

RAJA VIJAYARAGHAVAN V.,

&

K.V. JAYAKUMAR, JJ.

WP(C) No. 40608 of 2025

Dated this the 07th day of October, 2026

ORDER

Raja Vijayaraghavan V, J.

This Writ Petition was posted today to obtain an update regarding the stage of investigation in Crime Nos. 3700 of 2025 and 3701 of 2025.

2. Crime No. 3700 of 2025 was registered in connection with offences relating to the removal of gold from the Dwarapalaka idol plates and the side plates. Crime No. 3701 of 2025 was registered in connection with offences relating to the removal of cladded gold from the side frames of the doors and the connected plates of the Sreekovil.

3. When the matter was taken up for consideration on 03.09.2026, we directed the Special Investigation Team to expedite the investigation in both crimes and to complete the same at the earliest. We had also directed that, insofar as Crime No. 3701 of 2025 was concerned, the final report shall be laid before the jurisdictional Court on or before 25.09.2026. While passing the order dated 03.09.2026, we were informed that the analysis report from the National Metallurgical Laboratory would be

obtained within a period of two weeks from 03.09.2026.

4. Sri. Sasidharan, IPS, the officer heading the Special Investigation Team, submitted that the Analysts attached to the National Metallurgical Laboratory have sought some more time and that the analysis report is now expected to be obtained only on 12.10.2026. It is submitted that an officer of the Special Investigation Team has been deputed to obtain the analysis report. The Investigating Officer has also placed before us a copy of the draft charge sheet in Crime No. 3701 of 2025.

5. On perusal of the draft charge sheet, we find that as many as 292 witnesses have been cited by the investigating agency to prove the charges. Sri. Sasidharan, IPS, the Investigating Officer, submitted that the certified copy of the forensic results relating to the data analysis is yet to be obtained. He further submitted that, since offences under Section 13(1)(a), read with Section 13(2), of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, as amended by the Amendment Act, 2018, have also been incorporated in the charge sheet, prosecution sanction is required to be obtained. He submitted that the charge sheet can be finalised and a request for grant of prosecution sanction can be made on or before 25.10.2026.

6. Having gone through the draft charge sheet and the meticulous manner in which the investigation has been carried out by the Special Investigation Team, we are of the view that the time sought by the Chief of the Special Investigation Team can be granted. Accordingly, time is granted up to 25.10.2026 for finalising the charge sheet and taking necessary steps for obtaining prosecution sanction in Crime No. 3701

of 2025.

7. Insofar as Crime No. 3700 of 2025 is concerned, the Investigating Officer submitted that, pursuant to the directions issued by this Court, the incidents which led to the transportation of the Dwarapalakas in 2025 have also been clubbed along with the aforesaid crime. It is submitted that, insofar as the said case is concerned, upon receipt of the analysis report from the National Metallurgical Laboratory, the charge sheet can be finalised and a request for prosecution sanction can be submitted on or before 25.11.2026.

8. We have also gone through the report submitted by Sri. Sasidharan, IPS, the Investigating Officer. Having considered the facts and circumstances of the case and the nature and extent of the investigation that has been carried out, we are of the view that, insofar as Crime No. 3700 of 2025 is concerned, appropriate directions can be issued to the Investigating Officer to finalise the charge sheet and submit a request for prosecution sanction on or before 25.11.2026.

9. We make it clear that, now that the relevant analysis reports have been obtained and the report from the Forensic Science Laboratory has also been received, and having regard to the fact that the investigation in both crimes is stated to be at its final stage, all necessary steps shall be taken to ensure that the request for prosecution sanction in Crime No. 3701 of 2025 is submitted on or before 25.10.2026 and that the corresponding request in Crime No. 3700 of 2025 is submitted on or before 25.11.2026. The Special Investigation Team shall make every endeavour to

adhere to the aforesaid timelines and bring the investigation to its logical conclusion without any further delay.

Post on 26.10.2026.

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

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

APM