



Tuticorin Massacre

A Corporate Developmental Terrorism



Coordination of Democratic Rights Organisations
Women Against Sexual Violence and State Repression

The **Coordination of Democratic Rights Organisations (CDRO)**, formed in August 2007, is a coalition of around 18 civil and democratic rights organizations from across India. The CDRO arose in the context of the violent state repression of people's movements in India as well as the arrest of democratic rights activists. CDRO affirms that:

- *The right to organize and struggle is a basic democratic right of the people.*
- *To stand united against all forms of state repression on people's democratic struggles.*
- *To support with solidarity actions in the event of attacks by the state on any civil rights organizations or its representatives.*

CDRO has engaged in broad range of campaigns and issues that include,

- *The repeal of brutal laws such as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA), the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), the Chhattisgarh State Public Security Act (CSPSA) and other draconian laws operating in India,*
- *The arbitrary detention of Binayak Sen and several other political prisoners across jails in India,*
- *The increasing use of extra judicial, state-sponsored armed gangs such as the COBRAs in Andhra Pradesh and the Salwa Judum in Chhattisgarh to combat the Maoist insurgency,*
- *Death penalties by the Indian state, and*
- *Narco analysis as a form of police torture.*

The coordinating organisations of the CDRO are: Association for Democratic Rights (AFDR, Punjab), Association for Protection of Democratic Rights (APDR, West Bengal); Asansol Civil Rights Association, West Bengal; Bandi Mukti Committee (West Bengal); Civil Liberties Committee (CLC, Andhra Pradesh); Civil Liberties Committee (CLC, Telangana); Committee for Protection of Democratic Rights (CPDR, Maharashtra); Coordination for Human Rights (COHR, Manipur); Committee for Protection of Democratic Rights (CPDR, Tamil Nadu); Manab Adhikar Sangram Samiti (MASS, Assam); Naga Peoples Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR); Peoples' Committee for Human Rights (PCHR, Jammu and Kashmir); Peoples Democratic Forum (PDF, Karnataka); Jharkhand Council for Democratic Rights (JCDR, Jharkhand); Peoples Union For Democratic Rights (PUDR, Delhi); Peoples Union for Civil Rights (PUCR, Haryana), Campaign for Peace & Democracy in Manipur (CPDM), Delhi; Janhastakshep (Delhi).

Foreword

Tuticorin massacre on May 22nd by police firing on the peaceful protest was an unprecedented attack on the people in TamilNadu. At the national level, with the exception of Kashmir and parts of central India which are witnessing full scale war on the people, atleast two such attacks on the common people have taken place in the recent past. The targeted killing of protesting farmers at Mandsaur and the firing on the dalits protesting against the dilution of provisions of SC/ST atrocity act are two such instances. All these attacks on innocent people by the state took place when our nation boasts itself as superpower in the international.

While the growth of the country is projected as synonymous with its stature in public health and education and not in its military might, in actuality it stands otherwise. Defence is one of the largest heads of expenditure of central government, amounting to more than one sixth of the total budget. If we take defence and police together, more than one fifth of government expenditure is on the military and security establishment accounting to more than 3 lakh crores in the 2015-16 budget while in relative terms, the budget for health is a pittance 32000 crores out of the 17.77 lakh crores net expenditures. We must ask. So much investment in security apparatus of the state and where is it being used? These recent attacks like the one on people of Tuticorin and ongoing wars in Kashmir and parts of Central India are the answer.

In the name of development, thousands of hectares of land are handed over to the corporates under SEZ and EPZ. The lands are forcibly obtained from the poor land holders and landless are being continuously displaced in the pretext of 'national interest'. Thus the marginalised masses bear the brunt of this present steamrolling of development where their livelihood is snatched away in the name of "national interest". Tribals have

been alienated from their own lands in violation of the much pronounced Samata judgement of 1997 which was announced by the three judge bench of the Supreme court. Corporate Profit takes priority over employment generation, environment degradation, and air and water pollution. People's resistance to this so-called developmental terrorism of corporates face severe repression which is also borne out during our fact-finding in Tuticorin.

