

Sterlite firing: Officials named in report penalised, says AG

Crime

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CHENNAI: Advocate General R Shunmugasundaram in Madras High Court submitted that disciplinary action was taken and charges framed against the then Thoothukudi Collector N Venkatesh in respect with the 2018 Thoothukudi police firing.

Justice J Nisha Banu expressed a good opinion on Shailesh Kumar Yadav, the then Inspector General (IG) of the south zone, who was also named in the Aruna Jagadeesan Commission report. The judge observed "I'm now prejudiced of the officials named in the commission report," Shailesh Kumar Yadav

is the officer who brought peace to the MHC Madurai bench during turmoil and kept peace to continue the court to function, observed the judge.

Further, the judge directed the state to submit the allegations against each of the 17 officials named in the commission's report and the court also questioned the action taken against the officials.

The Advocate General submitted the annexure with details containing the actions initiated against the 21 officials regarding the Thoothukudi police firing. The annexure further

detailed that the disciplinary action has been initiated and charges framed against the then Thoothukudi Collector N Venkatesh. Since he denied the lapses, another IAS officer Dheeraj Kumar has been appointed as an inquiring authority to inquire about the disciplinary action. Further, explanation has been sought and received from the then south zone IG Shailesh Kumar Yadav. The annexure also stated that action had been initiated against 21 officials.

Petitioner Henri Tiphagne, a human rights activist, objected to the submission and contended that even

after several years since the firing happened, no action had been taken against the officials.

After the submission, the court adjourned the matter to December 11 for further hearing.

Tiphagne filed a petition against an order passed by the NHRC on October 25, 2018, closing the suo motu proceedings initiated by it with regard to the Thoothukudi police firing, in which 13 anti-Sterlite protesters were shot dead. The activist sought to re-investigate the high profile shootout case on the basis of his complaint alleging police excess.