

Madurai Bench of the Madras HC seeks Tamil Nadu's reply for Committee to reclaim abandoned mines, quarries

The petitioner stated that there have been frequent tragic incidents at abandoned mines and quarries in the state.



An abandoned granite mine in Karimnagar district (Representative purpose)

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MADURAI: The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on Monday directed the state to file a counter on a plea seeking a direction to form a committee to reclaim and restore abandoned mines and quarries in the state.

A division bench of Justices MS Ramesh and AD Maria Clete was hearing a petition filed by advocate R Sathiamoorthy, also the executive trustee of the Centre for Promotion of Social Concerns of Madurai. The petitioner stated that there have been frequent tragic incidents at abandoned mines and quarries in the state.

Despite the severity and the frequency of accidents, no preventive measures have been implemented. The Tamil Nadu Mines and Mineral Concession Rules, 1959, as amended envisages the insertion of Section IV-A that provides the constitution of a reclamation, restoration and rehabilitation committee and also the creation of a green fund for better maintenance of abandoned mines and quarries. Additionally, if the mines and minerals are transported outside the state, the contribution of the green fund shall be 20% of the seigniorage fee.

The petitioner sought interim directions to immediately fence all abandoned quarries, and to ensure that all licencees of quarry lease have contributed to the green fund as envisaged and file a report on

the payments received. He also sought the court to ensure that every district reclamation, restoration and rehabilitation committee undertake their functions.