This is not a recent development. Post 1991, with the introduction of structural adjustment and liberalization, successive governments have succumbed to the dictates of IMF and WB policies for economic reforms through slow withdrawal from the welfare policies of the state to the benefit of the corporate interests.

The authoritarian response of the state, centralised power favouring the corporates, the institutional independence buckling before corporate dictum and the utterly brutal form of violence by the state while branding the dissenters/protesters as anti-nationals and terrorists, skirting off every constitutional efforts to defend the victims, and isolating the entire area from outside support or communications (a similarity to disturbed area under armed forces) coalesced together in the Tuticorin Massacre on Sterlite issue, blatantly killing innocent protesters marching towards the District Collectorate Office against Sterlite, Vedanta's polluting industry at Tuticorin.

During the period of neo-liberal reforms, time and again, we have witnessed judiciary's reluctance to interpret law in favour of the citizens and leaving them to the mercy of the state machinery which is more inclined towards withdrawal of its responsibilities so that these responsibilities turn into profit making ventures for corporates. The recent verdict of National Green Tribunal (NGT) is a case in point. The Tarun Agrawal Committee has agreed with many of the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board's (TNPCB) allegations, including illegal operation by Vedanta, the group that manages Sterlite Copper. However, the committee has asked for leniency when dealing with them. It also says

that the TNPCB violated the principles of natural justice and calls for reopening of the factory. This is because according to this committee, the TNPCB did not give a chance to Vedanta to defend themselves. This is curious because the violations - under the Air Act, Water Act and Hazardous Waste Rules - contain no caveats for lenient treatment of violators. Further, the irony deepens when considering the victims' plight. These victims include the people of Tuticorin affected by the unlicensed and sub-standard operation of a polluting industry. In this instance, the only parties representing the people of Thoothukudi - the interveners - have been denied an independent legal status by the National Green Tribunal (NGT). Their request for a copy of the Agarwal Committee's report was also turned down, and they were directed to assist the state counsel without official access to it.

Tuticorin is a stark example of how big corporate can take on the entire populace of the district with ruling government at state and centre and the entire government machinery at its beck and call to repress the people. Even the Semblance of democracy became anathema for the state ever willing to serve corporate interest that showed up its ugly face. This is the beginning of a new phase of the big capital going whole hog for its authority against the joint struggle from the entire populace afflicted by its plundering. Unity of the village and urban beyond any internecine contradictions amongst them is the faint ray of hope in this hour of terrible repression. But yet the afflicted has a long way ahead for an organised response against the big capital to restore its rightful claim for a liveable atmosphere without exploitation.

- CDRO

TUTICORIN MASSACRE

FACT FINDING REPORT

22nd May 2018 shook the conscience of all the citizens of India when the news of police firing on anti-Sterlite protestors in Tuticorin (Thoothukodi) in TamilNadu and killing 15 of them reached the citizens through different news channels and media reports. Such a large scale attack on the common people is unprecedented in the history of TamilNadu and even at national level such events are rare with the exception of recent targeted killing of the protesting farmers at Mandsaur or the firing on Dalits protesting against the 'dilution' of the provision of SC/ST atrocity act.

A fact finding team on police firing on 22nd May, consisting of 17 members from all over India belonging to the constituent organisations of the Coordination of Democratic Rights Organisations (CDRO) and Women Against Sexual Violence and State Repression (WSS) visited Tuticorin for three days between 16th and 18th June 2018 and met the family members of persons killed in police firing, people injured in police firing, affected villages, people admitted with injuries in the hospital. The team met government officials and collected details on the incidence of firing, protest action against the Sterlite plant, sufferings of the local villages and community after the Sterlite plant installation. Specific objectives of the fact finding were:

- To determine the facts and circumstances of the incidents which led to the police firing through interaction with the families of deceased person, police and district administration, influential Merchants' Association
- To gather information and opinion of the families of the victims of police firing and subsequent arrests
- To ascertain the condition of the workers in Sterlite factory

- To gather information regarding the health condition of the people

Before the detailed presentation of the findings of this team, it is important to understand the background of incidences leading to the firing in Tuticorin. This is presented now.

