

TAMIL NADU

CB-CID gets three more weeks to trace activist Mugilan



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He went missing on February 15 after a press meet

After being apprised of the progress made by the [Crime](#)Branch-Criminal Investigation Department (CB-CID) in tracing the whereabouts of environmental activist T. Mugilan alias Shanmugam who went missing from Chennai on February 15, the Madras High Court on Thursday granted three more weeks to the police to crack the case.

the CB-CID in a sealed cover, made oral enquiries with the investigating officer and adjourned by three weeks a *habeas corpus* petition filed by human rights activist Henri Tiphagne of Madurai-based non-governmental organisation People's Watch.



During the course of hearing of the case, Additional Public Prosecutor R. Prathap Kumar told the court that the police had got some important leads in the case and that the investigation had been proceeding in the right direction. He pointed out that the investigators had been apprising the court of the developments through periodical status reports.

In earlier reports, the police had told the court that it was investigating the mysterious disappearance from all angles including his alleged relationship with a fellow activist. They claimed that the latter had threatened to create a ruckus during a press conference called by Mr. Mugilan in Chennai on February 15 regarding the protests against the Sterlite plant.

Fearing that she might create trouble, Mr. Mugilan had called one of their common friends from Namakkal district to the press conference so that the latter would be able to handle her if she lands up at the venue. However, she did not do any such thing and hence the activist addressed the press and boarded a train to Madurai on the same day only to go missing mysteriously.

Claiming to have formed 17 special teams and recorded the evidence of 251 witnesses, the police told the court that the closed circuit television camera footage from railway stations had been obtained.

Since Mugilan had, in the press conference, accused a few top police officials of having orchestrated the Thoothukudi firing in which 13 anti-Sterlite protesters were shot dead in May last year, the needle of suspicion had been pointing towards the police too with fellow activists and some political parties suspecting that he might have been killed.