

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI**

Original Application No.109 of 2021 (SZ)

(Through Video Conference)

IN THE MATTER OF

Tribunal on its own motions – SUO MOTU based on the
News items published in Dinamalar Tamil Newspaper, Chennai
Edition Dated : 08.04.2021 “Ranganathar Temple pond is
Becoming a hub for drinking alcohol”

... Applicant(s)

Versus

1. Additional Chief Secretary to Govt. of Tamil Nadu
Tourism, Culture and Religious Endowments Department
Government Secretariat, Fort St. George
Chennai, Tamil Nadu – 600 009.
2. The Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu
Department of Environment & Forests
Government Secretariat, Fort St. George
Chennai, Tamil Nadu – 600 009.
3. Additional Chief Secretary to Govt. of Tamil Nadu
Municipal Administration and Water Supply Department
Government Secretariat, Fort St. George
Chennai, Tamil Nadu – 600 009.
4. Hindu Religious Charitable Endowment Department
Rep. by its Commissioner
119, Uthamar Gandhi Salai
Nungambakkam
Chennai – 600 034
5. The Chairman
Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board
No.76, Anna Salai, Guindy
Chennai, Tamil Nadu – 600 032
6. The District Collector
Chengalpet District
Collector Office, GST Road
Chengalpattu – 603 001
7. Arulmigu Ranganatha Perumal Temple
Rep. by its Joint Commissioner
Thiruneermalai Main Road
Thiruneermalai, Chennai – 600 044

8. Thiruneermalai Town Panchayat
Rep. by its Executive Officer
No.6-A, Main Road, Thiruneermalai
Chennai – 600 004

...Respondent(s)

STATUS Cum ACTION TAKEN REPORT
FILED BY THE 8TH RESPONDENT - EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE
THIRUNEERMALAI TOWN PANCHAYAT

I D.A.Jeesiemabanu wife of Mr. Abdul Jabbar, aged 54 years, presently discharging my duties as Executive Officer, Thiruneermalai Town Panchayat, having its office at Thiruneermalai, Chengalpet District, do hereby solemnly affirm and sincerely state as follows:-

1. I humbly submit that this Hon'ble Tribunal has taken suo motu cognizance based on the News item with caption "Ranganathar Temple pond is becoming a hub for drinking alcohol" published in Dinamalar Tamil Newspaper, Chennai edition on 08.04.2021. This Hon'ble Tribunal has directed the 4th respondent to submit a report on or before 30.06.2021, with regard to any schemes for de-silting, maintenance and protection of temple tank, vide its interim order dated 21.05.2021.
2. I humbly submit that in pursuant to the direction of this Hon'ble Tribunal, the 3rd respondent has directed the 8th respondent Town Panchayat to take appropriate action on its part and file response regarding allegations in the news paper report on behalf of 3rd respondent also. Therefore, the 8th respondent file this status report for herself and on behalf of the 3rd respondent too:-
3. It is submitted that Sri Ranganathar Temple Pond is situated on the western side of the foothills of Thiruneermalai Temple. This Pond spread on 3.6 acres of land comprised in Survey No.137 and it has been under the care and maintenance of the 7th respondent. The water from nearby lake is filling the tank by channel passing through the lands comprised in S.Nos.130 to 136, besides its own recharging from rain water. There is an inlet for water reaching the pond, but no outlet is available now, to drain the water from tank. The 8th

respondent Town Panchayat used to collect and remove the wastes and silts, whenever the 7th respondent cleaning the Temple Pond.

