

IAS officer transferred after death of teenager in Chennai juvenile center

The transfer order was issued by the Chief Secretary to the Tamil Nadu government, V Irai Anbu, on Friday, February 03.



Written by [Nithya Pandian](#) [Follow @NityaPandian](#)

Edited by Sukanya Shaji [Follow @ShajiSukanya](#)

Valarmathi IAS, director of Social Defence, has been transferred to Ranipet district as a collector in the wake of the [custodial death of a 17-year-old boy in the Chengalpattu juvenile rehabilitation center](#), in December 2022. The transfer order was issued by the Chief Secretary to the Tamil Nadu government, V Irai Anbu, on Friday, February 03. Tirupathur district collector Amar Kushawha IAS will be the new Director of Social Defense and Baskara Pandian IAS who held the post of Ranipet district collector will be the new district collector for Tirupathur district.

Gokul Sree, a 17-year-old resident of West Kannadapalayam in Tambaram, was arrested around 10.30 pm on December 29 and was later handed over to the juvenile home, where he was allegedly beaten to death on December 31. Following an investigation based on a complaint filed by the victim's mother Priya, Chengalpattu DSP Bharath arrested the six accused staff, identified as Superintendent of Child Welfare Mohan (30), other staff members named Chandrababu(39), Anast Raj(29), Vijayakumar(30), Vidyasagar(33), and Saranraj(36), under Indian Penal Code Section 302 for murder charges on January 14.

Activists who advocate against custodial deaths welcomed the move of the government to transfer Valarmathi. Henri Tiphange, a lawyer in the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court, and Executive Director of People's Watch tweeted - "@peopleswatch

appreciates @CMOTamilnadu @mkstali^[PDI] #IraiAnbuIAS for transfer of #ValarmathiIAS 1 mth 3 days after custodial death #Chingleput shelter home. Demand arrest of #DCPO Sivakumar w/o further delay."

"The transfer came 1 month and three days after the death of Gokul Sree. As a senior civil servant, it was the duty of Valarmathi to visit the juvenile center and call for immediate action. But she didn't visit Chengalpattu for 14 days since the death occurred", Henri told TNM. "After 14 days, she went to that place with the juvenile center in charge and conducted an inquiry. But unfortunately, she didn't speak to a single child to know whether they were tortured by officials who were posted there. She failed to take action despite there being enough evidence pointing towards the juvenile center staff's torture that was meted out to kids. It showed her negligence and reluctance to take action," he further added.

Two days after Gokul's death, DCPO Sivakumar held a 'compromise' discussion with Priya. "The DCPO threatened that my kids will be on the streets if he doesn't approve renewing the license of the hostel in which they are staying. They are put up in government residential schools. He said even NGOs get funds only if he gives them his nod. He further warned me that I won't be able to do anything to him," she recounted in the complaint.

Priya added that Sivakumar then asked her to sign a blank sheet of paper, which she refused. She instead rushed from the hospital to the District Collector's office, where she formally registered a complaint with the collector and the District Revenue Officer.

According to Henri, the District Child Protection Officer Sivakumar allegedly got all support from Valarmathi to be immune to the probe. Henri accused Sivakumar of attempting to move Gokul's mother Priya from place to place to prevent her from seeing Gokul's body after his death. "I learned that Valarmathi ordered the Deputy Director of Social Defense to conduct disciplinary proceedings following the custodial death, 30 days after the incident. But we recommend that it should be either conducted by the committee outside the Social Defense department or by the newly appointed director Amar Kushawha. We demand a high-level, independent inquiry, and action against Sivakumar," he said.

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/ias-officer-transferred-after-death-teenager-chennai-juvenile-center-172875>