



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 12.12.2025

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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.37000 of 2024,
W.M.P.Nos.35572, 42082, 42113, 42114, 42115 & 42116 of 2024,
W.M.P.Nos.23020 & 23022 of 2025,
W.M.P.Nos.24518 & 41067 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 76 Others

Respondent(s)

*[R75 and R76 impleaded as per this order dated
12.12.2025 in W.M.P.No.41067 of 2025 in
W.P.No.27356 of 2019]*

*[R77 suo motu impleaded vide this order dated
12.12.2025 in W.P.No.27356 of 2019]*



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

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)

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,

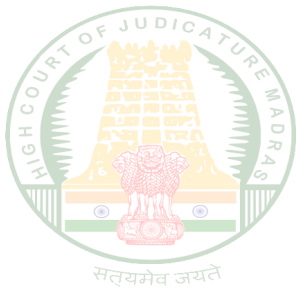
S/o.Late V.Mani, No.168, Karupparayan Kovil Street,
Puliyakulam,Coimbatore 641 045.

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)



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WMP NO. 42113 of 2024

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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

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

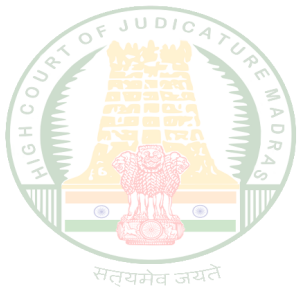
M.Siva,
S/o.Late V.Mani, No.168, Karupparayan Kovil Street,
Puliyakulam,Coimbatore 641 045.

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)



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

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. 23020 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)

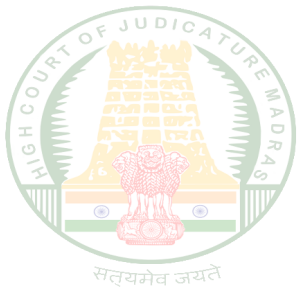
WMP NO. 23022 of 2025

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.27356 of 2019

WMP NO. 24518 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)

WMP NO. 41067 of 2025

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

Petitioner(s)

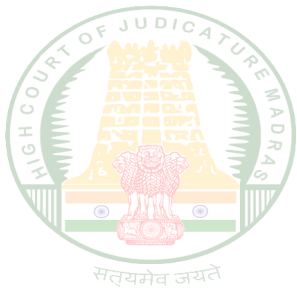
Vs

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 69 Others

Respondent(s)

Prayer in WMP No.41067 of 2025 :

To implead the Director, Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments, NO.119,
Uthamar Gandhi salai, Nungambakkam High Road, chennai-600 034 and The
Managing Director G Square Housing, Menon Eternity, 8th floor, 1st Main Road,
Austin Nagar Alwarpet, chennai-600 018 as respondents 69 and 70.



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

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

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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

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

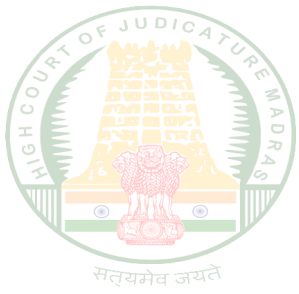
Mr.M.Purushothaman, for R 65 and 66

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



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ORDER

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Removal of Solar Panels in Ukkadam and Valankulam Lakes :

With reference to the prayer made in WMP.No.37000 of 2024 to stop all the commercial activities and to remove the solar panel placed in Ukkadam and Valankulam lakes are concerned, today, a detailed counter affidavit has filed by the Commissioner, Coimbatore City Municipal Corporation.

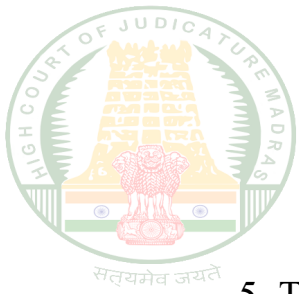
2. It can be seen that the application is filed as the activities are said to be detrimental to the interest of the migratory birds and the aquatic species. Different concerns were raised; firstly, the concern that was raised is that with reference to the floating solar panels that is detrimental to the aquatic species as they would prevent the sunlight and thereby create problem for the aquatic life; the second activity that is complained of is the using of high speed diesel boats for tourism and boating activities; the third activity that is complained of is the high amount of lighting that is installed around lake disturbing nocturnal environments completely; the fourth activity that is complained of is that the Corporation and the sponsors permitting sound and light shows in the tank bunds during the night and even inside the lakes, laser beam lights are used to conduct shows. It is said that night shows are being conducted which included bursting of crackers and creating other sounds by using speakers etc.,



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3. In the counter affidavit, it is stated that the lakes were restored without harming the eco-system of the lake. It is stated that dense growths of *Prosopis Juliflora* were extensively removed and the garbage and solid waste dumping is all now stopped and they have also now ensured that the overall storage capacity and size of the lake area is now increased. It is stated that the cumulative capacity of the Periyakulam lake has been enhanced from 19,80,763m³ to 24,40,059m³. Similarly, Valankulam lake has been increased 7,89,473.68m³ to 7,99,965m³. It is further stated that the lake front has been developed so as not to harm the environment and at the same time to provide meaningful public space for the public and other recreational activities.

