



SHRC slams cops for encounter killings

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Madurai: The State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has expressed serious concerns in the encounter of two people by police officer S Vellaidurai in Madurai in 2010. People's Watch, a human rights organization on Monday urged the state government to re-investigate encounter cases in which Vellaidurai was involved.

On October 16, 2010, Kaviarasu and Kallumandaiyan alias Murugan were gunned down by then assistant commissioner Vellaidurai. Police claimed that Kaviarasu and Kallumandaiyan were stopped during a vehicle check near Teppakulam but the duo attacked the police. So, Vellaidurai shot them dead in self-defence.

People's Watch demands investigation into encounters committed by police officer Vellaidurai

But Kaviarasu's mother Seethalakshmi alleged that her son was detained by police illegally two days earlier and died at the station due to torture. Kallumandaiyan's mother Kuruvammal claimed the entire family was tortured to exact the hideout of Kallumandaiyan, who had a criminal history. He was secured on October 14, 2010. SHRC found many holes in the explanation of the respondents, Vellaidurai, then Keerathurai sub-inspector Thennarasu, then head cons-

table Ganesan and their self-defence theory.

They were only property offenders and they need not flee upon seeing the police or attack them as claimed by the police. Though 12 years have passed, the police could never find the owner of the stolen vehicle in which the duo travelled. The respondents, though claimed to conduct a vehicle check when the encounter happened, could not produce a single eyewitness.

Besides, Vellaidurai intended to kill them by shooting in the chest instead of thighs or legs to immobilize them. The commission had also observed that he had killed four others in encounters earlier and it was not something to be proud of. The criminals have to be presented before the jurisprudence sys-

tem for punishment, the commission stated in its order dated October 21.

The commission also directed the chief secretary to provide ₹3 lakh each to the two victims' mothers and recover this money from Vellaidurai and the other personnel. Addressing reporters, Henri Tiphagne, executive director of People's Watch said that Vellaidurai calls himself an encounter specialist and had been involved in other encounters too.

The state government should take up all the encounter cases where Vellaidurai was involved and order for re-investigation, he said. He appreciated Kuruvammal and her lawyers who fought the case for the last 12 years before the commission and won.