

File chargesheet in Avaniyapuram custodial death case by Dec 31: Madras HC

Warning that the court would not be liberal if the delay continues, the judges gave a deadline of 10 days for the CB-CID to complete the investigation and file chargesheet by December 31.

MADURAI: Dissatisfied with the progress of the investigation conducted by the CB-CID in a 2019 custodial death case in Madurai, the Madurai Bench of Madras High Court directed the investigating officer to file chargesheet in the case by December 31.

A Division Bench comprising Acting Chief Justice Munishwar Nath Bhandari and Justice Pushpa Sathyanarayana slammed the investigating officer for her delay in collecting the CCTV footage of the Avaniyapuram police station, where a 22-year-old youth was allegedly tortured by the police during an inquiry in a kidnapping case in October 2019.

Though the CB-CID had taken over the investigation in June this year, the investigating officer had collected the relevant CCTV footage only this month. With hardly six weeks left for the expiry of the earlier deadline fixed by the court in October, the fact that the footage were collected by CB-CID only recently did not sit well with the judges. They orally questioned the officer and the Additional Advocate General, who was representing the investigating agency, whether the delay was deliberate as the persons accused in the case were police officers.

Warning that the court would not be liberal if the delay continues, the judges gave a deadline of 10 days for the CB-CID to complete the investigation and file chargesheet by December 31. The Court gave the direction in a suo motu petition filed by it last year, after an advocate Henri Tiphagne wrote to the court that the victim's father was threatened by relatives of the suspected policemen into withdrawing a case filed by him before the court alleging that his son died due to custodial torture. Tiphagne had also submitted the alleged audio conversations of the persons involved and the same were sent for scientific analysis

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