

## ‘Take policy decision on Sterlite closure’

STAFF REPORTER

MADURAI, DECEMBER 20, 2018 00:00 IST

Expressing disappointment over the National Green Tribunal’s (NGT) decision in the Sterlite Copper case, in which the State’s decision to close the plant was set aside, People’s Watch, a Madurai-based Human Rights Organisation, has urged the State government to immediately take a policy decision in this regard.

In a letter addressed to Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami, Executive Director of People’s Watch Henri Tiphagne urged the State to take a policy decision as the closure order was with limitations. The people of Thoothukudi were disappointed with the verdict of the NGT, he said.

The residents of Thoothukudi had expressed their concern over the environmental damages caused by Sterlite Copper and were also brutalised following the crackdown on them, even after 100 days of peaceful protests, he said.

### Peaceful protests

Seeking permission to organise peaceful protests against the decision of the NGT, he said peaceful protests were the medium for the people to express their opinion and concern against the order. The State must recognise and uphold the right of the people guaranteed under Article 19 of the Constitution, he said.

The State must ensure that no obstructions were created for the peaceful protests and demonstrations organised by the people of Thoothukudi against the NGT order. There was a need for hearing and discussing people’s demands and allowing peaceful protests without police interference, he stressed.