

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR MINORITY
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (NCMEI)**

Case No. 114 of 2023

In the matter of :-

**Santa Maria English Medium School, Santhome, Mundamveli
P.O., Kochi, District Ernakulam, Kerala-682507**

.....**Petitioner**

V/s

**Director, Directorate of Minority Welfare, Government of Kerala,
4th Floor, Vikas Bhavan, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**

..... **Respondent**

Present: Mr. Jose Abraham, Advocate for the petitioner

ORDER

DATED 26.04.2023

Justice Narendra Kumar Jain, Chairman, NCMEI

1. This petition has been received on 12.04.2023 by hand through Mr. Jose Abraham, Advocate of the petitioner institution for grant of Minority Status Certificate (in short 'MSC') to Santa Maria English Medium School, Santhome, Mundamveli P.O., Kochi, District Ernakulam, Kerala-682507.
2. Learned counsel for the petitioner filed an affidavit of Sr. Kunjamma, Managing Trustee of Society of Sisters Servants of Our Lady of Sorrows in support of the averments made in the petition and also to prove that the beneficiaries of the petitioner institution are members of the Christian minority community and stating that the petitioner institution shall not deny admission of eligible candidate of the Christian minority community subject to the eligibility of the students and availability of the accommodation in the petitioner institution.
3. Learned counsel for the petitioner has filed copy of Unique ID No. : KL/2019/0222979 of the petitioner's Trust as given by the Niti Aayog Portal NGO Darpan, copy of application dated 05.08.2022 sent to the State Competent Authority i.e. Director, Directorate of Minority Welfare, Government of Kerala, 4th Floor, Vikas Bhavan, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, copy of earlier application dated

23.01.2019 sent to State Competent Authority i.e. Secretary, General Education Department, Govt. of Kerala, notarized copy of order no. 4896/MSA/2022/DMW dated 29.03.2023 passed by the State Competent Authority, notarized copy of Trust Deed dated 27.11.1999 of Society of Sisters Servants of Our Lady of Sorrows, notarized copy of Supplementary Trust Deed dated 12.12.2018, copy of Affiliation order dated 06.08.2021 issued by the Deputy Secretary / Joint Secretary (Aff), CBSE to the unaided petitioner institution from 01.04.2022 to 31.03.2027 for the Secondary / Senior Secondary Level and resolution of the General Body of the Trust in favour of Sr. Kunjamma, Managing Trustee of Society of Sisters Servants of Our Lady of Sorrows for obtaining MSA from this Commission.

4. As per the information supplied by the petitioner unaided institution with regard to students strength in the year 2020-21, it is mentioned that out of total 956 students, 748 students were from the Christian minority community, 47 students were from the Muslim minority community and 161 students were Hindus, in the year 2021-22, it is mentioned that out of total 1010 students, 785 students were from the Christian minority community, 53 students were from the Muslim minority community and 172 students were Hindus and in the year 2022-23, it is mentioned that out of total 1163 students, 910 students are from the Christian minority community, 73 students are from the Muslim minority community and 180 students are Hindus. It is relevant to mention here that in the year 2020-21, out of the total 56 teachers, 50 teachers were from Christian Minority community, in the year 2021-22, out of the total 54 teachers, 49 teachers were from Christian Minority community, in the year 2022-23, out of the total 59 teachers, 50 teachers are from Christian Minority community. Hon'ble Apex Court, various High Courts as well as this Commission in case of Buckley Primary School, Cuttack, Orissa Vs. Government of Orissa (order passed by the Commission in Case No. 1320 of 2009 dated 6.7.2010) have categorically held that the percentage of admission of students from notified minority community in a minority educational

institution is not an indicia for determining the minority status of such institution. This Commission has also decided that there must be reasonable strength of students of particular minority community in a minority educational institution. The percentage could be determined based on the actual proportion of specific minority community in the State population as per prevailing census.

5. Earlier the petitioner institution has filed petition for grant of MSC on dated 09.05.2019 which was registered as Case No. 359 of 2019 and the case was decided by the Commission on dated 11.08.2021 by the following observation :-

“In view of the above facts and observations, it is an admitted fact that the petitioner institution had applied to Competent Authority of the State of Kerala for grant of NOC under Section 10 of NCMEI Act, 2004 and the said application was not decided in accordance with the provisions of NCMEI Act, 2004 and verdict of the Hon’ble Apex Court by the State competent authority and passed the impugned order 08.03.2019. So in the interest of justice, we are of the considered opinion, without going on the merits of the case, it is just proper and fit case to send the matter back to the State Competent Authority to decide the application of the petitioner institution for grant of NOC under Section 10 of the NCMEI Act, 2004 on merits after considering all the documents produced by the petitioner institution at the earliest, expeditiously.

Office is directed to send copy of this order to the State Competent Authority and in the interest of justice, in addition the petitioner institution is also directed to produce certified copy of this order before the State Competent Authority immediately for compliance of this order.