Background

Sterlite copper is a unit of Vedanta Limited, one of the biggest mining and metals company founded by Anil Agarwal, currently living in United Kingdom. The Sterlite copper Plant in Tuticorin has ability to produce 4,38,000tonnes of copper per annum or 1200 tons per day. Before setting up of the factory in Tuticorin, Sterlite tried to set up its factory in Ratnagiri district of Maharastra in 1992. However, under protest from the public for pollution caused by the smelting process, the company had to suspend all its work on July 15, 1993.

In Tamil Nadu, the Ministry of Environment and Forests issued environmental clearance on 16 January 1995, without even waiting for the Environment Impact Assessment report. Despite being close to the Gulf of Mannar biodiversity hotspot, the plant was built within 14 km of the Gulf of Mannar.

Sterlite Copper finally began operation in January 1997 with the setting up of the 391 tonnes per day (tpd) smelter and phosphoric acid plant. Subsequently, production was enhanced to 1200 tpd which is the current production capacity.

Reports on water, soil and air pollution due to the operation of the Sterlite factory

According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation, salinity levels above 2000mg/litre can cause severe damage of crops. A water sample from an open well collected from a farm in Kumareddyapuram near Sterlite's slug dump had a salinity level of 7854mg/litre and hence was found to be "completely unsuitable

for use in irrigation“ because of the high levels of salinity.

Water sample at Therkkuveerapandiapuram contained sulphate levels several times above levels that can cause serious stomach disorders including severe aches. As Sterlite generates and dumps large quantities of gypsum in the vicinity, the well water and handpump sample contained high levels of calcium.

A soil sample collected from backyard of a residence in TherkuVeerapandiapuram village contained 3,35,602 mg/kg of iron. At such high levels accidental ingestion of just 3.5grams can cause serious poisoning in a child. Consuming larger quantities can be lethal. Symptoms of iron poisoning range from abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhoea and damage to the intestine. Other effects include heart, liver and central nervous system damage.

Arsenic levels at the same location were 532mg/kg. Soils containing more than 50 mg/kg of arsenic are to be treated as hazardous waste under Indian law. Inorganic arsenic is carcinogenic in humans, most commonly producing skin, bladder and lung cancers through inhalation and cadmium which causes lung cancer and is toxic to kidney and bones was ten times above average background levels in the backyard soil sample, while nickel which causes skin allergies and bronchitis was also found at elevated levels.

Villagers from KalangaraiOdaifound that their cattle routinely fell sick and often died after consuming water from the canal. A sediment sample collected attributed the cause to be due to excess iron present in the sample.

National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) reports from 1998 - 2011- submitted to the courts - have consistently indicated that the effluent treatment system of the Sterlite factory is operating inefficiently. In its report of 2011, for instance, it reported that levels of both TDS and sulphates in treated effluent continued to exceed standards. Fluoride levels in treated effluent were also shown to exceed standards. Treated

waste water samples from the spray ponds exceeded standards for fluorides, sulphates, TDS and Zinc. Samples also exceeded desirable levels of chlorides.

Results of analyses of 15 groundwater samples (7 within the factory and 8 from villages around the factory) collected by TNPCB and the Thoothukudi district administration on 28th March, 2018 reveal that all 15 water sources are polluted and in violation of the bureau of Indian standards norms for one or more drinking water parameters. Quantity of lead, a neurotoxin heavy metal which is particularly toxic to children, were found to be between 4 and 55 times higher than levels considered safe for drinking water.

NEERI reports from 1998 to 2011, also document air pollution emissions in excess of the standards. For instance NEERI 2011 recorded particulate matters emissions in excess of the limits for both PM10 and PM2.5.

