

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

ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO 238 OF 2024(sz)

In the matter of:

Tribunal on its own motion SUO MOTU
based on the News Item in The Hindu
Newspaper dt: 25.06.2024, under
the caption, "Illegal sand mining continues
in Cauvery river in parts of Karur district,
allege activists".

Versus

TNPCB, Through its Member Secretary,
Chennai and Ors.

...Respondent(s)

INDEX

S. No.	Date	Description	Page No.
1.	25.11.2025	Action Taken Report Filed by 4 th Respondent- District Collector, Karur.	1-8

(**Note:** The page numbers are at the top centre of every page)



Through
Dr. D. Shanmuganathan
Standing Counsel for Government of Tamil Nadu
National Green Tribunal
Southern Zone, Chennai

DATE:26.11.2025

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI
SUO MOTU CASE REGISTERED ON THE NEWS ITEM ILLEGAL SAND
MINING CONTINUES IN CAUVERY RIVER IN PARTS OF KARUR
DISTRICT**

SUO MOTU CASE O.A. No.238 of 2024

[Earlier O.A. No.878 of 2024 (PB)]

Suo Motu registered by Principal Bench of National Green Tribunal based on the News item title Illegal Sand Mining issues in Cauvery river in parts of Karur district. The Hindu dated:25.06.2024

... Applicant

- Vs. -

1. Tamilnadu Pollution Control Board
Through its Member Secretary
76, Mount Salai, Guindy, Chennai-32
2. Central Pollution Control Board
Through its Member Secretary
Parivesh Bhavan,
East Arjun Nagar,
New Delhi - 110032
3. Ministry of Environment,
Forest & Climate Change
Through its Regional Office,
Integrated Regional Office,
I st and II nd floor,
Handloom Export Promotion Council,
34, Cathedral Garden Road,
Nungambakkam Chennai.
4. The District Collector
Karur District Collectorate,
Karur

...Respondents

ACTION TAKEN REPORT FILED BY THE 4th RESPONDENT

I, Thangavel, I.A.S., S/o. Meenakshisundaram, Hindu, aged about 59 years, serving as District Collector, Karur District, do hereby solemnly affirm and sincerely state that as regards the SUO MOTU case in original application No.878/2024 of the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi, transformed to Southern Bench, Chennai. Counter affidavit had already been submitted in this regard. Now, a status report is filed for developments. The enforcement officials of Revenue, Police and Geology and Mining department of Karur are geared upto curb illegal quarrying / transportation and storage of river sand by erection of barricades, railings, wire fencing, check posts 24X7 surveillance by the teams organized by the Revenue Divisional Officer, Sub Collector Karur and Kulithalai respectively. All the riverine villages are under watch and ward by the enforcement officials. Unauthorised sand quarrying, transportation and other minor minerals are all brought under criminal offence and prosecution with BNS 303, Section 21 of MMDR Act 1957. Appropriate penalties are also imposed under Rule 36-A (1), (3) & (5) of the Tamilnadu Minor Mineral Concession Rules 1959.

2) It is respectfully submitted that the Hon'ble Madurai Bench of Madras High Court adopted a case filed as SUO MOTU CASE in W.P.(MD) NO.16564 of 2025. This respondent filed a counter affidavit to the averments made in that case. The salient actions taken in respect of curbing illegal quarrying of sand and brick earth on the banks and flood plains of Cauvery river are submitted below.

