

## Protesters court arrest over firing



### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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**Government accused of unleashing terror on innocent people; probe by sitting HC judge demanded**

Political outfits including the Thamizhaga Vazhvurimai Kootamaippu, the Dravidar Viduthalai Kazhagam, the Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi and the May 17 Movement took out a procession and held an agitation in the city on Thursday condemning the killing of 12 protesters in Thoothukudi.

They assembled in groups before the Triplicane police station and marched

towards the State Guest House on Walajah Road holding placards condemning the State government for “unleashing terror on the people who were agitating in a peaceful manner” and also demanding a ban on the Sterlite plant in Thoothukudi.

Tamizhar Vazhvurimai Katchi leader T. Velmurugan said, “We demand that police officials and the District Collector of Thoothukudi be booked on charges of murder. A sitting judge of the Madras High Court should probe the causes that led to the shooting.”

Members of Makkal Mandram, the Social Democratic Party, the Aam Aadmi Party and a few other political parties also joined in the agitation. Activists of the May 17 Movement said the Sterlite plant should be closed and Chief Secretary Girija Vaidyanathan should be terminated from service for allegedly issuing the firing order.

The agitators demanded a probe by the United Nations Human Rights Commission into the firing. They also wanted the AIADMK government to resign. A heavy posse of police personnel was deployed to avert any untoward incident.

Mr. Velmurugan, Dravidar Viduthalai Kazhagam leader Kolathur Mani, Tamil Desiya Munnani president Pazha Nedumaran, Tamilaga Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam leader John Pandian, directors Ameer and Ram and their supporters were blocked by the police near the State Guest House when they attempted to proceed towards the Secretariat. They were later detained and taken to a community hall in Chintadripet.