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India's Supreme Court Denies RK Mission Non-Hindu Status

The Ramakrishna Mission has ultimately failed in its attempt, begun in 1980, to have themselves declared a non-Hindu minority religion-"Ramakrishnaism"-under Indian law. On July 2nd, Indian Supreme Court Justices Kuldip Singh, N. Venkatachaliah and Saghir Ahmed set aside an earlier verdict of a Calcutta court that declared the RK Mission separate from the Hindu religion and therefore entitled to protection under Article 30(1) of the Indian constitution. Under this article, the Mission would have been able to retain complete control of its extensive school system, a privilege accorded in India only to religious minorities such as Christianity and Islam. Now the schools, which receive substantial government subsidies, will come under government control, and that too of Bengal's ruling communist party. The Hindu world was shocked in 1986 to learn that the RK Mission founded by Swami Vivekananda was opting out of the Hindu family to become "the cult or religion of Sri Ramakrishna" for political/economic reasons. A further report will appear in our September issue.