4. As far as the floating solar panel is concerned, it is stated in the counter affidavit that the solar panel has been installed only to an extent of 0.2 acres constituting 0.05% of the space of the total lake area. It is also further stated during the argument that there is no plan for expanding the same. The same is recorded. Since the floating solar panel occupy only 0.2 acres, it cannot be said that it will be harmful blocking the sun light for the aquatic species, therefore, we accept the submissions of the learned counsel appearing on behalf of the Corporation with reference to the floating solar panel.



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5. The second grievance with reference to the usage of the diesel powered and other mechanical boats for tourism is concerned, the learned counsel for the Corporation would submit that the diesel boats or mechanical boats are no more used for any commercial purpose or for any visitors. The boating exercise is conducted only with roving/pedaling boats alone, these mechanised boats are there only for the rescue measures. Therefore, since, they are not continued to be in use except for the rescue measures and for rescue measures, it will only be the barest minimum, operational. We record the submissions made by the learned counsel for the Corporation.

6. As far as the laser lighting show is concerned, the learned counsel again submits that now she has got instructions to say that no more such shows are being permitted, the same is also recorded. It is made clear that such sound and light shows which involve light and loud speakers, decibels, bursting of crackers and other noise polluting kind of activities shall not only be used in these two lakes but should not be used in any other lake in the control of the Corporation or for that matter with the Public Works Department or any other local body in the area.

7. As far as the existing lighting and the other improvements which is said to be detrimental is concerned, now, the counter affidavit states that the nestling



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island is left untouched and is not in any manner interfered with by the human activities. But, it is admitted that there is nesting in these lakes and it is habitat for the birds which are living and also for migratory birds which throng these lakes during the season. In this regard, from a very reading of the counter affidavit, it can be seen that with a genuine intention of clearing up the area and to develop a front, it would be useful for the human beings living in the area, the entire exercise has been done with an anthropocentric idea. It can be seen that there was no scientific report from any environmental point of view, more specifically, from an ecocentric point of view as to what are all the activities which can be carried out by way of sustainable development and what are all the activities which should not be carried out, so as not to interfere with the habitat of the birds. The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in *State of Telengana v. Mohd. Qasim* (2024 6 SCC 461), held that these systems catering to biodiversity are not just objects for protection but subjects with fundamental rights to exist and survive.

8. In this regard, We deem it is just and necessary to appoint a committee consisting of two scientists from the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, Anaikatty (Post), Coimbatore – 641 108 to undertake the study in respect of these two lakes about the existence, migration and habitat of the species of the birds that are permanently existent and also visiting these lakes and ascertain about the purposes and needs of the various species and consider whether the

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developmental activities that are being carried now by the Corporation are in any manner detrimental to the nestling or other activities of the birds and their life. The expert committee can also suggest measures to make the development which would be more eco-friendly and will be bio-diversity friendly which will not affect any of the activities of the migratory birds or the inhabitant birds. Further, direction that are to be given by this Court will be dependent upon the expert report which shall be submitted and after hearing the Corporation in this regard.

9. We request the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History to depute two scientists who will be experts considering the nature of the orders that is passed in the field and the said expert committee shall be given due assistance by the Coimbatore City Municipal Corporation, Government of Tamil Nadu and District Forest Officer, Coimbatore for undertaking of the study and for submitting of the report.

10. Let a report be submitted within a period of two months from today. Call on 20.2.2026.

Usage of Speed Boats/Mechanised Boats :

11. With reference to the speed boats/mechanised boats being used in the Pykara and other lakes, since, the learned counsel for the Tamil Nadu Tourism



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Development Corporation is absent and Dr.T.Seenivasan, learned Special

Government Pleader (Forests) requests that the matter be heard in the next hearing date. Adjourned to 19.12.2025.

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

12. With reference to the constitution of Buffer Zone, both the State Government and Central Government have not come up with any response as of today, both the learned counsel seek further time. It is represented on behalf of the Forest Department that already a committee has been constituted with reference to the elephant corridor. That committee may not suffice because that committee is constituted to identify the elephant corridor.

