

W.P.No.32793 of 2026

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 11.09.2026

CORAM :

THE HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE D.BHARATHA CHAKRAVARTHY

W.P.No.32793 of 2026
and W.M.P.Nos.36029, 36037 and 36038 of 2026

M.Ravikumar

.. Petitioner

Versus

1. District Level Vigilance Committee,
Tiruvannamalai,
Represented by its Chairman,
The District Collector, Tiruvannamalai,
Collectorate, Tiruvannamalai – 606 604.
 2. State of Tamil Nadu,
Represented by the Secretary to the Government,
Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department,
Fort St. George, Chennai – 600 009.
 3. Director AD-V/Deputy Secretary,
Office of Chief Vigilance Officer,
Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs,
Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance,
2nd Floor, Hudco Vishala Building,
Bhikaji Cama Place, New Delhi – 110 066.
 4. Commissioner of Customs,
Chennai General Commissionerate,
Custom House, No.60, Rajaji Salai,
Chennai – 600 001.
- .. Respondents



W.P.No.32793 of 2026

Prayer : Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India seeking a Writ of Certiorarified Mandamus, calling for the records of the impugned proceedings of the respondent No.1 in R.C.No.K4/112/2026, dated 04.05.2026 and to quash the same, and to consequently forbear the respondent No.3 and respondent No.4, or anyone acting under or through them from acting upon the said impugned proceedings in R.C.No.K4/112/2026 dated 04.05.2026.

For Petitioner : Mr.Manikanda Prabhu J

For Respondents : Mrs.Inthu Karunakaran,
Special Government Pleader,
for RR-1 and 2

: Mr.K.Srinivasa Murthy,
Central Government Senior Panel Counsel,
for R4

ORDER

The prayer in this Writ Petition is for Certiorarified Mandamus challenging the impugned proceedings of the first respondent in R.C.No.K4/112/2026, dated 04.05.2026 and consequently, forbear the respondent Nos.3 and 4 or anyone acting through them acting upon the said proceedings.

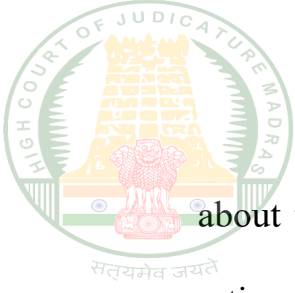
2. Upon hearing *Mr.Manikanda Prabhu J*, learned Counsel for the petitioner and perusing the material records of the case, it can be seen



W.P.No.32793 of 2026

that the District Level Vigilance Committee scrutinised the Scheduled Caste Community Certificate of the petitioner, in which he was mentioned as Hindu Adi Dravidar, as not genuine. Upon considering the facts of the case, it is seen that the petitioner's father, who was originally belonging to the Hindu Adi Dravidar community, converted himself to Christianity in the year 1960. At that point of time, the petitioner was born in a Christian family in the year 1966. Subsequently, in the year 1983, the petitioner's father and the petitioner thought it fit to convert into Hinduism. It is the case of the petitioner that his father took him to the Arya Samaj Centre, Chennai where re-conversion ceremonies were also done. The name of the father was changed from *R.Ayyavoo James* to *R.Munusamy*. The name of the son was changed from *A.Soundararajan* to *M.Ravikumar*.

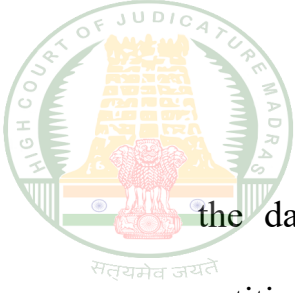
3. Thereafter, the petitioner got the community certificate as Hindu Adi Dravidar Community vide Certificate, dated 10.12.1986. The certificate itself categorically mentions that the petitioner is originally Hindu Adi Dravidar converted Christian, re-converted to Hinduism, now belonging to Adi Dravidar Community. On the strength of the said Community Certificate issued, the petitioner got appointed in the fourth respondent office and he was working as Assistant Commissioner and was



W.P.No.32793 of 2026

about to attain the age of superannuation on 30.05.2026. Just before his retirement, the respondents started verifying the genuineness of the Community Certificate. During the course of the enquiry, the petitioner appeared before the respondents and produced all the documents which he could muster to claim that from the date of his re-conversion to Hinduism, he is a staunch follower of Hinduism. It is the case of the petitioner that he and his wife are Hindus. Their children are brought up only as Hindus. He only worships Hindu gods. His marriage as well as his daughter's marriage all were solemnised as per Hindu rights and customs. In the teeth of all the material evidence on record, by considering only the look of the petitioner by holding that the petitioner and his family members are very fair in colour and males are very tall and are having good physique and they speak both Tamil and English and have curly hair, the certificate is held to be not genuine. Therefore, the petitioner is before this court.

