



IN THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA AT ERNAKULAM

PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE MR. SOUMEN SEN

&

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE SYAM KUMAR V.M.

WEDNESDAY, THE 1ST DAY OF JULY 2026 / 10TH ASHADHA, 1948

WP(PIL) NO. 38 OF 2026

PETITIONER:

SREE NARAYANA DHARMA PRABODHANA SAMRAKSHNA SAMITHI
A REGISTERED TRUST, HAVING ITS OFFICE AT RAGASUDHA,
TNRA-L-13, THEVALLY P O, KOLLAM DISTRICT, THROUGH ITS
GENERAL SECRETARY M.V.PARAMESWARAN, PIN – 691009.

BY ADV. SHRI D. ANIL KUMAR

RESPONDENTS:

- 1 UNION OF INDIA,
REPRESENTED BY ITS SECRETARY TO MINISTRY OF HOME
AFFAIRS, (MHA), NORTH BLOCK, NEW DELHI, PIN – 110001.
- 2 STATE OF KERALA,
REPRESENTED BY ITS SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF HOME
AFFAIRS, SECRETARIAT, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN – 695001.
- 3 DIRECTOR,
VIGILANCE AND ANTI-CORRUPTION BUREAU, PMG,
OPPOSITE VIKAS BHAVAN BUS DEPO,
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN – 695001.
- 4 VELLAPPALLY NATESAN,
S/O. KESAVAN, VELLAPPALLIL HOUSE,
KANICHUKULANGARA, CHERTHALA,
ALAPPUZHA DISTRICT, PIN – 688582.



BY ADVS. SHRI JAISHANKAR V.NAIR, SENIOR PANEL COUNSEL
SHRI SINIL KUMAR.G (K/727/2013)
SRI.NEERAJ NARAYAN

THIS WRIT PETITION (PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION) HAVING FINALLY
HEARD ON 01.07.2026, THE COURT ON THE SAME DAY DELIVERED THE
FOLLOWING:



JUDGMENT

Soumen Sen, C.J.

Heard Mr. D. Anil Kumar, learned counsel for the petitioner; Ms. Cristy Therasa Suresh, learned counsel representing Mr. Jaishankar V. Nair, learned counsel for the Union of India; and Mr. Neeraj Narayanan, learned counsel for the 4th respondent.

2. This application is filed in the nature of a Public Interest Litigation challenging the declaration regarding the conferment of the Padma Bhushan on the 4th respondent. However, during the pendency of this petition, the Padma Bhushan has been conferred on the 4th respondent.

3. The learned counsel for the petitioner submits that numerous criminal cases are pending against the 4th respondent and that, having regard to the antecedents and background of the 4th respondent, the Committee ought not to have nominated the 4th respondent for the said award.

4. The Union of India has filed an affidavit in which the detailed procedure before nominations and recommendations have been spelt out. In the said affidavit, it is stated that while no rigid criteria for selection is applied by the Padma Awards



Committee, it looks for lifetime achievement of an individual while making a selection. The persons recommended for the awards are subjected to verification of their character and antecedents by the investigating/intelligence agencies of the Central Government. After taking into consideration the reports of these agencies, the Padma Awards Committee makes its recommendations to the Hon'ble President of India for its approval. After the approval of the Hon'ble President of India, the names are announced through Press Note on the eve of the Republic Day i.e., on 25th January. In the case of respondent No.4, the Committee considered the relevant reports pertaining to the character and antecedents, as received from the concerned Central Agencies. The examination of the materials so received revealed that though certain allegations have been raised and proceedings have been initiated against him, there was no finding of guilt, conviction or sentence imposed upon him by any court of competent jurisdiction. The recommendation in favour of the 4th respondent was made after due consideration of his contributions and public service.

5. During the course of the hearing, we are informed that, in one of the cases in which he has been arrayed as an accused,



the Hon'ble Supreme Court has stayed further proceedings and as such, as on date, there is no adverse finding against him except that a few F.I.Rs. have been registered. In none of those cases, the trial has commenced. The mere registration of an F.I.R., by itself, cannot constitute a relevant factor for declining to consider a candidate for the award, particularly when the candidate is otherwise found eligible on the basis of his contributions to public service and social welfare. The Committee in recommending his name has taken his contributions to public service and did not give much credence to unproven allegations. The Committee was of the view that such unproven allegations cannot, by itself, eclipse such significant contributions made by the 4th respondent or justify denial of recognition otherwise found meritorious by the competent authorities.

6. Moreover, as rightly pointed out by the learned counsel for the Union of India, under the Statutes and Rules relating to the Awards of Bharat Ratna, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri, the President has the power to cancel and annul the award of a decoration to any person. Upon such cancellation and annulment, the name of the recipient is erased from the



Register, and the recipient is required to surrender the decoration and the Sanad.

7. If the 4th respondent is ultimately convicted in any of the alleged offences, the Union of India may be required to consider annulling the conferment of the Padma Bhushan. At this stage, however, we do not find any reason to interfere with the conferment of the Padma Bhushan on the 4th respondent.

The writ petition stands dismissed. However, there shall be no order as to costs. Pending Applications, if any, stand closed.

Sd/-

SOUMEN SEN,
CHIEF JUSTICE

Sd/-

SYAM KUMAR V.M.,
JUDGE



APPENDIX OF WP(PIL) NO. 38 OF 2026

PETITIONER'S EXHIBITS:-

- EXHIBIT P1 TRUE COPY OF THE DEED OF TRUST OF THE PETITIONER TRUST DATED 6.3.2023.
- EXHIBIT P2 TRUE COPY OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE TRUST (SNDP SAMRAKSHNA SAMITHI) DATED 1.2.2026.
- EXHIBIT P3 TRUE COPY OF THE PRESS NOTE DATED 25.1.2026 ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS REGARDING CONFERMENT OF PADMA AWARDS FOR THE YEAR 2026.
- EXHIBIT P4 TRUE COPY OF THE JUDGMENT IN BALAJI RAGHAVAN VS. UNION OF INDIA (1996(1) SCC 361) DATED 15.12.1995 OF THE HON'BLE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA.
- EXHIBIT P5 TRUE COPY OF THE MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION OF SNDP YOGAM DATED NIL.
- EXHIBIT P5(A) TRUE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF EXHIBIT-P5.
- EXHIBIT P6 TRUE COPY OF THE ORDER DATED 11.4.2018 IN CRL.M.C. NO.6117/2016 OF THE HON'BLE HIGH COURT OF KERALA.
- EXHIBIT P7 TRUE COPY OF THE ORDER DATED 8.1.2026 IN W.P.(C) NO.14599/2020 OF THE HON'BLE HIGH COURT OF KERALA.
- EXHIBIT P8 TRUE COPY OF THE ORDER DATED 5.7.2024 IN W.P.(C) NO.14599/2020 OF THE HON'BLE HIGH COURT OF KERALA.
- EXHIBIT P10 TRUE COPY OF THE REPRESENTATION DATED 27/1/2026 SUBMITTED BY PETITIONER BEFORE THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA WITH COPY TO THE 1ST RESPONDENT (WITHOUT ANNEXURES).
- EXHIBIT P11 TRUE COPY OF THE BOOKING RECEIPT (USER ID 10381595) ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF POSTS DATED 2/2/2026.

RESPONDENTS' EXHIBITS:-

- Exhibit R1(A) A true copy of the Notification Nos.1-Pres. /55,2-Pres./55,3-Pres./55 and 4-Pres./55 dated 08.01.1955 as amended up to 01.01.1969.