

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA AT ERNAKULAM  
PRESENT  
THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE RAJA VIJAYARAGHAVAN V  
&  
THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE K. V. JAYAKUMAR**

**Monday, the 18<sup>th</sup> day of May 2026 / 28th Vaisakha, 1948**

**WP(C) NO. 40608 OF 2025(A)**

**PETITIONER:**

1. SUO MOTU AS PER THE ORDER DATED 21.10.2025 IN SSCR 23/2025 REGARDING THE HEIST AND PLUNDERING OF GOLD FROM THE GOLD-CLADDED DWARAPALAKAS PLACED ON EITHER SIDE OF THE SREEKOVIL, SABARIMALA, PIN - 682031

**RESPONDENTS:**

1. THE STATE OF KERALA, REPRESENTED BY THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT, REVENUE (DEVASWOM) DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695001
2. THE TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD, REPRESENTED BY ITS SECRETARY, NANTHANCOD, KAWDIAR POST, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695003
3. THE CHIEF VIGILANCE AND SECURITY OFFICER (SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE), TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM HEAD QUARTERS, NANTHANCOD, KAWDIAR POST, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695003
4. THE STATE POLICE CHIEF, POLICE HEAD QUARTERS, VAZHUTHACAUD, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695010
5. THE SENIOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR, KERALA STATE AUDIT DEPARTMENT, TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695003.

BY S. RAJMOHAN, SR.GOVERNMENT PLEADER FOR R1 & R4

S.SREEKUMAR (SR.) along with SHRI.G.BIJU, STANDING COUNSEL FOR R2, R3 & R5

This petition again coming on for orders upon perusing the petition and the affidavit filed in support of WP(C) and this court's order dated 26/03/2026, the court passed the following:

**RAJA VIJAYARAGHAVAN V., & K.V. JAYAKUMAR, JJ.**

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**WP(C) No. 40608 of 2025**  
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**Dated this the 18th day of May, 2026**

**ORDER**

**Raja Vijayaraghavan V, J.**

This order shall be read in continuation of our previous orders.

2. Sri. S. Sasidharan, Investigating Officer of the Special Investigation Team (SIT), appeared in person and submitted a detailed report setting out the present stage of investigation in Crime Nos. 3700/CB/CU-IV/TVPM/D/2025 and 3701/CB/CU-IV/TVPM/D/2025.

3. From the report so submitted, it is seen that, as on date, 391 witnesses have been questioned and their statements recorded. As part of the investigation, the Special Investigation Team has carried out detailed enquiries and inspections at Smart Creations, Ambattur, Chennai, Sreeramapura Temple, Bengaluru, Mahalakshmi Layout Temple, Bengaluru, Jalahalli Temple, Bengaluru, and Aadisankaracharya Sannidhi Temple, Sringeri. A detailed mahazar has also been prepared regarding the various processes involved, including cleaning, buffing, gold plating, lacquer coating, packing and allied procedures, and the entire process has been video recorded as part of the investigation.

4. It is further reported that the analysis of the digital records and mobile phones seized in connection with the investigation is presently in progress. The recording of statements of witnesses under Section 183 of the BNSS is also being expedited.

5. One of the principal reasons for the delay in completing the investigation is the non-receipt of the detailed analysis report from the National Metallurgical Laboratory (CSIR NML), Jamshedpur, where approximately 36 samples have been forwarded for scientific examination. It is submitted that the tests being conducted include X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy (XRF) for determining the surface elemental composition, Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICP MS) for ultra trace impurity and elemental profiling, and Optical Emission Spectroscopy (OES) for analysing alloy composition and metallurgical uniformity. According to the Investigating Officer, these are highly specialised tests which require considerable time for completion.

6. It is further submitted that the laboratory authorities have informed the Special Investigation Team that the final analysis report is expected to be furnished within a period of ten days. It is only upon receipt of the said report that the investigating agency will be in a position to conclusively ascertain the exact nature and extent of the gold plating carried out over the gold clad plates, the quantity of gold involved, whether any substitution or swapping of copper plates had in fact taken place and such other matters.

7. We also take note of the submission that the aforesaid scientific tests are not being conducted in any other laboratory in the country and that the results of such tests are absolutely essential for arriving at a proper and scientifically supported conclusion in the matter. Furthermore, it is only after receipt of the

analysis report that the complicity and involvement of the various persons connected with the removal of the gold cladded copper plates of the Dwarapalakas during the month of September 2025 can be properly determined and the culpability of the persons concerned fixed. The registration of fresh crimes and the persons involved would also depend upon the outcome of the said report. We are therefore satisfied that the report from the National Metallurgical Laboratory, Jamshedpur, is indispensable for a complete and clear understanding of the facts under investigation and for fixing the liability of the accused persons involved.

8. Having considered the comprehensive report submitted by the Special Investigation Team and taking note of the nature and extent of the investigation presently underway, we are inclined to grant a further period of two weeks to complete the entire exercise.

Post on 08.06.2026.

Sd/-  
**RAJA VIJAYARAGHAVAN V,  
JUDGE**

Sd/-  
**K.V. JAYAKUMAR,  
JUDGE**

PS/18/05/26