3) **ACTION TAKEN TO CURB ILLEGAL RIVER SAND QUARRYING
IN CAUVERY RIVER**

a) To prevent early morning quarrying between 2 AM and 5 Am, Special teams are organised by the Revenue Divisional officer Karur to keep strict vigil on the pre dawn time. Culprits indulged in river sand quarrying are to be handed over to the nearest police station along with their transporting vehicles, including bullock carts for filling cases under 303 (2) & (3) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, Coupled with section 21 (4) of MMDR Act 1957 and Rule 36-A of Tamilnadu Minor Mineral Concession Rules 1959.

b) Vulnerable locations, having entry or access into river bed are either fenced or made with deep tranches so as to prevent entry of vehicles into the rived bed.

c) Caution boards depicting, the action to be taken on illegal sand quarrying and mobile numbers for intimating the illegal sand quarrying activities to the convenor of Taluk Level Task Force of the concerned Taluk are displayed.

d) The patta land owners of the flood plains of Cauvery river are the root cause for giving access to the illegal sand quarrying activities or they themselves are indulging in illegal quarrying of sand from the river beds, by using their bullock carts are severely warned that they night have landed on dire consequences if they do such unauthorised activities.

e) The roads abetting river Cauvery are provided with check points manned by police and revenue on rotation basis.

f) Appropriate co- Ordinations are cropped with the bordering districts of Namakkal and Trichirappalli having district borders either at the midpoint of river Cauvery or on its left bank.

g) The routine access places like crematorium and funeral processing sheds are provided with manual entry and on request to the village administrative officer vehicular entry provisions are provided.

h) The custodian of the river bed viz the Public Works Department's Water Resources Departments are made. More amenable to keep the river bed, river banks and flood plain areas, by watching 24X7 pattern through their irrigation assistants (formerly lascars) and Assistant / Junior engineers having jurisdiction over the area.

i) The check dams. Diversion dams and places having thick sand deposits are receiving special attention of the PWD – WRD Department of Karur District.

j) The Zonal – Deputy Tahsildars of Karur District are being engaged in their respective Zones to safeguard the National resource river sand vide G.O.(Ms) No.921/Revenue Department dated :15.06.1991.

k) The Taluk Level Task Force, Constituted vide G.O (Ms) No.135 /Industries (MMA1) Department dated: 13.11.2009 are assigned with field verification in river banks and beds of Cauvery within their jurisdiction frequently and to furnish reports to the District Level Task Force meetings held on monthly basis.

l) Apart from the seizure of 67 vehicles by Revenue and Geology and Mining Departments for illegal transportation of sand, on a single day on 05.06.2025, 25 lorries / Tarrus lorries / Tipper lorries having motive to transport sand and indulged in illegal transportation of sand were seized by the police from a sand sieving plant located at Manmangalam village of Manmangalam Taluk.

m) The quarrying, transportation, Storage Mineral Check post will be installed at the following places identified as vulnerable.

- i). Pugalur
- ii). Semangi
- iii). Vangal
- iv). Nerur
- v). Mettupalayam
- vi). Thavittupalayam
- vii). Kattipalayam
- viii). Kadambankurichi
- ix). Sanankottai
- x). East & West Thavittupalayam
- xi). Somur
- xii). Mayanur
- xiii). Thirumukkoodalur
- xiv). Nanniyur and
- xv). Sevanthipalayam

4) ACTION TAKEN TO PREVENT ILLEGAL BRICK EARTH QUARRYING ON THE FLOOD PLAINS OF CAUVERY RIGHT BANK IN KARUR DISTRICT

- i). Lists of brick kiln operation on the bank and flood plains of Cauvery river was obtained from the respective Tahsildars.
- ii). Misuse of 2-C Patta lands for using them as brick making kilns are identified. Appropriate recommendations will be sent to the Executive Engineer TANGEDCO, for disconnecting electric power supply and to the District Environment Engineer Tamilnadu Pollution control Board

6

Karur to cancel the consents granted on Air & Water (Prevention) of Pollution, if any.

- iii). Tahsildars are empowered with seizure of the existing stock of illegally quarried and stored brick earth and to seal the brick kiln, tools equipments and machineries under the provisions of Rule 8 of the Tamilnadu prevention of Illegal mining, Transportation of Mineral. Storage and Mineral Dealers Rule 2011, under intimation to the Revenue Divisional officer / Sub – Collector Concerned.
- iv). The brick earth illegally excavated from patta and 2 –C patta lands are measured in the excavated pits and after arriving volume the concerned pattadars are imposed with penalty under Rule 36-A (1) & (3) of Tamilnadu Minor Mineral Concession Rules 1959.