4. *Mr.Manikanda Prabhu J*, learned Counsel for the petitioner, would submit that the first finding that is given in the impugned order to dissentile the petitioner is with reference to the caste status of the father. It is true that his father was originally known as *R.Ayyavoo James* and he converted into Hinduism and he was called as *R.Munusamy*. However, at

*W.P.No.32793 of 2026*

the date of death, he was taken care by the younger brother of the petitioner, *A.Selvarajan*, who was still continuing the Christian faith and when the petitioner was working at Chennai, he had no control over where his father was buried and in view thereof, the younger brother buried his father in a Christian cemetery. The same alone cannot be put against the petitioner. Alternatively, the learned Counsel would plead that even his father was not truly professing Hinduism even after his conversion. Nothing can be alleged as against the petitioner. The petitioner has got overwhelming materials to show that he is only professing Hinduism. The Anthropologist visited the house of the petitioner and saw the pooja room. The petitioner produced the photographs of his marriage, tonsuring ceremony and ear poking ceremony of his children, the marriage of his daughter, which all were done only as per the Hindu rights and customs. The bridegroom of the petitioner's daughter is also only a Hindu. In the teeth of the same, a further finding is recorded in the impugned order as if the Ration Card, pertaining to the year 1994, depicted that the petitioner's daughter is a Christian. The petitioner got married only in the year 1994 and hence, the said finding is absurd.

5. The learned Counsel would further submit that it may be true

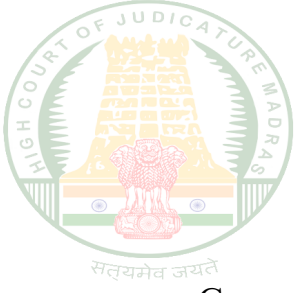


W.P.No.32793 of 2026

that an Anthropologist can, to an extent, consider the looks, the accent, the manner in which the parties speak. But, the reasons that are recorded in the impugned order, certainly, cannot be considered as inputs of an expert. On the other hand, it merely holds the petitioner as a Christian only because he is fair in colour and has good physique and speaks both Tamil and English and his hair is curly. The same cannot stand scrutiny of law.

6. The learned Counsel, in support of his contention, would rely upon the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in ***K.P.Manu Vs. Chairman, Scrutiny Committee for Verification of Community Certificate***¹ by pointing out to the facts therein. In the said case, even though the great grandchild, re-converted to Hinduism, the grandfather and father were Christians, upon finding that the petitioner is professing Hinduism, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India allowed the claim of the petitioner. The learned Counsel would submit that in repeated judgments, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has held that once reconverted and it is proved that the petitioner has returned to the fold of his original community, the certificate cannot be denied to the petitioner.

¹ (2015) 4 SCC 1



W.P.No.32793 of 2026

7. Per *contra*, *Mrs.Inthu Karunakaran*, learned Special

Government Pleader for the respondent Nos.1 and 2, would submit that from the various records submitted by the petitioner, it can be seen that on the record, for the purposes of getting employment, reservation etc., when the petitioner and his family members are claiming to profess Hinduism, they still seem to profess Christianity. It can be seen that the petitioner's father was also buried only in the Christian cemetery. The physical features and the other consideration can certainly be made in order to assess the overall personality of the person and to consider his case. When it is also found in the impugned order that the petitioner lived only in Chennai and Bangalore and his mother also lives outside the Adi Dravidar colony and when the community people have not accepted the petitioner because he is following Christianity and their culture, it cannot be said that the petitioner has returned to the fold. The judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India is that the petitioner must also be accepted by his community.

8. *Mr.K.Srinivasa Murthy*, learned Central Government Senior Panel Counsel for the fourth respondent, by pointing out certain annexures filed along with the Writ Petition, would submit that even though his father

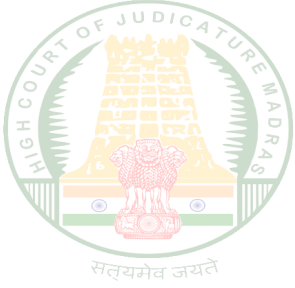


W.P.No.32793 of 2026

is proclaimed to be converted to Hinduism and being called as *R.Munusamy*, even the school records thereafter and the Community Certificate, obtained in the year 1986, still described him as *R.Ayyavoo James* and not *R.Munusamy*. Even the letter given by the church describes both the petitioner and his father by their original names. This case does not seem to be a genuine case of re-conversion.

