



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 07.11.2025

CORAM :

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE N. SATHISH KUMAR

AND

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE D.BHARATHA CHAKRAVARTHY

W.P.No.27356 of 2019 &
W.M.P.No.31591 of 2023, W.M.P.No.36994 of 2024,
W.M.P.No.37000 of 2024, W.M.P.No.35572 of 2024,
W.M.P.Nos.42082, 42113, 42114, 42115 & 42116 of 2024,
W.M.P.Nos.23023 of 2025 & 24519 of 2025
and
W.P.No.28266 of 2022, W.A.No.1510 of 2025, W.P.(Crl.) No.934 of 2025

W.P.No.27356 of 2019

Mr. S.Muralidharan

S/o.Mr.P.Sivalingam, 2A, 3rd Main Road, Kottur Gardens, Chennai-600 085

Petitioner(s)

Vs

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and

Chief Wildlife Warden, Department of Forests, Govt. of Tamil Nadu, No.1 Jeenis Road, Panagal Buildings, Saidapet, Chennai-600 015 and 72 Others

Respondent(s)

WMP NO. 31591 of 2023

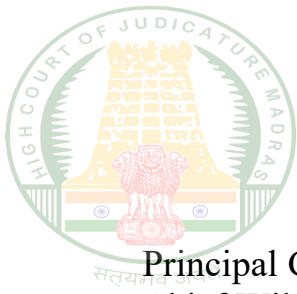
Mr. S.Muralidharan

S/o.Mr.P.Sivalingam, 2a, 3rd Main Road, Kottur Gardens, Chennai-600 085

Currently Residing At F1, 1st Floor, No.40 R.S.Sridhar Street, Kottur, Kotturpuram, Chennai 600085.

Petitioner(s)

Vs



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and
Chief Wildlife Warden, Department Of Forests, Govt. Of Tamil Nadu, No.1 Jeenis
Road, Panagal Buildings, Saidapet, Chennai-600 015 and 7 Others

Respondent(s)

WMP NO. 36994 of 2024

S.Muralidharan
S/o.Mr.P.Sivalingam, 2A, 3rd Main Road, Kottur
Gardens, Chennai-600 085.

Petitioner(s)

Vs

Principal Chief Conservator Of Forests And
Chief Wildlife Warden, Department Of Forests, Govt.
Of Tamil Nadu, No.1 Jeenis Road, Panagal Buildings,
Saidapet, Chennai-600 015 and 64 Others

Respondent(s)

WMP NO. 37000 of 2024

S.Muralidharan
S/o.Mr.P.Sivalingam, 2A, 3rd Main Road, Kottur
Gardens, Chennai-600 085.

Petitioner(s)

Vs

Principal Chief Conservator Of Forests And
Chief Wildlife Warden, Department of Forests, Govt.
Of Tamil Nadu, No.1 Jeenis Road, Panagal Buildings,
Saidapet, Chennai-600 015 and 64 Others

Respondent(s)

WMP NO. 35572 of 2024

Mr. S.Muralidharan
S/o Mr.P.Sivalingam, 2A, 3rd Main Road, Kottur
Gardens, Chennai 600085

Petitioner(s)



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

Vs

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and
Chief Wildlife Warden, Department of Forests, Govt.
of Tamil Nadu, No.1 Jeenis Road, Panagal Buildings,
Saidapet, Chennai-600 015 and 65 Others

Respondent(s)

WMP NO. 42082 of 2024

M.Siva,
S/o.Late V.Mani, No.168, Karupparayan Kovil Street,
Puliyakulam,Coimbatore 641 045.

Petitioner(s)

Vs

Mr. S.Muralidharan (p-in-p)
S/o.Mr.P.Sivalingam, 2A, 3rd Main Road, Kottur
Gardens, Chennai-600 085 and 65 Others

Respondent(s)

WMP NO. 42113 of 2024

M.Siva,
S/o.Late V.Mani, No.168, Karupparayan Kovil Street,
Puliyakulam,Coimbatore 641 045.