ACTION TAKEN OF ADMINISTRATIVE ANGLE

- i). The Revenue Divisional Officer, Karur Organised 30 teams Comprising revenue officials vide Proceedings Rc.No.A1/5417/2024 dated 29.03.2025 to keep constant vigil over the vulnerable areas prone for illegal quarrying and transportation of river sand, by bullock carts.
- ii). The Sub – Collector, Kulithalai vide Proceedings Rc.No A1/1521/2024 dated 15.11.2024 imposed a penalty of Rs.4,95,35,000/- (Rupees Four Crore Ninety five Lakhs Thirty Five Thousand only) on six persons for dispatch of 49185 cubic metres of gravel earth from patta S.F.No.573/3A etc., of Vadaseri Village, Kulithalai Taluk, Karur District.
- iii). The Sub – Collector, Kulithalai initiated disciplinary proceedings against Thiru. Muthukannan, Firka Revenue Inspector, Thogamalai Firka, Kulithalai Taluk of Karur District vide Rc.A1/1521/2024 dated.07.11.2024.
- iv). A Village Administrative officer named G.Satheesh of Vadaseri village, in Kulithalai Taluk had been suspended from government seizure by the Sub – Collector, Kulithalai in Rc.No.A4/1978/2025 dated: 08.04.2025.

- v). On 21.6.2025, five lorries bearing registration numbers TN-28-BJ-5214, TN-37-BR-7644, TN-38-CT-2221, TN-41-QQ-0182 and TN-88-V-4988 were seized by the Geology and Mining with Revenue Department officials in a Sand sieving plant at Lingathur Village in Kadavur Taluk of Karur District, cases filed under Section 303(2) of BUS 2023 and 21 (1) of MMDR Act 1957. Appropriate immediate actions are taken to seizure the machineries and to seal such sieving plants functioning unauthorised by.
- vi). The District Administrative have clamped detention orders against one of the habitual sand offenders named Surya S/o. Velusamy of Nathamedu in Karur Taluk and District on 16.06.2025 vide (C.R.M.P No.25/2025 dated 16.06.2025 under The Tamil Nadu prevention of Dangerous Activities of boot leggers, cyber law offenders, drug offenders, forest offenders, Goondas, Immoral traffic offenders, sand offenders, sexual offenders, slum grabbers and video pirated Act 1982 (Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982) one another case on the same lines is confirmed by the government on one Thiru.Selvaraj S/o. Chellamuthu vide G.O. (Ms) no 589 / Home, prohibition and excise (15) Department dated 06.02.2025.

INFERENCE OF THE ACTION TAKEN REPORT

It is submitted that the District Administration of Karur is family prepared to counter the illegal quarrying of river sand from Cauvery and other river of the district. the enforcement officials as detailed in vide G.O.(Ms) No.170/Industries (MMC2) Department dated: 05.05.2020 are conflicting with the inbuilt menace of the offenders with tooth and nail Registering criminal cases on the drivers /Owners of the vehicles under Section 303(2) of BNS, read with section 21 (1), (4) and (4-A) of MMDR Act confiscation of the vehicle indulged in the sand offence and booking habitual offenders under sand offenders etc., Act 1982 (Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982) brought the number of such offices in descending manner. The district administration of Karur also pledged to eliminate unauthorised river sand quarrying, transportation and its storage.

VERIFICATION

I, Thangavel, I.A.S., S/o. Meenakshisundaram, Hindu, aged about 59 years, serving as District Collector, Karur District, do affirm and state that verified the contents of the paragraph of this counter affidavit and to my knowledge and belief they are correct. Any material facts are not suppressed.


DISTRICT COLLECTOR
KARUR

DATE:25.11.2025