In view of above, the present petition is disposed of in accordance with this order.”

Thereafter, the petitioner institution has filed application for grant of NOC before the State Competent Authority on dated 05.08.2022 and that application was accepted by the State Competent Authority and the following order dated 29.03.2023 has been passed :-

“The application alongwith the supporting documents has been examined in detail and also heard the authorized representative of the applicant on 12.04.2022. As the application for NOC has been found prima facie admissible, the application has been referred to the District Collector, Ernakulam for inspection in the institution and report.

As per the reference 4 cited, The District Collector, Ernakulam after conducting physical verification of the institution and scrutiny of records and registers, has reported the eligibility of the educational institution of the applicant for Minority Status and also recommended for grant of No Objection Certificate for the purpose to the Higher Secondary level of the Institution.

In these circumstances, on the facts revealed in hearing the applicant on institution and by the scrutiny of all relevant records in original submitted while hearing and after considering the report and recommendation of the District Collector, Ernakulam, it has been found that the Higher Secondary Section of Santa Maria English Medium School, Santhome, Mundamveli P.O., Kochi, District Ernakulam, Kerala-682507 has been functioning with the objective of subserving the interest of the Christian minority community and the institution satisfies all other eligibility conditions for becoming a minority educational institution. Therefore, the Higher Secondary section of Santa Maria English Medium School, Santhome, Mundamveli P.O., Kochi, District Ernakulam, Kerala-682507 has been granted No Objection Certificate for the purpose of obtaining Minority Status Certificate, under Section 10 of the National Commission for Minority Educational Institution Act, 2004.”

6. Heard the Learned Counsel for the petitioner, perused the pleading of the petitioner institution, the documents filed by the petitioner and affidavit of Sr. Kunjamma, Managing Trustee of Society of Sisters Servants of Our Lady of Sorrows. In fact and circumstances of the case, need not to give notice of this petition, because respondent has granted NOC in favour of the petitioner institution.
7. The petitioner institution has applied for grant of minority status certificate on the ground that the same has been established primarily for the benefit of the members of the Christian minority community and is being administered by Society of Sisters Servants of Our Lady of Sorrows which is managed and run by the members of the Christian minority community. The aforesaid averments made in the petition find ample corroboration from the documentary evidence produced on behalf of the petitioner institution and the affidavit of Sr. Kunjamma, Managing Trustee of Society of Sisters Servants of Our Lady of Sorrows.
8. We have perused the Supplementary Trust Deed of the petitioner institution which was registered before the Sub Registrar on dated 12.12.2018 which is before the filing of NOC applications U/s 10 of

the NCMEI Act, 2004 dated 05.08.2022 and petition for grant of MSC on dated 12.04.2023. So it is clear that the amendment has been done before the application filed before the State Competent Authority U/s 10 of the NCMEI Act, 2004 and also petition for grant of MSC before this Commission.

9. The Supplementary Trust Deed and all the documents produced by the petitioner institution clearly reflects that the beneficiaries of the petitioner institution are primarily members of the Christian minority community. In addition, the said facts are also stands proved from the documents and affidavit filed by the petitioner. There is no document on record to rebut the documentary evidence produced on behalf of the petitioner institution.
10. We have perused the order No. 4896/MSA/2022/DMW dated 29.03.2023 passed by the State Competent Authority. By the above order State Competent Authority of Kerala has granted NOC in favour of the petitioner institution.
11. Relying on the said unrebutted evidence produced on behalf of the petitioner, we find and hold that Santa Maria English Medium School, Santhome, Mundamveli P.O., Kochi, District Ernakulam, Kerala-682507 run by Society of Sisters Servants of Our Lady of Sorrows is eligible for grant of minority status on religious basis. The evidence also proves that the said educational institution was established with the main objective of sub-serving the interests of the Christian minority community.
12. Consequently, Santa Maria English Medium School, Santhome, Mundamveli P.O., Kochi, District Ernakulam, Kerala-682507, which is for Secondary / Senior Secondary Level, is declared as a minority unaided educational institution covered under Article 30 of the Constitution of India within the meaning of Section 2(g) of the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions Act, 2004.
13. A minority status certificate be issued accordingly.
14. However, it is made clear that if State Govt. has any objection in granting MSC in favour of the petitioner institution i.e. Santa Maria

English Medium School, Santhome, Mundamveli P.O., Kochi, District Ernakulam, Kerala-682507, is free to file an application for cancellation of MSC under section 12(c) of the NCMEI Act, 2004.

15. In view of the above, the present petition is disposed of in accordance with this order.

Signed, pronounced and published on **Wednesday, 26th Day of April, 2023.**

**JUSTICE NARENDRA KUMAR JAIN
CHAIRMAN**

**DR. JASPAL SINGH
MEMBER**

**DR. SHAHID AKHTER
MEMBER**

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