Petitioner(s)

Vs

Mr. S.Muralidharan (p-in-p)
S/o.Mr.P.Sivalingam, 2A, 3rd Main Road, Kottur
Gardens, Chennai-600 085 and 65 Others

Respondent(s)

WMP NO. 42114 of 2024

M.Siva,
S/o.Late V.Mani, No.168, Karupparayan Kovil Street,
Puliyakulam,Coimbatore 641 045.

Petitioner(s)

Vs



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

Mr. S.Muralidharan (p-in-p)
S/o.Mr.P.Sivalingam, 2A, 3rd Main Road, Kottur
Gardens, Chennai-600 085 and 65 Others

Respondent(s)

WMP NO. 42115 of 2024

M.Siva,
S/o.Late V.Mani, No.168, Karupparayan Kovil Street,
Puliyakulam,Coimbatore 641 045.

Petitioner(s)

Vs

Mr. S.Muralidharan (p-in-p)
S/o.Mr.P.Sivalingam, 2A, 3rd Main Road, Kottur
Gardens, Chennai-600 085 and 65 Others

Respondent(s)

WMP NO. 42116 of 2024

M.Siva,
S/o.Late V.Mani, No.168, Karupparayan Kovil Street,
Puliyakulam,Coimbatore 641 045.

Petitioner(s)

Vs

Mr. S.Muralidharan (p-in-p)
S/o.Mr.P.Sivalingam, 2A, 3rd Main Road, Kottur
Gardens, Chennai-600 085 and 65 Others

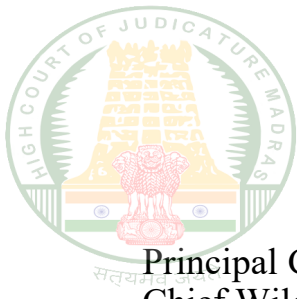
Respondent(s)

WMP NO. 23023 of 2025

Mr. S.Muralidharan
S/o.Mr.P.Sivalingam, 2A, 3rd Main Road, Kottur
Gardens, Chennai-600 085

Petitioner(s)

Vs



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and
Chief Wildlife Warden, Department of Forests, Govt.
of Tamil Nadu, No.1 Jeenis Road, Panagal Buildings,
Saidapet, Chennai-600 015 and 65 Others

Respondent(s)

WMP NO. 24519 of 2025

Mr. S.Muralidharan
S/o.Mr.P.Sivalingam, 2A, 3rd Main Road, Kottur
Gardens, Chennai-600 085

Petitioner(s)

Vs

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and
Chief Wildlife Warden, Department of Forests, Govt.
of Tamil Nadu, No.1 Jeenis Road, Panagal Buildings,
Saidapet, Chennai-600 015 and 65 Others

Respondent(s)

W.P.No.28266 of 2022

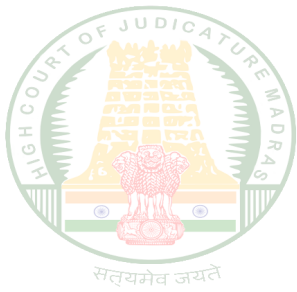
DR.R.KARPAGAM

.... Petitioner

v.

1.ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,
Department Of Geology And Mining,
Coimbatore District,
Coimbatore,
Coimbatore – 641018 and 3 others

Respondent(s)



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

WEB COPY

W.A.No.1510 of 2025

T.M.S.Rajendran

Petitioner(s)

Vs

Commissioner of Geology and Mining,
Thiru Vee Kaa Industrial Estate,
Guindy, Chennai – 600 032 and 165 others

Respondent(s)

W.P.(Crl.) No.934 of 2025

G.Gokila and 5 others

Petitioner(s)

Vs

The District Collector,
O/o. The District Collector – Tiruppur,
Tiruppur – 641 004 and 7 others

Respondent(s)

W.P.No.27356 of 2019 :

For Petitioner(s): Mr.Muralidharan (P-IN-P)

For Respondent(s): Dr.T.Seenivasan, Special Government Pleader (Forest), for
R1, 3 to 5