Anti-Sterlite struggle (1995-2017)

On May 5, 1997, more than 100 women working in the adjacent Ramesh Dryflowers Company were affected by a gas leak from sterlite, causing nausea, dizziness and suffocation. While many fainted there were reports of abortions as well. On August 20, 1997 the staff at Tamil Nadu Electricity Board's sub-station, located across the Sterlite plant, complained of headache, coughing and choking due to smoke coming from the plant. On March 2 1999, a gas leak impacted staff members of All India Radio Station unit located near Sterlite and 11 of them had to be admitted in GH for inhalation of noxious gas. In all these incidences, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board and the district administration came to the rescue of the Sterlite factor and gave a clean chit to the factory. The state administration chose to ignore that the existing plant with 4 lakh tpd copper capacity has only 60 metres stack against a legal minimum of 103 metres. In 2013 the company was found releasing excessive sulphur dioxide.

In the last 21 years of its existence, it had to close down the factory several times on the orders of Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board. The plant has faced investigations following accidents, some of them serious and has been subject to several studies by environmental and other agencies. The Madras High Court ordered the closure of the plant on November 23, 1998, on the basis of a petition filed by a non-governmental organisation, National Trust for Clean Environment, which stated that the environmental clearance granted by the state government to the plant was in violation of the provisions of the environment (protection) act 1986 and other notifications issued thereafter. Vaiko and Kanagaraj and Appadurai of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) impleaded themselves in the case. Sterlite filed a petition, on the basis of which the Madras High Court modified its order on December 1, 1998 and allowed the industry to resume its operations, pending the results of a study that it asked the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) to carry out. On the basis of NEERI report, the court ordered the closure of the plant in September 28, 2010. Justice Ellipe Dharma Rao, who wrote the judgement for the two member bench including Justice Paul Vasantha Kumar, observed: “The materials on record show that the continuing air pollution being caused by the noxious effluents discharged into the air by the respondent company is having a more devastating effect on the people living in the surroundings”. Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board who has been really supportive of the Sterlite Copper actions took a U-turn and ordered the company to shut down for two and half months and even set up an inquiry on the company. The National Green Tribunal allowed the factory to resume production in 2013 but the Supreme Court in a separate case fined Sterlite Copper company Rs.100 crore for polluting the environment. The company went on appeal to the Supreme Court. The two member Supreme Court bench of justices A. K. Pathak and H. L. Gokhale, in its final order on April 2 2013, asked the industry to pay a penalty of Rs 100 crores and allowed it to continue its operations. The Supreme Court justified the penalty

and said the amount would be deposited in a nationalised bank in a fixed deposit for a period of five years. The interest accrued from it would be spent on improving the environment, water and soil in the area.

Alongside of the legal procedures against the Sterlite factory, the harmful effects on environment and human health led to a series of protests against the factory. Early efforts against the Sterlite plant with support from all sections of society petered out owing to differences of opinion among the movement's members. Initially the church took the initiative in organising the protests involving a large number of fishermen. "It was natural that the fishermen were apprehensive. Discharge of effluents into the ecologically fragile Gulf of Mannar, they feared would destroy fish breeding spots and jeopardise their livelihood" said Tamilmanthan, a local trade unionist. Later when the movement picked up again against the plant, internecine clashes amongst the society was whipped up to divide the co-ordinated action of the Anti-Sterlite movement.

With very little response from the Sterlite or the district administration, the anti-Sterlite movement conducted a massive human chain protest on July 18, 2017, with nearly 4000 people participating to pressurise the government and the TNPCB to withdraw their consent orders to Sterlite Phase II. This was the first struggle against the expansion activities of Sterlite Phase II which got intensified in 2018.

Anti-Sterlite struggle in 2018

In January 2018, when the company started land work as a part of their plans to double the capacity of the smelter, the people got scared for their health and started the protest in a small village of Kumarredyapuram. 12th February 2018 marked the first day of protest after an attempt to meet the District Collector, Mr. N. Venkatesh, did not yield any result. From February 13 2018 until 23rd March, villagers from Kumarredyapuram sat in groups

under a Neem tree as a mark of protest against the plant.

