



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 17.07.2026

WEB COPY

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.38951 of 2025, W.M.P.No.14511 of 2026,
W.M.P.No.35572 of 2024

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 77 Others

Respondent(s)

W.M.P.No.38951 of 2025

S.Muralidharan

... 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 67 Others

... Respondent(s)

Page 1 of 12



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

W.M.P.No.14511 of 2026

S.Muralidharan

... 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 77 Others

... Respondent(s)

W.M.P.No.35572 of 2024

S.Muralidharan

... 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 :

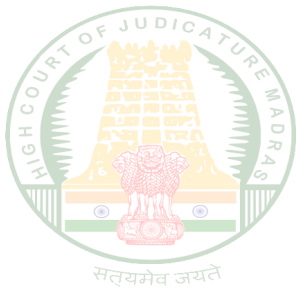
For Petitioner : Mr.Muralidharan (P-IN-P)

For Respondent(s): Mr.P.V.Balasubramaniam,
Additional Advocate General,
assisted by Mr.K.Surendar,
Government Pleader and
Mr.G.Abraham Prabhu, Government Counsel
for RR1, 3 & 5

R2 – Deleted vide Court order dated 09.01.2021 in
W.M.P.No.4685 of 2021 in W.P.No.27356 of 2019

Mr.B.N.Suchindran,
Standing Counsel for R4 (TNPCB)

Mr.V.Chandrasekaran, Senior Panel Counsel for R6



WEB COPY



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

Mr.S.P.Chockalingam for R7
Mr.L.Jaivenkatesh, Standing Counsel for R8
Mr.Richardson Wilson for RR9 to 11, 16 to 45
RR 12 to 15 - No Appearance
Mr.N.Muralikumaran,
Senior Counsel for M/s.MCGAN Law Firm
for RR 46 to 49
Mr.L.Palanimuthu for RR 50 to 64
Mr.M.Purushothaman for RR 65 & 66
Mr.Ramasamy Meiyappan for R67
R68 – Returned unserved (Insufficient Address)
Mr.V.Jayaprakash Narayanan for RR 69 to 73
Mr.K.S.Punithan,
Standing Counsel for R74 (TTDC)
Mr.N.R.R.Arun Natarajan,
Standing Counsel for R75 (HR & CE)
Mr.Harishankar for Mr.G.Gokul for R76 & R77
Mr.D.Ferdinard for R78 (Coimbatore Corporation)

Amici Curiae

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

ORDER

Destruction of Ivory :

With reference to destruction of ivory, on the last occasion, a new method was proposed by the learned *Amici Curiae* by stating that the same can be done through cement factories. By the status report filed today, the idea is accepted and

Page 3 of 12

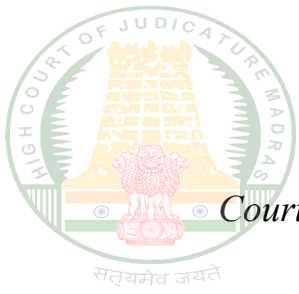


it is submitted that, first, a sampling exercise to be done. Para Nos.9 and 10 of the status report is extracted hereunder for ready reference :

WEB COPY

“9.It is respectfully submitted that the Committee has also recommended conducting a pilot destruction exercise in a suitable cement kiln before undertaking the large-scale implementation and organising a symbolic public awareness event as part of the statewide destruction programme. The learned Amici Curiae have also proposed that the sample quantity and tentative date of the pilot destruction exercise may be finalised in consultation with the representatives of the cement manufacturing facility. Accordingly, M/s.Ramco Cements Limited, Alathiyur Unit, has been requested by the Chairman of the Committee, i.e., Deputy Director, Arignar Anna Zoological Park, Vandalur to extend their cooperation to utilise their cement kiln facility for the pilot exercise and seeking details regarding the minimum quantity of ivory required, technical and operational requirements, safety protocols, handling procedures process, documentation and certification procedures.

10.It is respectfully submitted that the process for issuing the destruction order for conducting the pilot destruction exercise at a suitable cement kiln is under progress. At the time of undertaking the said exercise, the learned Amici Curiae will be duly informed. It is further respectfully submitted that, upon evaluation of the outcome of the pilot destruction exercise, the remaining ivory stock under the custody of the Department will be destroyed by incineration in a suitable cement kiln, in accordance with the directions of the Hon'ble

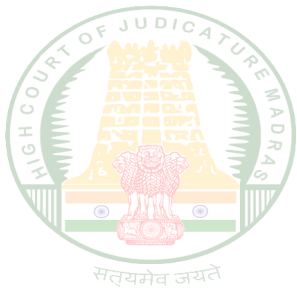


W.P.No.27356 of 2019

Court and the applicable Rules in force.”

WEB COPY

2. In view of the same, it can be seen that the process now proposed is that the sample will be first pulverized and the pulverized particles will be sent to the incinerator and after incineration, the output will be received as cement and therefore, the only difficulty of taking sample after incineration can be overcome by videographing the samples being loaded for pulverization and the output of the particles after pulverization and loading of the pulverized particles into incinerator. That would ensure the destruction and the ultimate second sampling that is proposed, which was keeping in mind separate incineration of the ivory alone, is not possible and that will stand dispensed with, when pulverization method is used. Once the sampling exercise is successful, thereafter, the authorities shall proceed with the destruction of the existing stock. As stated in the earlier order, due publicity shall be granted and in the presence of all digital and print media and such other important functionaries of the Government and in the presence of the learned *Amici Curiae*, the entire exercise can be done. Let the sampling process be done as agreed at M/s. RAMCO Cements at Alathiyur Unit, Ariyalur District and let the outcome be first reported before this Court by way of further report.