Mr.B.N.Suchindran, Standing Counsel for R4

Mr.V.Chandrasekaran, Senior Panel Counsel, for R6

Mr.S.P.Chockalingam, for R7

Mr.L. Jaivenkatesh, Standing Counsel for R8

Mr. Richardson Wilson, for R 9 to 11, 16 to 45



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

RR - 12 to 15 - No Appearance

Mr.N.Muralikumaran, Senior Counsel,
for M/s.MCGAN Law Firm, for R 46 to 49

Mr.L.Palanimuthu, for RR - 50 to 64

Mr.M.Purushothaman, for R 65 and 66

Mr.K.M.D.Muhilan

Additional Public Prosecutor for the Special Investigation Team (SIT)

Amici Curiae

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

ORDER

Mata Amritanandamayi Math

The learned Special Government Pleader (Forests) submitted that they have conducted LiDAR survey in Matha Amirthanandamayi Institutions, Ettimadai and the Swamy Sachidanandha Jothi Nikethan International School, Mettupalayam adjoining reserve forests on 01.11.2025 and they require 15 days time to demarcate the places for free movements of wildlife according to the ground condition. Once the details are collected based on field condition, the matter will be examined and suggestions will be submitted before this Court.

2.Such view of the matter, once the suggestions are completed, the same



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

can also be circulated to the learned amici curiae and concerned respondents so that they also can come up with their response.

3. Issue fresh notice to the respondent No.68, returnable by 05.12.2025.

Private notice is also permitted.

4. Post on 05.12.2025.

Removal of Prosopis Juliflora in Thadagam Valley

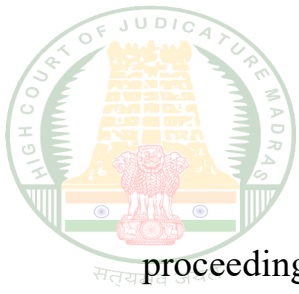
5. With reference to the closure of pits in Thadagam Valley, the learned Special Government Pleader would reply upon the status report that was filed in another matter, i.e., WP.No.28266 of 2022, where-under, it was averred that upon inspection they already found 565 pits in 5 villages, the following are the details:-

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Village</i>	<i>Classification</i>	<i>Number of pits</i>	<i>Volume excavated (in cbm)</i>
1	Nanjundapuram	Patta	37	311753
		Government	1	23961
2	Pannimadai	Patta	7	34255
3	Somayampalayam	Patta	25	1865056
		Government	2	10717
4	Chinnathadagam	Patta	319	4213607



Sl. No.	Village	Classification	Number of pits	Volume excavated (in cbm)
		Government	7	197312
5	Veerapandi	Patta	152	4010456
		Government	15	410159
Total			565	11077276

6. With reference to the same, they have already engaged TERI and TERI has also submitted its report. Based on the report, now, they are proceeding to initiate action under Tamil Nadu Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1959 and they may require three months time to do the same. It is essential to initiate appropriate proceedings and also to collect the damages from the pattadars/illegal miners. But, at the same time, merely because the proceedings for levying of damages is pending, the present state of affairs cannot be continued as the animal/elephant is in the risk of falling into pits and dying. Therefore, we grant time as prayed for by the respondents, within the time, whether they complete the passing of final orders or not; they will survey these pits in the manner known to law and also the videograph the same in the presence of concerned respondent/pattadars and if they do not co-operate, record the same that they are invited for videographing/surveying and once that is done, irrespective of the further



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

proceedings pending, the process of levelling can be commenced as per the recommendations made by the TERI or even otherwise by taking into account the nature of terrain and wherever it is required for the animals to navigate, the terrain shall be made conducive for the movements of the elephants and other wildlife.

7.Call this matter on 06.02.2025 for filing further status report.

8.It is stated by the learned Special Government Pleader that as far as the removal of garbage in Nanjundapuram, garbage has been removed, now, no dumping is taking place. We are of the view that mere removal of the wastes will not serve any purposes, alternative setting up of solid waste management has to be established. The respondents are directed to file status report as to the steps taken in this regard.

9.Post on 06.02.2025.