4. It is submitted that the Thiruneermalai Town is a Special Grade Town Panchayat in Chengalpattu District, with population around 40,000, situated on the outskirts of Chennai city, in an extent of 4.80 sq.km and is administratively delimited into 18 wards. Most of its habitats and Wards are on the eastern side of the outer ring road. The above pond is sacred to the devotees and domiciles occasionally using the same for rituals and performs rites. There are three marriage halls and several residents on its northern side and part of western side. The office of the Town Panchayat was functioning on the premises at the southern side of the pond till the year 2011 and it was moved to the present building away from the tank. Now, the old premises of Town Panchayat have been occupied by the primary health post and sub post office.
5. It is submitted that when the office of the Town Panchayat was functioning on the southern side of the Pond, a public toilet was constructed few decades ago, to cater the needs of its visitors and the junk of devotees throng from various places during the temple festivals and auspicious days. Apart from that, two bore wells were erected, a motor pump room to lift drinking water to overhead tank and a Kariya Mandapam for public to perform their rituals, tonsuring, ear boring, etc., was constructed on the south west side of the Tank.
6. It is submitted that since the sub post office and health post have been functioning in the old premises only on limited hours or days in a week and the office of the Town Panchayat was moved out from there, the entire stretch of the south and part of western side of the Pond became idle place. Hence, over the period of time, the public used to

conduct and perform their rituals on the vacant place at the south east side of tank and nearby main road.

7. According to the residents, in absence of regular usage or access of public/domicile, the major portion of pond became isolate place and potential location for tipplers, who come from different parts of city and nearby villages to attend the functions at the three marriage halls, situated on the northern bund of the Tank.
8. It is humbly submitted that subsequent to the interim order of this Hon'ble Tribunal, the Joint Director (Schemes), Directorate of Town Panchayat, visited the area of the above Temple Tank along with the Executive Officer and other officials of the Town Panchayat, on 05.06.2021. The J.D.(S) interacted with families residing at the western side of the tank and requested them to complement the efforts of the Town Panchayat in maintaining sanitation, vigilant on strangers misuse the surroundings of Pond and inform the Town Panchayat if any untoward incidents. He further instructed the Town Panchayat to remove the bushes in front of the water pumping room and check any encroachments on the channels bringing water to the Pond.
9. It is submitted that the Town Panchayat cleared the bushes around the pumping room and bunds of Tank on 06.06.2021 and inspected the channel and water course from lake to Tank. No encroachment found on the channel as on date. The sanitary team of Town Panchayat was instructed to clean the area regularly.
10. It is further submitted that the Executive Officer of the 8th respondent Town Panchayat had a meeting with the Executive Officer of the Arulmigu Ranganatha Perumal

Temple, Thiruneermalai, on 12.06.2021 and discussed the concerns raised by this Hon'ble Tribunal. The latter part requested the Town Panchayat to construct 5 ft height compound wall around the tank and park at 6 feet width from the wall. However, the resource of Town Panchayat does not permit such projects. The 8th respondent assured its cooperation for maintenance of sanitation around the Temple Tank.

11. It is submitted that the 8th respondent has instructed its sanitation team to clean the Tank area regularly and study the options for renovation of unused Toilet, as it may require only during the festive seasons and regular maintenance without usage is not viable.
12. I humbly submit that this respondent has been following the directions of this Hon'ble Tribunal diligently and adequate measure are taken to comply with.

It is therefore prayed by the 8th respondent that this Hon'ble Tribunal may be pleased to record the above status cum action taken report and pass any such further other order deem fit and proper to the circumstances of the case and thus render justice.

Dated at Chennai on this the 21 day of June, 2021

D.A. Jeesi 21/6/2021

8TH RESPONDENT

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Thiruneermalai Spl. Grade Town Panchayat

VERIFICATION

I D.A.Jeesiemabanu wife of Mr. Abdul Jabbar, aged 54 years, presently discharging my duties as Executive Officer, Thiruneermalai Town Panchayat, having its office at Thiruneermalai, Chengalpet District, do hereby certify that the contents of above Paragraphs are true to the best of my knowledge.

Verified at Chennai on this the 21 day of June, 2021

D.A. Jeesi 21/6/2021

8TH RESPONDENT

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Thiruneermalai Spl. Grade Town Panchayat

Chennai-600 132

Chengalpattu District