

# Extra-judicial killings by police condemned

**The Hindu Bureau**

MADURAI

Joint Action Against Custodial Torture - Tamil Nadu (JAACT) has condemned the extra-judicial killing of history-sheeter 'Seizing' Raja in Chennai on Monday.

In a statement, it said the events resembled exactly of the police's version for the encounter of a another history-sheeter Thiruvengadam on July 14. "This raises many questions and suspicions as this is the third incident in less than 10 weeks since Arun assumed as Commissioner of Greater Chennai Police on July 8," the statement added. The killings sync with Mr. Arun's statement that "He will speak in a language that rowdies will understand,' to media while assuming office., While one is aware of the sensitivity involved in investigation of the murder of Armstrong, former State leader of Bahujan Samaj Party, the police resorting to extra-judicial measures, including shooting down people, would not bring the perpetrators to justice.

"When 'Seizing' Raja was caught by the police from Andhra Pradesh, it was said that he was a per-

son of interest in Armstrong's murder investigation, but after his killing, the same police clarified that Raja was not related to this case.

The recent incidents also reveal the nexus between anti-social elements and political parties, hence the onus was on the government to conduct impartial investigation.

Raja is the 16th person to be killed in extra-judicial killing since the DMK government came to power in May 2021. This denoted that the government had lost its faith in effective prosecution of perpetrators and rather relying on illegal and extra-judicial means which was only a knee-jerk reaction to cover up the incompetence to conduct a free and fair investigation.

The forum also requested the Madras High Court to immediately intervene in the 'unchecked' use of extra-judicial killings by a *suo moto* intervention. It also suggested that the court order a commission of inquiry.

"We call upon State Human Rights Commission to form a fact-finding team and conducting an independent investigation," the statement added.