Trek Tamil Nadu Initiative :

10.Today, rejoinder affidavit is filed with reference to the trek routes. The learned amici curiae have also filed memo on inspection. Certain submissions



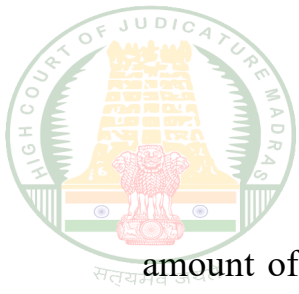
W.P.No.27356 of 2019

WEB COPY
were also made by Mr.S.Muralidharan, Party-in-Person in this matter. In order to further consider the issue and necessity to put in place such measures including measures like inspection etc., let further facts be placed before this Court by the learned amici curiae. It is also submitted that some of the routes are sensitive and meddle with the regular pattern and route of the wildlife and disturbing the movements of the elephants and other wildlife and their breeding pattern, all these issues will be considered .

11.Call on 06.02.2025.

Removal of Solar Panels in Ukkadam and Valankulam Lakes :

12.Mr.D.Ferdinand, learned standing counsel for the Coimbatore City Municipal Corporation seeks further time to place on record their response in this matter. It is also brought to our notice that not only this lake, in many of the lakes which are located within the core forests area, high-speed boats with diesel engine are being used by the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation which firstly creates huge noise at the river beds and upto 100 meters, completely disturbing the wildlife and other species, secondly, it results in huge air pollution and water pollution. Thirdly, the aquatic life is also affected on account of great



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

amount of vibration on account of these powerful engines and eventually, diesel also mixes with water endangering to the entire environment.

13. Such view of the matter, we are of the view that Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation is necessary party to this proceedings and as such is suo-motu impleaded as 74th respondent in W.P.No.27356 of 2019 as follows:-

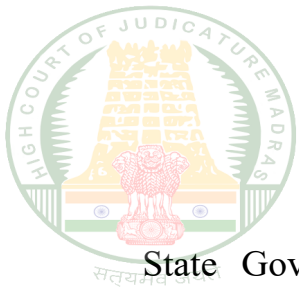
Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation
Rep by its Managing Director
Wallajah Road, Chennai – 600 002.

14. Let notice be served to the newly impleaded 74th respondent, through Court as well as privately, returnable by 21.11.2025.

15. Call on 21.11.2025.

Steel wire Rope Fencing and other Miscellaneous Issues relating to Elephant Protection :

16. With reference to the directions that were issued by our previous order dated 12.09.2025 with regard to steel wire rope fencing and creating a buffer zone/no development zone along the borders of the reserve forest area and wild life habitat, the learned Special Government Pleader appearing on behalf of the



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

State Government and Mr.V.Chandrasekaran, learned Senior Panel Counsel appearing on behalf of the Central Government, seek some more time to get instructions and place on record a status report in this regard.

17.Call on 28.11.2025.

Illegal Mining of Earth and Minerals and Elephant Protection :

18.With reference to the directions that were issued with regard to the mitigating measures/protective measures in the illegal mining in Perur Taluk, etc., the written communication issued by the District Collector, Coimbatore, is placed on record, whereunder, it is mentioned that, as on date, 84 appeals are pending before the District Collector; as and when the appeals are disposed of, further mitigating measures will be taken, and steps are being taken to effectively dispose of all these appeals.

19.With reference to the installation of AI cameras in the locations identified, they have also completed installation of 126 cameras in all the blocks except Madukarai for want of 'No Objection' from the National Highways Authority of India. The control rooms for monitoring the movement of vehicles



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

are decided to be established in the District Office of the Superintendent of Police, AD (Mines), concerned DSPs and concerned RDOs. Let the National Highways Authority of India shall also communicate its 'No Objection' as early as possible.

20. With reference to developing technological tools, it is stated that they are working with BISAG-N to develop Mining Surveillance System and a communication is received from the said Corporation to depute two departmental officials from Department of Geology and Mining, Coimbatore, to BISAG-N for the purpose of integrating MSS Application with illegal mining of minerals. Let the Director of Geology and Mining take a decision quickly and depute the officials so that proper system can be developed, as prevention is always better than cure.

