



Sterlite firing | T.N. files counter to plea to register murder case against police personnel involved

The PIL petition was filed by the mother of a 17-year-old protester who was shot dead during the Sterlite firing in 2018

February 21, 2024 03:27 pm | Updated 04:54 pm IST – CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu government on Wednesday, February 21, 2024, filed a counter affidavit to a public interest litigation (PIL) petition seeking the registration of a murder case against the police officers and personnel responsible for [the May 2018 firing](#) in which as many as 13 anti-Sterlite protesters were shot dead in Thoothukudi district.

First Division Bench of Chief Justice Sanjay V. Gangapurwala and Justice D. Bharatha Chakravarthy were seized of [the PIL petition filed by J. Vanitha \(50\)](#), mother of 17-year-old J. Snowlin who was among those killed in the police firing. The litigant insisted on booking the police as well as revenue officials on a charge of murder.

Further, the petitioner had also insisted that the departmental inquiry initiated against the officials must culminate in their dismissal from service, the compensation of ₹20 lakh each paid to the families of the deceased must be enhanced to ₹1 crore and that a memorial must be built in memory of them.

Additional Advocate General J. Ravindran, assisted by Additional Public Prosecutor R. Muniyapparaj, told the court that most of the petitioner's prayers had already been complied with. He said the criminal cases registered with respect to the firing had been transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The CBI had completed the investigation and filed a chargesheet before the trial court in Madurai.

However, [the trial court was not satisfied with the final report](#) and had directed the investigating agency to conduct further investigations. This further investigation by the CBI was underway, the AAG told the Bench.

On the other hand, senior counsel Colin Gonsalves, representing the PIL petitioner, contended that none of the police personnel had been subjected to criminal prosecution for the grave offence committed by them and requested time to file a detailed rejoinder to the State government's counter affidavit.

The judges accepted his plea and adjourned the PIL petition for further hearing on April 5.

Related writ petition

In the meantime, the third Division Bench of Justices S.S. Sundar and N. Senthilkumar heard [a related writ petition filed by human rights activist Henri Tiphagne](#) of People's Watch in Madurai against the closure of his complaint, regarding the police firing, by the National Human Rights Commission.

The petitioner contended that the NHRC had closed the complaint solely because the State government had constituted [the Justice Aruna Jagadeesan Commission of Inquiry](#) to look into the incident and had also paid a compensation of ₹20 lakh each to the families of the deceased.

The litigant also took out a sub-application to implead the officials, involved in the firing incident, as respondents to his writ petition. The Bench led by Justice Sundar allowed the impleading petition on Wednesday and directed the counsel appearing for some of the impleaded respondents to file their counter within two weeks.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/sterlite-firing-tn-files-counter-to-plea-to-register-murder-case-against-police-personnel-involved/article67870234.ece>