9. I have considered the rival submissions made on either side and perused the material records of the case.

10. It is for the District Level Vigilance Committee to verify the genuineness of the petitioner's community. In this case, there is no dispute that the petitioner belongs to Scheduled Caste. What is in dispute is that thereafter, he got converted into Christianity and even though he has claimed to be reconverted to Hinduism, whether the same is genuine and correct or not, is the question. The law, in this regard, has been repeatedly laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and from the judgment cited by the learned Counsel for the petitioner in *K.P.Manu*'s case (cited *supra*), it is essential to extract paragraph No.16, which reads hereunder:-

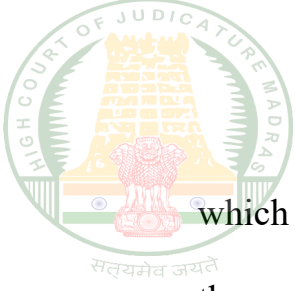


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W.P.No.32793 of 2026

“16. From the aforesaid paragraph in **Guntur Medical College v. Y. Mohan Rao [(1976) 3 SCC 411]**, it is plain as day that if the parents of a person are converted from Hinduism to Christianity and he is born after the conversion and embraces Hinduism and the members of the caste accept him, he comes within the fold of the caste.”

11. Thus, on re-conversion and if the members of the caste accept the petitioner, then, the petitioner is entitled to the certificate. In this regard, while the District Level Vigilance Committee has considered the issue, the findings are not clear and categorical. While the fact that the petitioner's father is buried in a Christian burial ground, may be relevant, the subsequent finding “In 1994 Ration Card, his daughter name was in Christian”, is not supported by any evidence. It is the claim of the petitioner that he got married only on 15.09.1994 and his first daughter was born on 10.11.1998. Therefore, the said finding appears to be unsustainable. Again, when the finding with reference to the community people accepting or not accepting, will be very relevant, the same is again not supported by any concrete reasons or facts. While, whether the petitioner follows the Hindu gods or Christianity, will be relevant, the reasoning that the petitioner and his family members are very fair in colour, they are tall and having good physique and speak Tamil and English and have curly hair, may not have any relevance. The manner, in

*W.P.No.32793 of 2026*

which the said reasons are mentioned in the impugned order, is also not in the context of any evaluation by any Anthropologist in this regard.

Therefore, while some of the reasons, contained in the proceedings of the first respondent, are relevant, however, they are not supported by detailed reasons, while some of the reasons are unacceptable.

12. In view thereof, this Writ Petition is ordered on the following terms:-

(i) The impugned proceedings, dated 04.05.2026 shall stand set aside.

(ii) The first respondent shall give an opportunity of personal hearing to the petitioner.

(iii) Within four weeks from the date of receipt of a web-copy of this order, the petitioner shall appear before the first respondent and submit all the documents including the photographs, and such other materials, which are in his possession, to prove that he is following Hinduism;

(iv) As far as Hinduism is concerned, the law has been laid down that it cannot be demonstrated merely by a formal conversion, but, an unequivocal and categorical following and belief in the religion. Therefore, the petitioner can submit all the documents which are at his



W.P.No.32793 of 2026

command before the Committee.

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(v) The petitioner can also submit such other evidence to prove that he has been accepted by the community fold after re-conversion;

(vi) It will be open for the District Level Committee to call for any other evidence also.

(vii) After appearance of the petitioner, within eight weeks therefrom, the District Level Committee shall pass orders afresh in accordance with law.

(viii) There shall be no order as to costs. Consequently, connected miscellaneous petitions are closed.

11.09.2026

Neutral Citation : yes
grs

To

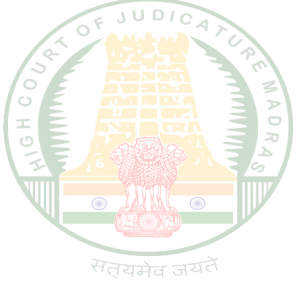
1. The Chairman,
District Level Vigilance Committee,
Tiruvannamalai,
The District Collector, Tiruvannamalai,
Collectorate, Tiruvannamalai – 606 604.
2. The Secretary to the Government,
Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department,
Fort St. George, Chennai – 600 009.



W.P.No.32793 of 2026

3. The Director AD-V/Deputy Secretary,
Office of Chief Vigilance Officer,
Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs,
Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance,
2nd Floor, Hudco Vishala Building,
Bhikaji Cama Place, New Delhi – 110 066.

4. The Commissioner of Customs,
Chennai General Commissionerate,
Custom House, No.60, Rajaji Salai,
Chennai – 600 001.



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W.P.No.32793 of 2026

D.BHARATHA CHAKRAVARTHY, J.

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W.P.No.32793 of 2026

11.09.2026