



Sterlite firing: Madras High Court impleads officers, seeks reply

The bench posted the matter to February 21 for further hearing.

Updated on: 01 Feb 2024, 11:40 am | 2 min read



CHENNAI: A division bench of Madras High Court consisting of Justices SS Sundar and N Senthilkumar on Wednesday ordered notices to the revenue and police officers, including then district collector, IG of police, DIG and SP, in connection with a case relating to the police firing on anti-Sterlite protesters in 2018.

Allowing an additional affidavit filed by Henri Tiphagne, executive director of People's Watch, the bench impleaded then collector of Thoothukudi N Venkatesh, three revenue department officers and 17 police officers including then IG for South Zone Shailesh Kumar Yadav, DIG Kapil Kumar C Saratkar - and SP Mahendran. They were directed to file their response to the petition.

The bench posted the matter to February 21 for further hearing. Henri Tiphagne filed the petition in the High Court challenging the order of the National Human Rights Commission closing its suo motu investigation into the firing abruptly; and wanted the body to reopen the probe.

During the last hearing, he pointed out that certain police officers, particularly Shailesh Kumar Yadav, was given promotion despite being indicted by the Justice Aruna Jagadeesan commission of inquiry.

The bench, then, asked him to file an additional affidavit to implead the officers concerned because they have to be heard before passing orders on the issue of disciplinary action against them.

Off-site contamination

Meanwhile, the first bench of Chief Justice SV Gangapurwala and Justice D Bharatha Chakravarthy directed the TNPCB to draw a remedial plan for handling off-site contamination affecting the areas surrounding the Sterlite plant in Thoothukudi. The direction was given when a 2019 petition seeking orders on the issue of effluents came up for hearing. The court directed the preparation of the remedial plan without affecting the parties concerned since the cases regarding Sterlite Industries is pending before the Supreme Court.

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