21. Call on 19.12.2025 for filing further status report.

W.A.No.1510 of 2025 :

22. Dr. T. Seenivasan, learned Special Government Pleader, takes notice for the respondents 1 and 2. Mr. V. S. Senthil Kumar, learned counsel, takes notice for the respondents 11, 57, 100 and 133. Mr. R. Bharath Kumar, learned counsel,



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

submits that he has filed vakalat for the respondents 27, 43, 51, 59, 65, 112, 159, 164, 148, 154, 162, 166, 15, 40, 61, 75, 108. Registry is directed to verify the same and print his name in the cause list. In respect of the other respondents, private notice is permitted returnable by 05.12.2025. Private notice to the counsel who appeared before the learned Single Judge as well as to the counsel who appeared in the condone delay stage, is also permitted.

23.Call on 05.12.2025.

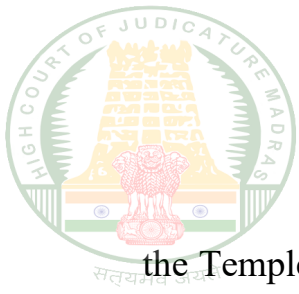
W.P.(Crl.). No.934 of 2025 :

24.Dr.T.Seenivasan, learned Special Government Pleader, takes notice for the respondents 1 and 2. Mr.A.Gokulakrishnan, learned Additional Public Prosecutor, takes notice for the respondents 3 to 8.

25.For filing counter and disposal, call on 05.12.2025.

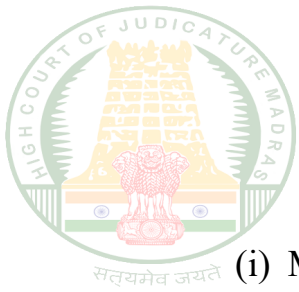
Marudhamalai Murugan Temple & Anuvavi Subramaniyar Temple :

26.Today, a status report is filed on behalf of the Temple. We have also heard Mr.R.Shunmugasundaram, learned Senior Counsel, appearing on behalf of



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

the Temple. It is submitted that, since the installation of the statue in the foothills of the Temple in the original place was not found to be feasible, since the same comes within the corridor area, now they have proposed to locate it in yet another location in S.Nos.160, 158/3, 159/1, 159/2 in Somayapalayam Village and S.Nos.421/6, 421/1 and 421/5 in Vadavalli Village, Coimbatore North Taluk. Even the said location, it is submitted on behalf of the Forest Department, is 137 m from the forest boundary. Therefore, we would only request the temple authorities to reconsider the issues not only with reference to the location of the statue alone, but the number of people they expect to visit and the number of other facilities which may be required if such huge statue of Lord Murugan is to be installed and the overall impact on the area, including the traffic arrangements, solid waste management, other concrete structures in the form of shelters, toilet and other facilities to the pilgrims, etc., as this would require a huge complex, given the magnitude of the statue which they are proposing. Therefore, let the temple itself first consider it from a wholesale perspective and let the final place identified be placed before this Court thereafter. Thereafter, this Court will endeavor to conduct an inspection by appropriate experts and thereafter, things can proceed further. While deciding the issue, the authorities shall endeavor to take into consideration of the following,



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

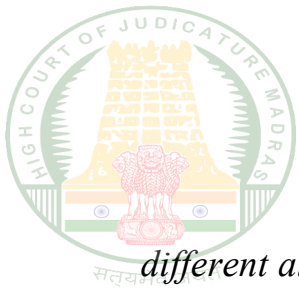
WEB COPY

(i) Marudhamalai is deemed to be the seventh important abode of Lord Muruga, after the அறுபடை வீடு (six homes);

(ii) The temple is considered to be significant not only because of the great faith and reverence to the lord, but it is also considered that several siddhars and saints lived in the hill in the service of the faith.

(iii) The very aura and location of the temple is believed to have a healing atmosphere by its natural and serene atmosphere and the herbs having great medicinal values.

