

ITEM NO.2

COURT NO.3

SECTION XI-A

S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Petition(s) for Special Leave to Appeal (C) No(s).26064-26069/2024

[Arising out of impugned final judgment and order dated 17-10-2024 in CAC No.14/2024 17-10-2024 in CAC No.15/2024 17-10-2024 in CAC No. 16/2024 17-10-2024 in CAC No.17/2024 17-10-2024 in CAC No. 18/2024 17-10-2024 in CAC No.19/2024 passed by the High Court of Kerala at Ernakulam]

V. VENU & ORS.

Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

ST. MARYS ORTHODOX CHURCH (ODAKKALI PALLI) & ORS. Respondent(s)
WITH

SLP(C) No. 27971/2024 (XI-A)

(FOR ADMISSION and I.R.)

SLP(C) No. 27970/2024 (XI-A)

(FOR ADMISSION and I.R.)

SLP(C) No. 27977/2024 (XI-A)

(FOR ADMISSION)

SLP(C) No. 28011/2024 (XI-A)

(FOR ADMISSION)

SLP(C) No. 27978/2024 (XI-A)

(IA No.270512/2024-EXEMPTION FROM FILING C/C OF THE IMPUGNED JUDGMENT)

SLP(C) No. 28318/2024 (XI-A)

(FOR ADMISSION)

Date : 17-12-2024 These petitions were called on for hearing today.

CORAM :

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SURYA KANT

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE UJJAL BHUYAN

For Petitioner(s) Mr. Ranjit Kumar, Sr. Adv.
Mr. Saji Varghese, Adv.
Mr. A. Raghunath, AOR
Mr. Sreenath Vijayaraghavan, Adv.

Mr. Shyam Divan, Sr. Adv.
Mr. Naveen R. Nath, Sr. Adv.
Mr. P. K. Manohar, AOR
Mr. Sunil Jacon, Adv.
Mr. Saji Varghese, Adv.
Mr. Sunil Jacob, Adv.

Mr. Kapil Sibal, Sr. Adv.
Mr. C. K. Sasi, AOR
Ms. Meena K Poullose, Adv.
Ms. Sumedha Ray Sarkar, Adv.

Mr. Mathew J.Nedumpara, Adv.

For Respondent(s) Mr. P.V. Dinesh, Sr. Adv.
Mr. Sanand Ramakrishnan, Adv.
Mr. Rajeev Mishra, Adv.
For M/S. Axxess Legal Corp, AOR

Mr. P.K. Manohar, AOR

Mr. Chander Uday Singh, Sr. Adv.
Mr. S.Sreekumar, Sr. Adv.
Mr. Krishnan Venugopal, Sr. Adv.
Mr. E. M. S. Anam, AOR
Mr. Ankur Talwar, Adv.
Mr. Mathew P. Paul, Adv.

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

1. Issue notice, returnable on 29.01.2025.
2. Mr. E.M.S. Anam, learned counsel, who appears on caveat, accepts notice on behalf of respondent No.2 in SLP(C)No.27971/2025, respondents Nos.1 and 2 in SLP(C)No.27970/2024, respondent Nos.1, 2 and 3 in SLP(C)No.27977/2024, respondent Nos.1 and 2 in SLP(C)No.28011/2024, respondent Nos.1 and 2 in SLP(C)No.27978/2024, respondent Nos.1 and 2 in SLP(C) No.28318/2024, respondent Nos.1 and 2 in SLP (C) Nos. 26064/2024, respondent Nos.1 and 2 in SLP (C) No. 26065/2024, respondent Nos.1, 2 and 3 in SLP (C) No. 26066/2024, respondent Nos.1 and 2 in SLP (C) No. 26067/2024, respondent No.3 in SLP(C)No.26068/2024 and respondent Nos.1 and 2 in SLP(C)No.26069/2024 and waives service of formal notice upon the said respondents.
3. Counter affidavit may accordingly be filed within four weeks.
4. Rejoinder affidavit, if any, may be filed within two weeks thereafter.
5. The affidavit filed by petitioner No. 1 in SLP (C) No. 27971/2024 is taken on record. It shall be treated as a part of the pleadings in the other SLPs as well.
6. Consequently, counter affidavit to SLP (C) No. 27971/2024 may address the averments made in the aforestated affidavit also.

7. The affidavit filed by respondent Nos.1 and 2 in SLP (C) Nos. 26064-26069/2024 as well as their Additional Affidavit are also taken on record.

8. The State of Kerala is directed to furnish the following additional information :

(i) The total Christian population of the State, made of the orthodox and Jacobite denominations, preferably delineated on a Gram Panchayat or Sub-Division level.

(ii) The details of all the Churches in the State, preferably village-wise or sub-division wise.

(iii) The managing authorities of the aforementioned Churches, i.e, whether they are under the complete administrative control of Orthodox denomination or Jacobite denomination.

(iv) The list of all the Churches where management is under dispute and/or unclear, and the status quo as it exists vis-a-vis their administrative control.

(v) The composition of the parishioners of these Churches.

9. Further, so far as the Parish Registers are concerned, liberty is granted to the parties to place on record their respective Parish Registers as well.

10. Till further orders, the parties are directed to maintain *status quo* with regard to management and administration of the Churches, as it exists today. However, the State Administration shall be at liberty to intervene as and when required in accordance with law.

11. Meanwhile, the exemption granted to the officers of the Government of Kerala from personal appearance before the High Court on 25.11.2024 shall continue to operate.

(SATISH KUMAR YADAV)
ADDITIONAL REGISTRAR

(PREETHI T.C.)
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

