



W.P.No.15120 of 2019

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 19.09.2025

CORAM :

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE N. SATHISH KUMAR

AND

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE D.BHARATHA CHAKRAVARTHY

W.P.No.15120 of 2019

and

W.M.P.Nos.8422 of 2024 & 15112 of 2019

W.P.No.15120 of 2019

G.Subramania Koushik

... Petitioner (s)

Vs

1.The Principal Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu,
Environment and Forest Department,
Secretariat, Fort St.George,
Chennai 600 009 and 17 others

... Respondent(s)

W.M.P.No.8422 of 2024

G.Subramania Koushik

... Petitioner (s)

Vs

1.The Principal Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu,
Environment and Forest Department,
Secretariat, Fort St.George,
Chennai 600 009 and 15 others

... Respondent(s)



W.P.No.15120 of 2019

W.M.P.No.15112 of 2019

G.Subramania Koushik

... Petitioner (s)

Vs

1.The Principal Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu,
Environment and Forest Department,
Secretariat, Fort St.George,
Chennai 600 009 and 15 others

... Respondent(s)

W.P.No.15120 of 2019

For Petitioner : Mr.T.V.Suresh Kumar
M/s Genicon & Associates
For Respondent(s): Dr.T.Seenivasan
Special Government Pleader for
RR1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13
and 14
Mrs.A.Sri Jeyanthi for R4
Mr.R.Srinivas, Senior Counsel for
Mr.K.Madhan for R12
Mr.V.Chandrasekaran, SPC
for R15
Mr.B.N.Suchindran,
Standing Counsel for TNPCB for
R16
Mr.P.T.Ramkumar, Standing Counsel
for Railways

Amici Curiae

1. Mr.C.Mohan, Advocate
2. Mr.T.Mohan, Senior Advocate
3. Mr.M.Santhanaraman, Advocate
4. Mr.Rahul Balaji, Advocate



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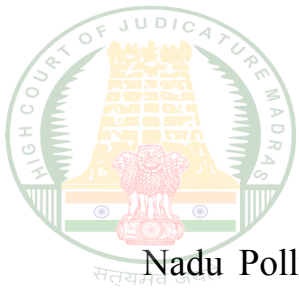
ORDER

Carrying capacity / E-Pass :

(W.M.P.No.8422 of 2024)

The latest interim reports of the experts have been filed. The experts submitted that the work is in progress and they will be able to complete it by December, 2025. They have also submitted that there is a need for some micro level data, which they have requested from the District Administrations of Nilgiris and Dindigul Districts. Let the District Administrations of Nilgiris and Dindigul Districts provide the data as requested by the experts as expeditiously as possible, not later than a week's time. Any other data or particulars which are required by the experts shall also be provided and the Nodal Officer shall coordinate with all the line Departments for provision of those data.

2.Mr.Rahul Balaji, learned *Amicus Curiae*, would also submit that a meeting of the officials of all the line Departments with the experts will be a useful exercise before final report comes out. The experts also welcome the idea. Therefore, all the stakeholder Departments such as Tourism Department, Tamil

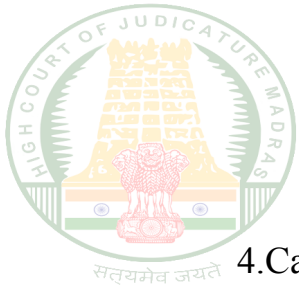


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Nadu Pollution Control Board, Forest Department, and Revenue and Municipal

Administration, can all place their views as stakeholders before the experts. A meeting under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary of the State of Tamil Nadu and the Secretary of the Environment and Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Forest, Government of Tamil Nadu, shall be convened as per their convenience with the experts and with the heads of all the line Departments, so that they can place their views before the experts, so that the experts can also take into consideration the views of all the Departments and at the same time, also require any further information/data from the line Departments, which shall be arranged and furnished as expeditiously as possible. It is once again reiterated that the entire exercise shall be with an eco-centric approach, the primary aim being preservation of bio-diversity, flora and fauna while addressing other needs.

3.The learned Advocate General can also be a part of the meeting so that the exercise will be more fruitful. The learned *Amici Curiae* can also participate in the meeting and put forth their views. We direct the Government side to conduct the meeting as expeditiously as possible.



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4.Call on 31.10.2025 to place the developments on record.

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E-Pass for Valparai :

5.While considering the issue of carrying capacity as a follow up to the implementation of the upper cap limit for the vehicles and implementation of e-pass system, it is reported before us that the entire unregulated crowd, which does not get a vehicle pass to Nilgiris and Kodaikanal, is suddenly flocking to Valparai. Valparai is even more sensitive area with more wildlife. A detailed memo is also filed by the learned *Amici Curiae*. As a matter of fact, the movement of elephants and other wildlife is greater in Valparai and the Annamalai Tiger Reserve, which is in Valparai, is even more a great ecologically fragile and sensitive zone with more man-animal conflicts already happening.