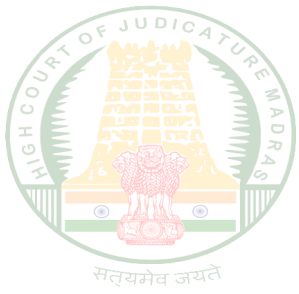


W.P.No.27356 of 2019

WEB COPY

3. With reference to the identification of the ivory, it is now placed on record that, in respect of these stock, being antique in nature, they are not in a position to identify the crime number to which these stock belongs to. The same is recorded. However, prospectively, the same should not be the answer. The Department should be in a position to identify and recognise the ivory or such other recoveries made as belonging to a particular case. Therefore, the methods which they are going to follow, including indelible ink, any mark or embossment or whatever the technological measure, are to be recorded. Since the DNA profiling is already ordered, every piece should also be identified with that of the DNA profiling. Therefore, appropriate methods in the form of stickers, indelible ink or any embossment, whichever is feasible, shall be placed on record by the Department, which will be of best use, so that, until the destruction, the concerned piece can be identified by its case number also.

4. Once the destruction procedure goes on well, the present system itself can be framed as Standard Operating Procedure by also fixing the outer periodical limit within which these goods shall be periodically destroyed.



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

WEB COPY

5. With reference to the 7.8 Tonnes of ivory, for which, no details have been submitted by the Forest Department, it is submitted that it is a tentative quantity and that they have to take stock from various places. Let that process be concluded and the final particulars be placed while the status report is being filed on 07.08.2026. The particulars shall be called upon from every District and complete particulars with reference to the ivory available and all other seized valuables shall be furnished in the status report.

6. Call on 07.08.2026.

Restoration and maintenance of Singanallur Lake :

7. With reference to restoration and works that are carried on at Singanallur Lake, Mr.D.Ferdinand, learned counsel appearing on behalf of the Coimbatore Corporation, seeks a short time to file his counter.

8. Let counter affidavit be filed by 07.08.2026. Call on 07.08.2026.



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

Steel Wire Rope Fencing :

WEB COPY

9. With reference to steel wire rope fencing, the learned Additional Advocate General, assisted by the learned Government Counsel, would place on record the communication from the District Forest Officer concerned. The laboratory test reports of the steel ropes and their quality, etc., are all detailed. It is submitted that, by and large, it is working and they have also annexed the pictures of the elephants returning unable to break the fencing. It is stated that, in one or two places alone, the strengthening measures were required not with reference to the quality of the steel or the rope, but with reference to the soil and ground. Such measures are also already carried on. They will be maintaining the 10 km stretch.

10. It was also brought to our notice during the field inspection that it will be profitable to plant bio-fencing of a particular type of cactus along the fencing so that it acts as a further barrier separating the corridor and the rest of the agricultural fields. It will also save the animals from getting hurt by dashing against the fence, etc., and guide them in proper path. Therefore, as a pilot, in the very same stretch of 10 km, any non invasive identified cactus plant which will serve the purpose can be planted along the fence, so that a bio-fencing is also developed simultaneously. The same shall be undertaken and further status report shall be filed in that regard.



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

11. With reference to replicating the pilot with reference to other areas, the same shall also be placed on record. Similarly, the planting and proliferation of the natural fodder in the interior area shall also be taken care of and a status report shall also be filed in that regard.

12. Call on 07.08.2026.

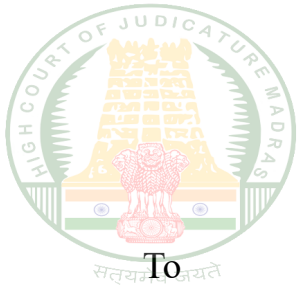
Creation of Buffer Zones :

13. With reference to our earlier directions relating to notification as Ecologically Sensitive Area, both by the State and the Central Governments, today, Mr.V.Chandrasekaran, learned Senior Panel Counsel appearing on behalf of the Central Government, would place on record an e-mail communication dated 12.03.2026. A copy thereof is also furnished to the learned State Government Counsel. The learned Additional Advocate General would submit that he will get instructions with reference thereof.

14. Call this matter and all issues relating to notification of Buffer Zone on 07.08.2026.

[N.S.K.J.] [D.B.C.J.,]
17.07.2026

mkn

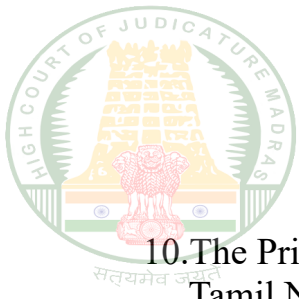


W.P.No.27356 of 2019

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

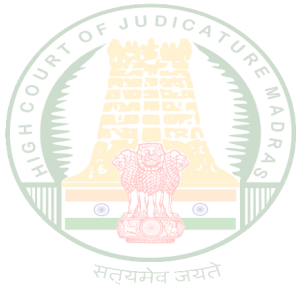
11. The Managing Director
Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation
Wallajah Road, Chennai – 600 002.

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

15. The Commissioner,
Tiruppur Municipal Corporation,
Tiruppur.



WEB COPY



W.P.No.27356 of 2019

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

mkn

W.P.No.27356 of 2019

17.07.2026