On March 24, 2018 the protest entered its 41st day and more than 1,00,000 residents of Tuticorin flooded the streets of this South Indian coastal town demanding an immediate closure of Vedanta Sterlite's Copper operations. The influential Merchants Association's call to all the members to down their shutters for a day was the trigger. Artisanal fisherfolk, shank divers, small salt pan manufacturers, the Tuticorin Chamber of commerce , auto rickshaw unions, mini bus drivers and tea stall vendors quickly joined the call and stayed off work. They called for an immediate halt of the work to construct a new copper smelter complex in TherkuVeerapandiapuram- a suburban locality west of Tuticorin town and closure of the existing factory. The public meeting at the VVD junction, under the slogan "Ban Sterlite, Save Thoothukudi", was charged up with the slogan shouting children, palpable youth energy, colourful dances. A horribly outnumbered police force stood helplessly as the three hour long meeting wound up with no untoward incident. Between March 25 and May 20, 8-10 more villages started putting makeshift tents and joined the movement. A unified struggle involving all sections of the society took shape.

It has to be understood that this wave of opposition and the intensity of the sentiment was not merely against Sterlite, but also against the agents of the state- the district administration, police and the Tamilnadu Pollution Control Board- who have done the corporate giant's bidding since the factory was set up.

Findings about the incidences on 20th-23rd of May 2018

On May 20, the district administration called representatives surrounding villages, activist leaders and company executives for a meeting to resolve the impasse. The meeting ended without any decision. It has been learnt from people's testimonies that the administration used a selective approach in inviting the organisations and protesting villages' representatives for the

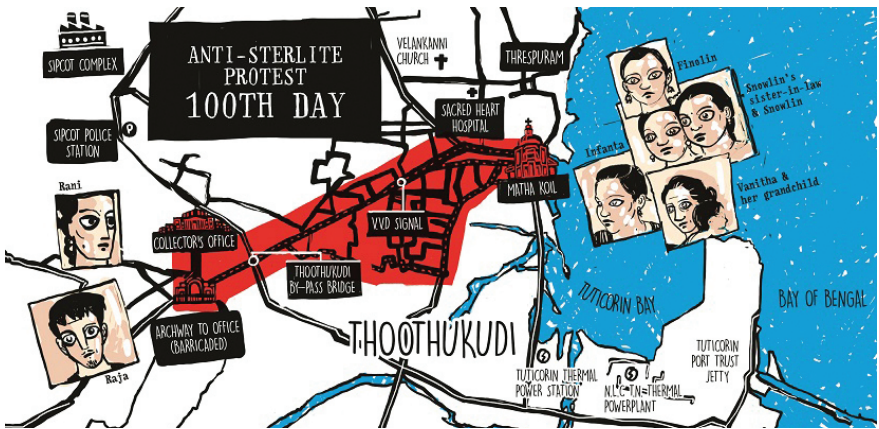
said meeting. People with whom the fact finding team interacted in Thoothukudi allege this to be a deliberate attempt of the administration to divide the anti-Sterlite movement. Fact finding Team (henceforth termed as FFT) observes that the very fact that the district administration negotiated with only one set of the organisers made the bona fides of the administration suspect in the eyes of the people. 18 of the 23 members of the Anti Sterlite protest movement attended the meeting despite protest from the public that saw the last minute efforts of the administration with scepticism. Finally, the administration gave permission for an assembly at SAV ground close to the Collectorate for the protest. When the team returned, the protesting people did not approve of the leaders concurrence in the SP meeting. SAV school ground being very small, it can hardly accommodate a large number of people. As a result, the people insisted on the protest to be taken to Collectorate Office to petition him or squat till he closes Sterlite. This was generally agreed upon and decision was taken to assemble and march towards collectorate office.

Sterlite company had approached the Tamil Nadu High Court earlier to restrain the protest march claiming that the organisers intended to cause violence against the company. High court reading from the pamphlet of an organisation, in its vilest speculation of an impending violence, ordered the district administration to impose Section 144 in the vicinity of Sterlite company. However, on the pretext of implementing the court order to avoid any untoward incident against Sterlite company, the district administration declared section 144 prohibitive order applicable to many parts of the town of Tuticorin from 21st evening till 23rd morning.

