

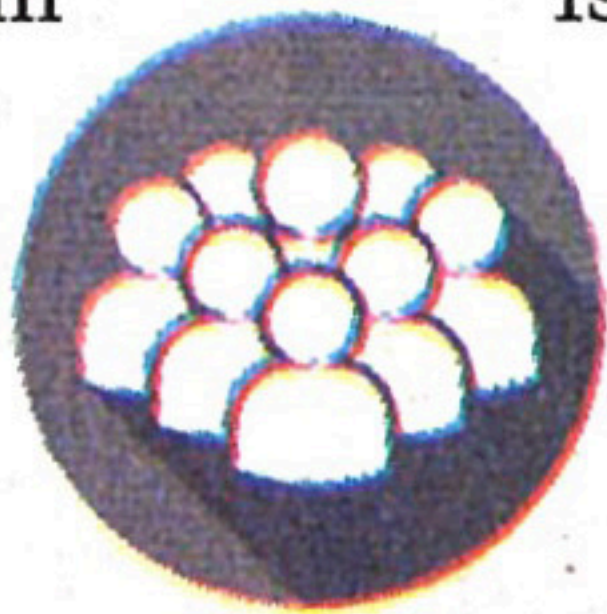


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TN urged to stop eviction of Manjolai workers till housing facilities in place

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Madurai

AFTER the Tirunelveli district administration attempted to evict the former workers and their family members from the Manjolai estate earlier in the day based on the Madras High Court's verdict, People's Watch executive director Henri Tiphagne and high court advocate Robert Chandra Kumar urged the state government to halt the eviction process until all arrangements are in place. They also urged the state government to provide a timeline for



the eviction process.

At a joint press meet, Robert said a team of officials, including hundreds of police personnel reached the place without issuing any prior notice.

The court verdict does not mention immediate eviction. "The houses and rehabilitation process are incomplete. The company has already stopped providing the facilities that were earlier provided to the workers, including access to education, hospital, drinking water and transportation (excluding one emergency vehicle)," he said.

Tiphagne said they plan to file review petitions for the cases and also need time for the same. Recently, the National Human Rights Commission directed the state's chief secretary to make sure basic amenities are provided to the former workers. However, the officials led by the sub-collector set up camp on Saturday morning with the objective of evicting the workers.

Tiphagne said the state government, which identifies as a social justice government, should not evict the workers until all arrangements are in place.