13.As far as the buffer area is concerned, the Government has to take a call by way of proper planning under the existing Development Control Regulations and Combined Building Rules, creation of buffer zone where constructions and commercial activities in the buffer zone can be banned so that human elephant/other wildlife conflicts can be avoided.

14.The Central Government under Section 3 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 has to notify these ecologically sensitive area. It is only in

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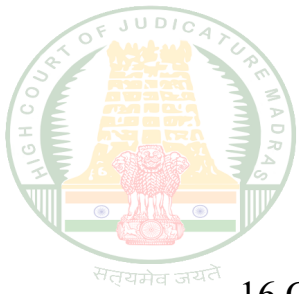


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that context, we had issued directions both the State Government and Central Government. The particulars of compliance and status report shall be placed before this Court on the next hearing date.

15. On behalf of the Central Government, written instructions are placed by Mr. V. Chandrasekaran, learned Senior Panel Counsel, as if the power is vested only with the State Government and even for notification under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, and under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, proposal has to come from the State Government. Further details that are given, are with reference to Eco-Sensitive Zones. Insofar as the Eco-Sensitive Zones around the Protected Areas, national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, etc., are concerned, we have already stated in our earlier order dated 31.10.2025 that, after the recommendations of Dr. K. Kasthurirangan Commission, already the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has issued notification in S.O.3072(E), dated 06.07.2022, notifying the village mentioned therein as a Eco-Sensitive Area. In this regard, since the power under Section 3 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, vests with the Central Government to issue a notification to declare this entire buffer area, as described in our order, as an Ecologically Sensitive Area, the same can be done by the Central Government as done in S.O.No.3072(E), dated 06.07.2022. As such, the learned Senior Panel Counsel is directed to get instructions in this regard.

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16.Call on 23.01.2026.

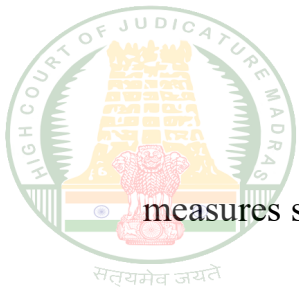
Illegal Resorts at Anaikatti Area/Elephant Protection :

17.With reference to the illegal resorts, detailed directions were given by this Court on 31.10.2025 and the matter is posted today for compliance. Learned Special Government Pleader would place on record the written instructions issued to him, in which, it is stated that the first meeting under the chairmanship of the Collector, Coimbatore, was conducted on 04.12.2025 and that they need two months' time to complete the inspection and file a report. In this regard, already two months' time has elapsed from our directions and therefore, time is granted till 23.01.2026 and the respondents are required to conduct inspection as directed by our earlier order dated 31.10.2025 and submit a report on the said date without fail.

18.Call on 23.01.2026.

Banning of Night Traffic on SH-164 :

19.With reference to carrying out of the speed calming measures in the Anaikatti Road, let the learned *Amici Curiae* inspect the road and suggest



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measures so that the same can be put across to the respondents.

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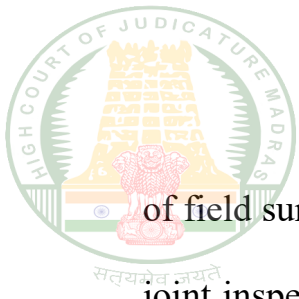
20.Call on 23.01.2026.

Notification of Elephant Corridors :

21.With reference to the notification of the Elephant Corridors, the prayer is pending before this Court from the year 2019. Originally, the corridors have already been identified. It is only pending for identifying the details and notifying the same. When repeatedly time is prayed before this Court, and when this Court was of the view that the matter cannot brook any further delay, finally, an order in G.O.(D) No.196, Environment, Climate Change and Forests (FR.5) Department, dated 20.08.2025, was placed before this Court. In the said G.O., month-wise timeline was fixed for completion of the tasks and notification of the corridors. It was also stated in the previous status reports that the work is progressing as per the timelines, though there was lagging with reference to the same.

22.In this regard, today, a status report is filed. It can be seen that the timelines in the months of May and June, 2025, with reference to submission of letters and discussion with the District Administration, in the current status, it is stated that the District Forest Officers have initiated this work and the work is in progress for ground truthing at various sites. With reference to the second timeline

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of field survey also, it is stated that many Collectors have already issued orders for joint inspection and the work is in progress. As far as the third timeline from the point of the Committee is concerned, it is stated that the Committee has made draft report ready based on the available records and the local field inputs from expert and forest department officials. As far as the next timeline for October, 2025 is concerned, it is stated that the Committee has taken up the field inspection to finalise the reports and the work progress is detailed further. Even with reference to preparation of draft corridor report, the details are given. It is stated that, in several corridors, the stage is in drone survey, etc., and it is lagging behind.