6.In that regard, as a first measure, we direct the District Administration, Coimbatore, to set up check-posts at all the entry points leading to Valparai and first, start implementing the issuance of e-pass system as is implemented in The Nilgiris and Kodaikanal. The said system shall be started as expeditiously as possible not later than 1st of November, 2025, and in every check post, PET bottles



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and plastic check shall also be conducted. Suitable personnel shall be deputed by the District Administration, Coimbatore, for such exercise. The District Collector, Coimbatore, shall also ensure that no PET bottle, single use plastic bottle, etc., as banned, is being used or sold in Valparai.

7.Call on 31.10.2025.

Nilgiris Mountain Railway/Southern Railway :

(W.M.P.No.15112 of 2019)

8.With reference to our order dated 01.08.2025, a status report is filed by Mr.P.T.Ramkumar, learned Standing Counsel on behalf of the Railways Administration. The learned counsel, pointing out to the status report, would submit that instructions have been made with reference to four catering units at Kallar, Hillgrove, Coonoor and Udthagamandalam Stations not to use any plastic items such as paper cups, plastic spoon, plastic food containers and plastic carry bags in these stalls while serving to the public. We are of the view that similar instructions have to be issued to the Mettupalayam Station also which very much comes within the corridor and it is the starting point. The learned counsel submits



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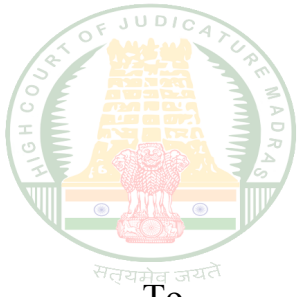
that separate instructions have been issued with reference to the particular timings and he will produce the same. But we are of the view that Mettupalayam Station also, being very near to the corridor, as instructed in the other Stations, in the Mettupalayam Station also, use of single-use plastic items should be completely banned.

9.Let the orders be complied with and further status report be filed before this Court. With reference to the removal of waste and solid waste management, etc., let the same be carried on as mentioned in the status report and further status report be filed on the next date of hearing. The Railways shall also nominate a member in the District Environment Audit Committee as directed by us in our earlier order dated 29.08.2025.

10.Call on 31.10.2025.

[N.S.K.J.,] [D.B.C.J.,]
19.09.2025

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To
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1.The Principal Secretary
to Government of Tamil Nadu,
Environment and Forest Department,
Secretariat, Fort St.George, chennai 600
009.

2.The District Collector,
The Nilgiris District, Collectorate, Ooty
643001.

3.The Commissioner,
Udhagamandalam Municipality, Oot,
The Nilgiris District.

4.The Commissioner,
Coonoor Municipality, Coonoor, The
Nilgiris District.

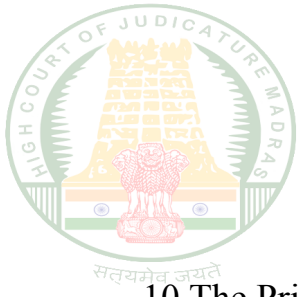
5.The Commissioner,
Gudalur Municipality, Gudalur, The
Nilgiris District.

6.The Commissioner,
Kotagiri Town Panchayath, Kotagiri,
The Nilgiris District.

7.The Field Director,
Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, Mount Stuart
Hill, Ooty, The Nilgiris.

8.The District Forest Officer,
The Nilgiris District, Mount Stuart Hill,
Ooty -643001.

9.The Commissioner,
Kodaikanal Municipality, Kodaikanal,
Dindigul District.



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10.The Principal Secretary To
Government,
Transports Department, Secretariat, Fort
St. George, Chennai - 600009.

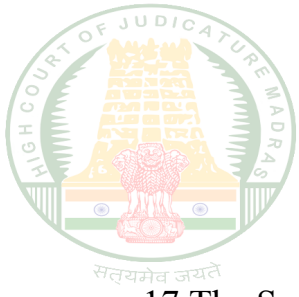
11.The Transport Commissioner,
Government of Tamil Nadu,
Commissionerate of Transport and Road
Safety, Ezhilagam, PWD Estate,
Chepauk, Triplicane, Chennai - 600005.

12.The Principal Secretary,
Department Of Municipal
Administration, Urban And Water
Supply, Government Of Tamil Nadu,
Secretariat, Fort St. George,
Chennai.600 009.

13.The Additional Chief Secretary,
Department Of Tourism, Culture And
Religious Endowments Department,
Government Of Tamil Nadu, Secretariat,
Fort St.George, Chennai.600 009.(r13
And R14 Are Suo Motu Impleaded As
Per Order Dated 19.03.2024 In
Wp.15120/2019 By Nskj And Dbcj)

14.The Secretary To The Ministry Of
Road Transport And Highways,
Transport Bhawan, No.1, Parliament
Street, New Delhi.110 001.

16.The Chairman,
Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board,
No.76, Mount Salai, Guindy, Chennai -
600032.



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17. The Secretary,
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare,
Government of India,
Nirman Bhawan,
New Delhi – 110011.

18. The Principal Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu
Department of Health and Family Welfare Department,
Secretariat, Fort St. George,
Chennai – 600 009.



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AND
D. BHARATHA CHAKRAVARTHY. J.

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