(iv) Marudhamalai is part of western ghats, which has its name on account of Marudham trees known for its medicinal value. *It holds a rich number of 201 species belonging to 153 genera of 51 families. The species like Acacia tora, Albizzia amara, A. lebbeck, Azadirachta indica, Chromolaena odorata, Commiphora caudata, Erythroxylon monogynum, Euphorbia antiquorum, Fluggea leucopyrus, Pterolobium indicum and Zizyphus oenoplia are considered to be ecologically important and established well in the low hills of Maruthamalai (450m above m.s.l.). In higher altitudes at 750m above msl, the species like Albizzia amara, Azadirachta indica, Chloroxylon swietenia, Commiphora caudata, Erythroxylon monogynum, Fluggea leucopyrus and Holoptelea integrifolia have secured higher importance value index and established well in the habitats. At 950m above m.s.l., the vegetation has been occupied predominantly by the species like Acacia torta, Albizzia amara, Commiphora caudata, Erythroxylon monogynum, Fluggea leucopyrus and Syzigium cumini as they derived higher importance value index. Among the 165 medicinal plants, 37 species (22%) are present in all the three plots located at*



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

*different altitudes.*¹

WEB COPY

27. It is part of the elephant corridor and one can normally sight elephant movements along the corridor and many of them are living there as their habitant and a number of other wildlife also live there. Thus, any development or structure that is planned should bear in mind, the value of the faith and the sacrosanct purpose of visiting the temple where the faith converges with ecology and nature which results in healing and the people visiting the temple emerging with greater inner peace serene feeling and fulfillment. The above should be kept as the core guiding value, while the decision is being taken. Let further status report be filed in this regard by the temple.

28.Call on 05.12.2025.

29.With reference to rope car facility in Anuvavi Subramaniyar Temple also, let a status report be filed on 05.12.2025.

[N.S.K.J.] [D.B.C.J.,]
07.11.2025

dhk/mkn

1 'Maruthamalai hills of Western Ghats, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu – A potential ecosystem for medicinal plants – Authored by Paulsamy. S'
<https://www.scribd.com/document/235590273/Maruthamalai-Hills-of-Western-Ghats-Coimbatore-District-Tamil-Nadu-A-potential-ecosystem-for-medicinal-plants>

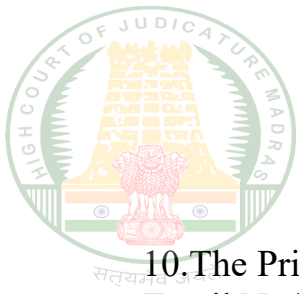


W.P.No.27356 of 2019

To

WEB COPY

- 1.The Principal Secretary,
Department of Forests And Environment,
St. George Fort, Chennai 600 009.
- 2.The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests,
(Head of Forest Force),
Forest Head Quarters,
Guindy-Velachery Main Road,
Velachery, Chennai – 600 032.
- 3.The District Collector,
The Nilgiris, Ooty,
The Nilgiris District.
- 4.The District Collector,
Coimbatore.
- 5.The District Forest Officer,
Kodaikanal, Dindigul District.
- 6.The Assistant Director of Rural Development,
Coimbatore.
- 7.The Commissioner,
Department of Geology and Mining Thiru.Vi.Ka.Industrial Estate, Alandur Road,
Guindy, Chennai-600 002
- 8.Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,
Indira Paryavaran Bhavan, Jorbagh Road, New Delhi-110 003
- 9.The Superintending Engineer (Coimbatore North),
Tamilnadu Generation and Distribution Limited (TANGEDCO),
Tatabad, Coimbatore.

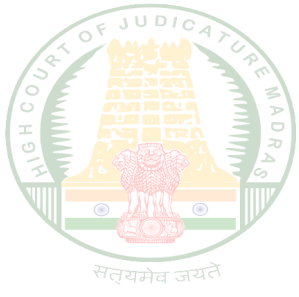


W.P.No.27356 of 2019

10. The Principal Secretary/Chairman,
Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board,
No.76, Mount Salai, Guindy, Chennai- 600 032

11. The Managing Director
Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation
Wallajah Road, Chennai – 600 002.

12. The Special Government Pleader (Forests),
Madras High Court, High Court Campus,
Chennai 600 104.



WEB COPY



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

N. SATHISH KUMAR. J.
AND
D. BHARATHA CHAKRAVARTHY. J.

dhk/mkn

W.P.No.27356 of 2019

07.11.2025