

(2001) 08 MAD CK 0009

In the Madras High Court

Case No : Writ Petition No. 13540 of 2001 and WMP No. 19912 of 2001

Dr. K. Natarajan, Director, Dr. K.N. Study Centre for
Humanism

APPELLANT

Vs

The Union of India and The University Grants Commission,
New Delhi

RESPONDENT

Date of Decision : 10-08-2001

Acts Referred:

Citation : (2001) 08 MAD CK 0009

Hon'ble Judges : F.M. Ibrahim Kalifulla, J

Bench : Single Bench

Advocate : B. Venugopal, for the Appellant;

Final Decision : Dismissed

Judgement

F.M. Ibrahim Kalifulla, J.—The petitioner seeks for the issuance of a writ of mandamus, to forbear the respondents from introducing Vedic

Astrology as a subject of scientific study in any of the Universities in India, pursuant to the circular with guidelines of the second respondent

dt.23.02.2001 in F. No. 1-38/2000 (CPP-1I) or by issuing any directions relating to the subject matter. According to the petitioner, the

introduction of Vedic Astrology as a subject of scientific study in the universities would involve unnecessary expenditure of public funds and will be

of no benefit to the human beings. The petitioner would further contend that in a secular country like ours, which treats all religions alike, as given

out in the Preamble of the Constitution, the introduction of the subject Vedic Astrology as a study in the field of education, would cause a dent in

the secular set up. The sum and substance of the stand of the petitioner is that the introduction of this subject as a scientific study in any educational

institution would only be in furtherance of the propagation of the principles of one particular community and therefore, such a step should not be permitted to take place.

2. I am unable to appreciate the stand of the petitioner, inasmuch as, by introducing one new subject for study in the field of education, I am of the view that, that cannot be construed to mean as anybody's attempt to influence the mind of the people to follow any particular religious practice.

The very purpose of imparting education, is to gain knowledge and also Education is stated to be the teacher of a teacher. Therefore there should

be every scope for making a study on very many subjects in order to enrich one's craving for knowledge. Any such attempt from any quarters in

furtherance of that pursuit, in my opinion should not, therefore, be stultified. Astrology itself as per dictionary meaning to the study of the

movements and relative positions of celestial bodies interpreted as having an influence on human affairs and the natural world. By introducing the

subject of Vedic Astrology either as a science subject or as an arts subject or under any other category, it will have to be held that the same would

only help the pupil to gain knowledge in that particular subject. It cannot also be said that by merely introducing it as a science subject there is

going to be any compulsion on any one to undertake that study in great depth and thereby providing scope for propagating any particular religion.

For that matter, it can be said that that will be so on any other subject which has got its origin on any other religious texts. When it is for the pupil

concerned to select any particular field or subject in furtherance of his future career, merely because the subject has got its basis origin traceable to

some cult, it cannot be held that the same would only result in propagation of a particular religion. On that footing, it cannot be held that there

should be a ban on introduction of that subject as a course of scientific study.

3. However, it will have to be stated that if the petitioner or for that matter any other well informed citizen could come forward with any other

valuable offer or suggestion to the respondents pointing out similar other fields or subjects which could be made available to the student community

to opt for it and which would also enrich their knowledge to such an extent that the same would be of greater assistance for the betterment of the

society, be that origin of such subjects or the basic course materials are

traceable or available in any other ancient Holy testaments of Thirukkural or any other similar ancient religion oriented or literary work, the origin of which are known world wide and which cannot be contradicted by any one, the respondents should come forward to offer such subject also as a course of study. The petitioner can as well concentrate his valuable thinking in those lines and suggest ways and means for the respondents to open up many more fields for education based on such other ancient testaments or other literary works. Certainly, when such constructive ideas are suggested there can be no doubt that the respondents would definitely bestow their whole hearted encouragement on such valuable ideas and introduce many more useful branches of studies akin to Vedic Astrology that are equally available in the other religious testaments which would go a long way for the betterment of the society apart from paving the way for keeping the secular set up in tact. I therefore, do not find any scope for countenancing the claim of the petitioner made in this writ petition: The writ petition, therefore, fails and it is accordingly, dismissed. No costs. Consequently, the connected W.M.P. is also dismissed.