

# 'Formulate laws to take control of Sterlite site'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

@ Madurai

EXECUTIVE Director of People's Watch Henri Tiphagne said that there exists a misconception regarding the recent Supreme Court's (SC) verdict on Sterlite copper plant and "people who are fighting against the plant should put forth their arguments before the court."

Addressing a one-day seminar 'Direction for Anti Sterlite Protest', organised by People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) here on Sunday, Tiphagne said that there were misconception about the SC verdict against Sterlite copper plant "but we have to understand that the judge mentioned that he would not be inclined to stay the order of National Green Tribunal (NGT) at this juncture as he had not read the NGT order."

He further said that the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) which had the authority to take actions against the human rights violations in the Thoothukudi police firing incident, had closed the case based on the State government's report, stating that normalcy has returned to

Thoothukudi.

He appealed the members of PUCL to organise a mass signature campaign to make NHRC reopen the case. He said that it was also important to make the people know about their fundamental rights to protest as they are being threatened by the police.

In the seminar headed by national secretary of PUCL R Murali, Madurai district president of union S Krishnasamy said that there were no private companies which were producing copper between 1964 to 1995 and when government was handling copper, there was no issue as regulations were followed and there was minimal environment degradation.

He explained that the issue of pollution cropped up when private companies started copper smelting process.

Krishnasamy urged the Central and State governments to take formulate appropriate legislature and take judicial actions to take control of the Sterlite site. He further said that the government should take control of the copper production in the country and should start units manufacturing less than one lakh metric tonnes to prevent pollution.

