

ITEM NO.38

COURT NO.6

SECTION XI-B

S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A
R E C O R D O F P R O C E E D I N G S

Petition(s) for Special Leave to Appeal (C) No(s). 3834/2025

[Arising out of impugned final judgment and order dated 26-11-2024 in WP(C) No. 7123/2019 passed by the High Court of Kerala at Ernakulam]

R. SREERAJ & ORS.

Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD & ORS.

Respondent(s)

WITH

SLP(C) No. 1535-1536/2025 (XI-B)

FOR EXEMPTION FROM FILING C/C OF THE IMPUGNED JUDGMENT ON IA 10922/2025

FOR EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T. ON IA 10923/2025

IA No. 10922/2025 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING C/C OF THE IMPUGNED JUDGMENT

IA No. 10923/2025 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T.

Date : 11-05-2026 This petition was called on for hearing today.

CORAM :

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE PAMIDIGHANTAM SRI NARASIMHA
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ALOK ARADHE

For Petitioner(s) :

Mr. V. Chitambaresh, Sr. Adv.
Mr. James P. Thomas, AOR
Mr. C. Govind Venugopal, Adv.
Mr. Bibin John, Adv.

Mr. Amit Anand Tiwari, Sr. Adv.
Mr. Harikumar V., AOR
Mr. Anupam Mishra, Adv.
Ms. Tanvi Anand, Adv.
Mr. Pranjal Mishra, Adv.
Mr. Chakma Purnojyoti, Adv.

Mr. Subramanyan H, Adv.

For Respondent(s) :

Mr. P. S. Sudheer, AOR
Mr. Rishi Maheshwari, Adv.
Ms. Anne Mathew, Adv.
Mr. Bharat Sood, Adv.
Mr. Jashan Vir Singh, Adv.

Mr. G. Prakash, AOR
Mrs. Beena Prakash, Adv.

Mr. Sagar Ravi, AOR
Mr. Cebin Mathew, Adv.

UPON hearing the counsel the Court made the following
O R D E R

1. On our suggestion on 01.12.2025, Mr P.S. Sudheer, learned counsel appearing on behalf of the Travancore Devaswom Board (the "Board") has placed before us a Report submitted by the Secretary of the Board dated 01.12.2025. The Report is extracted herein below:

"By Order dated 01.12.2025 The Hon'ble Supreme Court, by order dated 01.12.2025, issued the following direction:

Having heard the learned counsel appearing for the petitioners and the respondent(s), we are of the opinion that it would be appropriate if the President of the Travancore Devaswom Board calls the petitioners for a meeting to discuss the issue of taking the petitioners into service. The learned counsel for the Board will inform us of the outcome of the meeting on the next date of hearing.

Pursuant to the above directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the petitioners in both cases were heard by the President, Travancore Devaswom Board, on 18.12.2025.

SLP (Civil) No. 3834/2025:- This Special Leave Petition has been filed by Shri R. Sreeraj and three others challenging the impugned judgment dated 26.11.2024 in WP (C) No. 7123/2019 passed by the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala.

The petitioners argued that, they are qualified to be appointed as Nadaswaram and Thakil artists in the temples managed by the Travancore Devaswom Board and were included in the select list. Other candidates in the said list, except the petitioners, were appointed. The petitioners were appointed on a temporary basis from the year 2019. The first petitioner is still continuing in service, while the remaining petitioners continued till November 2025.

The grievance of the petitioners is that, though they were included in the select list and were well within the prescribed age limit at the time of inclusion, they were not appointed on a regular basis and they allege denial of justice.

The Board is of the view that the case of these petitioners can be considered based on the facts revealed, subject to the condition that they shall not be entitled to any retrospective service benefits.

SLP (Civil) Nos 1535-1536 of 2025:- These Special Leave Petitions have been filed challenging the common judgment dated 09.10.2024 in WP (C) No. 13353/2020 and WP (C) No. 29641/2021 passed by the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala.

The case of the petitioners is that, they are qualified and experienced in playing traditional musical instruments such as Nadaswaram, Thakil and Panchavadyam, which are integral to temple rituals and festivals. However, the petitioners have not completed the prescribed course from the Kshetra Kalapeedom of the Travancore

Devaswom Board.

In the absence of the mandatory qualification, namely a pass certificate from the Kshetra Kalapeedom, this petitioners do not possess any legal right for regularisation in service as per the rules and regulations."

2. Insofar as the first Special Leave Petition (SLP(C) No. 3834/2025) is concerned, the petitioners were included in the select list of candidates. The Devaswom Board is inclined to take them in service in view of this qualification and selection. We direct that they should be appointed within a period of three months from today.

3. Insofar as the second Special Leave Petitions (SLP (C) Nos. 1535-1536/2025) are concerned, the petitioners were not included in the select list of candidates, as they have not completed the prescribed course from the Kshethra Kalapeedom of Travancore Devaswom Board. In this view of the matter, this Special Leave Petition is dismissed.

4. In view of the above, the Special Leave Petition (SLP (C) No. 3834/2025) is allowed and there shall be a direction to appoint the petitioners within a period of three months from today.

5. Pending application(s), if any, shall stand disposed of.

(CHETAN ARORA)
ASTT. REGISTRAR-cum-PS

(NIDHI WASON)
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR