the ____ day of November, 2025

DEPONENT

// **ADVOCATE :: HYDERABAD** //

VERIFICATION

Kancherla Venkata Ramana, S/o Late Sri Kancherla Mallikharjuna Rao, aged about 53 years, R/o Plot No. 230, H. No. 42-878/2, Sri Jawahar Nagar Colony, Moula Ali, Hyderabad – 500040, India, do hereby verify and declare that the contents mentioned in the above paras are true and correct to the best of his knowledge and information. Hence verified on this the ____ day of November, 2025 at Hyderabad.

COUNSEL FOR THE PETITIONER

DEPONENT