



**THE HINDU**

## **Ambasamudram custodial torture | Victims depose before IAS officer Amudha**

**The People's Watch advocates protested the presence of Special Branch police inside the taluk office where the inquiry is going on**

**April 17, 2023 06:03 pm | Updated 06:09 pm IST – TIRUNELVELI**

As many as eight victims of alleged custodial torture at Ambasamudram and three of their family members appeared before IAS officer P. Amudha on Monday at the Ambasamudram Taluk Office to record their statements.

On March 29, at Surya of Zamin Singampatti, one of the victims, had appeared before the Sub-Collector of Cheranmahadevi, Mohammed Shabbir Alam, and claimed to have lost a tooth in an accidental fall. On Monday, his grandfather Bhoothapandi, on his behalf, appeared before Ms. Amudha to record a statement.

Mr. Bhoothapandi said his grandson and a few others had damaged the CCTV cameras installed in a public place at Kallidaikurichi and was caught by the police on March 26 night and released around 10 a.m. the following day.

“A senior police officer damaged his teeth and uprooted them. He fears for his life. The women in our family have admitted him to a hospital for treatment. I did not see him since March 28. I am appearing before the inquiry commission on his behalf to record my statement,” he said.

He alleged police threatened him and few of his relatives that he should not record his statement on behalf of Mr. Surya.

Apart from him, a couple, their teenage son and his teenage friend also appeared before Ms. Amudha to record their statements along with the advocates of People's Watch Madasamy and Venkat Pandiarajan. Later, one of the family members went to Cheranmahadevi where he submitted his statement before Mr. Mohammed Shabbir Alam also.

The People's Watch advocates protested the presence of Special Branch police inside the taluk office where the inquiry is going on.

Henry Tiphagne, executive director of People's Watch, who came to the taluk office in the afternoon, said he, along with the victims, would go to the police stations where the torture had taken place, to seek the CCTV footage of the days in which the suspects were tortured.

“If the CCTV footage had been captured by the District Collector immediately after the news on torture surfaced, it would have easily proved the case,” Mr. Tiphagne said. He urged the government to give treatment to the victims in Madurai Rajaji Government Hospital and due compensation.

Five more victims — E. Esakkimuthu of Sivanthipuram, his brothers E. Chellappa, E. Mariappan, M. Mariappan and auto driver Vedhanarayanan of Vickramasingapuram appeared before Ms. Amudha to record their statements.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/ambasamudram-custodial-torture-victims-depose-before-ias-officer-amudha/article66747287.ece>