

Printed from

**THE TIMES OF INDIA**

# People's inquest sees more flaws

TNN | Jun 4, 2018, 12.24 PM IST

TUTICORIN: Besides the manner in which the police fired at the anti-Sterlite protesters in Tuticorin on May 22 and 23, the Coordinating Committee for People's Inquest has found fault with the entire issue from the clamping of the prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the CrPC in select areas in the city on May 21.

Former judges and senior bureaucrats under the Coordinating Committee for People's Inquest have conducted a fact finding study into police firing. Former chief secretary of Haryana M G Devasahayam, who is one of the members of the team, said that he is yet to get a copy of the 144 order. "I suspect the entire incident involve a massive conspiracy. A 144 order should be properly communicated to the people and people should not have been allowed to gather. It has been conspired step by step till it ended with the brutal killings," he said when the team presented its initial findings here on Sunday.

Pointing at various flaws, former additional chief secretary Christudoss Gandhi alleged that weapons such as semi-automatic rifles that are not usually used to control the mob was purposely used in Tuticorin. "They have not been used anywhere in Tamil Nadu so far," he said.

Former Madras high court judge Hariparanthaman said that there were four spells of police firing and that they were unnecessary. "Firing took place at the collectorate, outside the collectorate, at Therespuram that is 13km away and at Anna Nagar the following day (May 23) when the public was unarmed," he said. Stating that the police are the accused in the case he strongly felt that the probe should be monitored by the high court.

"We cannot rule out infiltration by anti-social elements into the protest," said former director of the national police academy, Hyderabad, Kamal Kumar while many members of the 23 person committee refused to accept it.

Henri Tiphagne of People's Watch, Madurai, said that a detailed report on the inquest will be published in three weeks and the recommendations will be forwarded to the government.