23.As a matter of fact, as per the original time schedule, the months of November and December, 2025, were earmarked for the draft report to have been uploaded and for inviting comments from the public and for public hearing. Thereafter, as per the original timeline, report was to be finalised in the month of January, 2026 and to be published and notified in the month of February, 2026. Thus, from the status report which is placed today, we feel that, at every stage, the timeline is not being adhered to and there is a delay. It is made clear that the authorities shall catch up for the time lag, as originally ordered in G.O.(D) No.196, Environment, Climate Change and Forests (FR.5) Department, dated 20.08.2025. A report shall be notified as per the original timeline of February, 2026. It is made clear that, if detailed works are not undertaken, the Court will pass orders based on



the draft report of the Committee which is made ready on the basis of the available records, to notify the corridors.

24.Call on 06.03.2026.

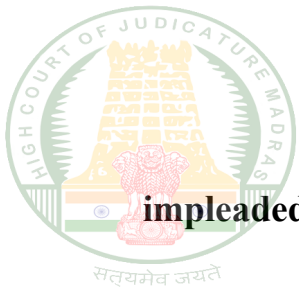
G-Square :

W.M.P.No.41067 of 2025 :

25.Since notice is served on the concerned developer and also the HR & CE Department, the impleading petition in **W.M.P.No.41067 of 2025 stands allowed and the proposed parties are impleaded as respondents 75 and 76 in W.P.No.27356 of 2019.** Print the name of Mr.N.R.R.Arun Natarajan, learned counsel for HR & CE Department/75th respondent.

W.M.P.No.24518 of 2025 :

26.From the instructions that are placed on record by the learned Special Government Pleader, it can be seen that the newly impleaded M/s.G-Square Realtors Private Limited, Chennai, is only a power of attorney of M/s.Rakindo, Kovai Township Limited, Coimbatore (now Rakindo Kovai Township Pvt. Ltd.). Therefore, **M/s.Rakindo Kovai Township Private Limited, having registered office at No.201, 2nd Floor, "Capital Towers", 180, Kodambakkam High Road, Nungambakkam Chennai Chennai TN IN 600034, is suo motu**
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impleaded as 77th respondent in W.P.No.27356 of 2019.

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27.Let notice to be issued to the newly impleaded 77th respondent and private notice can also be taken returnable by 23.01.2026.

28.It is stated in the instructions that there is an undertaking given by the said developers that there will not be any work within a distance of 100 metres from the reserve forests. We are considering about the establishment of a buffer zone and until the parties are being heard, instead of 100 metres, let there not be any construction for a distance upto 150 metres from the reserve forest boundary.

29.Call on 23.01.2026.

Solid Waste Management in Tiruppur District :

30.Dr.R.Rajagobal, learned counsel, has filed a memo. Both the expert persons mentioned in the memo, namely, Dr.N.K.Perumal, Founder-Chairman, Rural Development Organisation (RDO, Aravankadu, Ooty – 643 202) and Prof.K.Thirupathi, Associates with Rural Development Organisation (RDO), are present before the Court and submitted their views and also the projects undertaken by them. It is also submitted that the learned single Judge of this Court (Hon'ble Mr. Justice V.Lakshminarayanan) has also passed orders with

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reference to the establishment of dumping yard with reference to the Tiruppur

Town. In this regard, since we have made suggestions to develop cluster projects,

etc., and to include experts also, let this matter be heard in detail on 23.01.2026.

31.Call on 23.01.2026.

[N.S.K.J.] [D.B.C.J.]
12.12.2025

dhk/mkn

To

- 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.



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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.

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

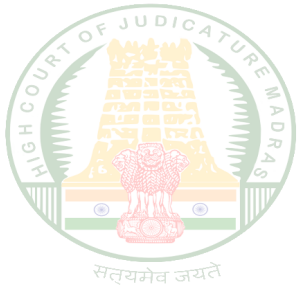
11.The Managing Director
Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation
Wallajah Road, Chennai – 600 002.

12.The Director,
Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department,
No.119, Uthamar Gandhi Salai,
Nungambakkam High Road,
Chennai – 600 034.

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

14.The Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History,
Anaikatty (Post),
Coimbatore – 641 108.

15.The Commissioner,
Coimbatore City Municipal Corporation,
Coimbatore.



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W.P.No.27356 of 2019

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

dhk/mkn

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