

National SC commission to investigate delay in disbursal of relief measure by Adi Dravidar Welfare Department

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THE HINDU BUREAU

Based on the complaint filed by a forum, National Commission for Scheduled Castes has informed about its decision to investigate into the matter regarding delay in disbursal of relief measure to the bereaved SC families and also on the alleged reply of the Director of the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department to the Madras High Court against the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, SC/ST (POA) Rules, 1995 and SC/ST (POA) Amendment Act, 2015.

S. Karuppiah, State president, Dalit Liberation Movement of Tamil Nadu had petitioned the commission on May 23, 2025, demanding an action against the Director of the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department for filing an affidavit in the Madurai Bench of Madras High Court which was against the SC/ST (POA) Act, rules and amendment.

In 2017, a writ petition was filed by an individual in the Madurai Bench of Madras High Court against the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department for not acting according to the Act and also for delaying the disbursal of relief measures to 18 bereaved SC families who had suffered loss of family members to violent murders in 2014, 2015 and 2016, Mr. Karuppiah said.

As more than seven years had passed since the offences were committed, the second relief was not disbursed to the victim's family. The senior official who filed an affidavit in the court for the writ petition on February 7, 2024, stated that "Since the relief matter pertaining to the 18 families were pending in the court, the department had not released the second part of the relief."

Mr. Karuppiah pointing out to the affidavit, said the writ petition which was filed to expedite the government's action of providing relief, but the senior official citing the very petition, before court had denied the relief to the bereaved family for more than eight years.

"While the reply was insensitive to the pain of the victim's families, it was also against the SC/ST Act 1989, Rules 1995 and Amendment 2015. The Act has stipulated a time period for the release of relief measures and also the duty of the officials in providing relief to the family members," he added.

Condemning the reply, Mr. Karuppiah said he had demanded action against the official under section 4 (Punishment for neglect of duties) of the SC/ST (POA) Act, 1989.

The National Commission for SC has accepted the petition and written to Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu and the Secretary to Government, Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department seeking details of the victims and details regarding their compensation within 15 days of receiving the letter.

It had also mentioned that it would be investigating the matter under Article 338 of the Constitution of India.

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