MONDAY, THE 20TH DAY OF JULY 2026

WP(C) No. 40608 of 2025

SUO MOTU

VS

THE STATE OF KERALA & OTHERS

ADVS FOR PETITIONER:

SUO MOTU (IN PERSON)

ADVS FOR RESPONDENT/S:

SRI.S.SREEKUMAR (SR.), SHRI.G.BIJU,SC,TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD

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

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W.P.(C) No. 40608 OF 2025

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Dated this the 20th day of July, 2026

ORDER

Raja Vijayaraghavan V, J.

We have gone through the report submitted by Sri H. Venkitesh, the Additional Director General of Police (Crimes). We have interacted with Sri Sasidharan, IPS, Police Superintendent and Assistant Director, KEPA, the officer heading the Special Investigation Team.

2. It was after taking note of the fact that specialised scientific examinations, namely, X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy (XRF) for determining 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, are available in the country only at the CSIR National Metallurgical Laboratory, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, that this Court had granted permission to the Special Investigation Team to forward the samples to the said laboratory.

3. The conduct of the above analysis was indispensable for determining the precise manner in which the accused allegedly stripped the gold from the copper plates, the quantity of gold pilfered, and for ascertaining the

originality, composition and metallurgical characteristics of the various copper plates.

4. We find that the final report from the CSIR National Metallurgical Laboratory was received only on 06.07.2026. This explains the delay in completing the investigation. The report further reveals that the stripping salt seized from Smart Creations was also forwarded to the laboratory for detailed scientific examination in order to ascertain whether it was capable of stripping the gold cladding from the copper plates in the manner alleged by the prosecution. This has given fresh perspectives to the Team and the method adopted by the accused. The report further states that the final opinion rendered by the National Metallurgical Laboratory provides a comprehensive scientific explanation of the entire process allegedly adopted by the accused. It elucidates the manner in which the gold was stripped from the copper plates and identifies the composition and metallurgical characteristics of the copper plates. The test has also enabled the Investigating agency to have a clear idea as to the quality and quantity of gold originally used for cladding the plates, and also the amount of gold utilised for nano gold plating at Smart Creations. These findings would furnish the scientific basis for understanding the modus operandi allegedly employed by the accused. It is further stated in the report that the officers of the Special Investigation Team visited the National Metallurgical Laboratory from 09.07.2026 to 11.07.2026 and have interacted in detail with the Scientific Officers who

conducted the examinations. Their statements have been recorded as part of the investigation so as to place the scientific findings in their proper evidentiary perspective.

5. It is further stated that, insofar as Crime No. 3701/CB/CU-IV/TVPM/D/2025 is concerned, the investigation has substantially been completed and the final report can be filed within a period of thirty days from today. Thereafter, appropriate steps will be taken to obtain the requisite prosecution sanction from the competent authority. Insofar as Crime No. 3700/CB/CU-IV/TVPM/D/2025 is concerned, it is stated that the transactions relating to the alleged pilfering of gold during September 2025 are also being clubbed along with. The Investigating Agency submits that the scientific findings received from the National Metallurgical Laboratory have provided fresh insights and a clearer understanding of the modus operandi adopted by the accused insofar as the transactions of the year 2025 as well. It is also reported that, as on date, as many as 54 witnesses have been examined in connection with the transactions pertaining to the year 2025. The Investigating Agency has further assured this Court that the final report in the said crime will also be filed without any further delay. To carry out further steps in connection with the investigation, which are confidential, some more time is sought.

6. Having carefully considered the reports placed before us, we are satisfied that the scientific analysis undertaken by the CSIR National Metallurgical

Laboratory constitutes a vital and indispensable component of the investigation. The willingness of the institution to undertake this challenging assignment and the quality of the scientific analysis provided have substantially aided the progress of the investigation. It has been brought to our notice that no other laboratory in the country possesses the specialised infrastructure, equipment and technical expertise necessary to carry out the sophisticated metallurgical examinations involved in the present case. As already observed in our earlier orders, this is not a case that rests merely on ocular or circumstantial evidence. The prosecution is basing its conclusions on scientific and forensic evidence.

7. Now that the final scientific report has been received, we direct the Investigating Agency to conclude the investigation in Crime No. 3700/CB/CU-IV/TVPM/D/2025 and to file the final report before the jurisdictional court at the earliest.

List the matter on 03.09.2026.

sd/-
RAJA VIJAYARAGHAVAN V,
JUDGE

sd/-
K.V. JAYAKUMAR,
JUDGE

PS/20/07/26