

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA AT ERNAKULAM

PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE RAJA VIJAYARAGHAVAN V

&

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE K. V. JAYAKUMAR

Wednesday, the 28th day of January 2026 / 8th Magha, 1947

DBAR NO. 2 OF 2025

IN THE MATTER OF TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD - SPECIAL REPORT (FINAL) ON THE
SERIOUS EMBEZZLEMENT AT THE PETROL PUMP, NILAKKAL - REG:

PETITIONER:

JOINT DIRECTOR,
KERALA STATE AUDIT DEPARTMENT, TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD,
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695003

BY GOVERNMENT PLEADER for the petitioner

RESPONDENTS:

1. THE SECRETARY, TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD, NANTHANCOD, KAWADIAR POST, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695003
*ADDL.R2 IMPEADED
2. THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL, NATIONAL INFORMATICS CENTRE (NIC), MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, E2A, RAJAJI BHAVAN, BASANTH NAGAR, CHENNAI - 600 090
*IS SUO MOTU IMPEADED AS ADDITIONAL RESPONDENT AS PER ORDER DATED 17/09/2025 IN DBAR.NO.2/2025
*ADDL.R3 IMPEADED
3. KERALA STATE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED (KSITIL), REPRESENTED BY ITS MANAGING DIRECTOR, 1ST FLOOR, SAANKETHIKA, PF ROAD, PATTOM PALACE P.O., THIRUVANANTHAPURAM - 695004
*IS SUO MOTU IMPEADED AS ADDITIONAL RESPONDENT NO.3 AS PER ORDER DATED 16.01.2026 IN DBAR NO.2/2025

BY SRI.G.BIJU, SC, TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD FOR R1

BY SMT.O.M.SHALINA, DEPUTY SOLICITOR GENERAL OF INDIA

FOR ADDL.R2

BY SRI.K.A.ABDUL SALAM, SC, KITFRA & SRI.SUNIL V.MOHAMMED FOR R3

THIS DEVASWOM BOARD AUDIT REPORT ALONG WITH CONNECTED CASE HAVING COME UP FOR ORDERS AGAIN ON 28/01/2026, UPON PERUSING THE REPORT AND THIS COURT'S ORDER DATED 16/01/2026, THE COURT ON THE SAME DAY PASSED THE FOLLOWING:



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

DBAR No. 2 OF 2025

Dated this the 28th day of January, 2026

ORDER

Raja Vijayaraghavan V, J.

By order dated 16.01.2026, we took note of the submission made by the learned Standing Counsel appearing for the Travancore Devaswom Board that the Board has taken a conscious decision to have a professionally prepared Functional Requirement Specification strictly based on the functional requirements already identified by this Court in the earlier proceedings. It was further submitted that, having regard to the complexity, scale, and sensitivity of the proposed digitization exercise, and in view of the admitted lack of adequate in-house technical expertise within the Travancore Devaswom Board to design such a comprehensive technology framework, the Board has resolved to entrust the task with the Kerala State Information Technology Infrastructure Ltd. (KITFRA), as a technical consultant to ensure professional competence and adherence to industry standards.

2. In view of the said submission, we directed the technical lead of the project responsible for the preparation of the RFP on behalf of KITFRA to

make himself available for virtual interactions with this Court, so as to enable the Court to meaningfully assess the technical competence, institutional preparedness, and prior experience of KITFRA in handling projects of similar magnitude, sensitivity, and public importance, particularly in the context of religious and cultural institutions.

3. In compliance with the directions, Dr. Santhosh Babu, IAS, Managing Director of KITFRA, Dr. Noufal, Deputy Director, Information Kerala Mission and Chief Architect of KSMART, have appeared virtually before this Court. Rahul A. Raj, General Manager, KITFRA, appeared in person. We have also heard the submissions of Sri K.A. Abdul Salam, the learned Standing Counsel appearing for KITFRA, the learned Standing Counsel appearing for the Board and the learned Government Pleader.

4. We have interacted extensively with the Senior Management Officials of KITFRA on various technical and administrative aspects of the proposed project. During the course of these interactions, we were apprised that within a period of two weeks from today, the officers of KITFRA would indicate the precise time frame within which the Technical Requirement Specification (TRS)/System Requirement Specification (SRS) for the project can be prepared after acquiring the requisite domain knowledge pertaining to temple administration and related functions. We would like to remind KITFRA

that it would also be within their mandate to prepare a comprehensive Detailed Project Report (DPR), Business Requirement Document, Data Migration & Legacy Integration Plan, Project Implementation Plan, Scope of Work (SoW), and such other essential documents to make the tendering process transparent, structured, and efficient. Every aspect of the matter has to be professionally and comprehensively charted out so that the work can be entrusted to a competent software firm to design a robust microservices-based digital ecosystem architecture for the temples under the administration and management of the Travancore Devaswom Board.

5. In the order dated 30.10.2025, we had observed that the software to be designed shall seamlessly integrate all essential functions, including—(i) accounting and finance; (ii) auditor access and risk profiling; (iii) procurement, contracts, and vendor management; (iv) human resources and payroll; (v) project and construction management; (vi) inventory and asset control; (vii) temple services and offerings; and (viii) online accommodation booking. The proposed architecture shall include role-based access controls, tamper-proof audit trails, and real-time monitoring of all temples and institutions under the Board. This integrated digital framework is intended to ensure transparency, efficiency, accountability, and improved service delivery in temple administration and public interface.

6. As KITFRA has undertaken to place before this Court a detailed statement outlining the entire exercise and the time frame required for the same within a period of two weeks, post this matter on 11.02.2026 at 10.15 a.m. for further consideration and monitoring of progress.

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

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

PS/28/01/26