On May 22, to mark 100 days of the protest, over 50,000 people marched towards district Collectorate to demand the closure of the plant. Women and children participated in the rally in large numbers and even carried food packets with them. The image below shows the different parts of the town and people's progress as well as the death of persons due to police firing.

(Source: <https://www.firstpost.com/india/anti-sterlite-protest-of-22-may-a-story-of-rage-and-death-in-thoothukudi-told-through-ink-4493159.html>)

Most of the PS jurisdictions being not covered under Section 144 allowed protesters to march forward legitimately and freely. Those assembled at MadaKoil church moved towards the VVD signal joined those who came from other areas. At VVD signal though there were barricades, the crowd coaxed the police to move forward towards the Collectorate.



When they reached near the Collectorate Office, there was verbal exchange between the police and the protesters over moving ahead to Collectorate Office. At this juncture, allegedly a bullock crossed the crowd in a berserk way. The people the team met strongly suspect that the bullock was consciously pulled into the crowd by the police to let it run amok to disturb the peaceful rally by the protesters. The people in the rally who were moving in an organised way got split with few in the front while the remaining people were left behind. The police took this opportunity to lathicharge the people away from the Collectorate.

The people in the rally who entered the Collectorate in large numbers were enthused over reaching the destined area. They were rushing inside the Collectorate when the police started firing at the protesters all of a sudden.

Some from villages near district Collectorate did mention about the limited use of tear gas but there was no public announcement or bugle call asking the protesters to disperse. This is in contradiction to the police manual (see Box-1).

BOX-1:

WHAT THE RULEBOOK SAYS

Tamil Nadu police standing order and police training manual have laid down a protocol that should precede opening fire:

1. It should be declared as unlawful assembly and the gathering should be ordered to disperse.
2. If they don't obey, the district collector should ask police to invoke coercive measures.
3. As first step of coercive measure, tear gas should be burst; second step is mild lathicharge and the third step is using water cannon.
4. If all these three fail, police could open fire that too after issuing a warning through megaphones that loss of lives could happen. They also should hoist a riot flag.
5. While opening fire, police should first fire in the air and then aim only below the hip.
6. PSO clearly mentions that firing should be used as a deterrence, and not as revenge

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When the protesters reached the District Collectorate, there were vehicles in the compound which was set in fire. It is alleged that the targeted firing from the upper floors of the District Collectorate Office was carried out by the state police and also by a gunman with assault rifle from top of the police vehicle (see image below). Those wearing black shirts were particularly targeted, identified as protest leaders.

In the close range firing six of the activists were killed inside the collectorate. Tamarasan, a leader of the anti-Sterlite movement from its inception, was killed with severe bullet shots. Gladston fell to the short range firing from the pistol. Snowlin was killed from the short range firing that pierced her head and came through the mouth (see Box 2 below for the statement of Infanta who was with Snowlin just before she later was shot dead). Maniraj was shot at head the bullet pierced through the back of his head. He was shot near Collector office at Chitra bank. Karthick, a third year student was also targeted and killed. Earlier in the day he had helped the injured to reach the hospital. The bullet had pierced his temple and did not come out.



Johnsy was killed by targeting point blank at Teresapuram. Killing of a woman at 2.30 pm on May 22nd in Teresapuram, a place 10-15 km away from the scene of trouble near the Collectorate, is a clear indication of a targeted killing. It may also be noted that Section 144 was not imposed at Teresapuram under the North Police Station. She was known to be one of the leaders of the movement but was not part of the protest on May 22nd. She was on her way to her daughter's house in the nearby to deliver fish. She was shot in her head in such a manner that her face collapsed. The police that came in a van shot her down at close range, wrapped her body with the flex banner, took it and sped away.

People testified that the police were still continuing their harassment and the threat of being implicated in the open FIRs which had upto 2000 unnamed accused persons under various sections has left them terrorized. Such omnibus FIRs are prone to being misused by the police. Even after the firing and attacks on the people on May 22nd, when the injured people reached the government hospital for treatment, police arrived there and attacked several injured and their families. People and families going to the mortuary to identify the dead were lathi charged by police outside the mortuary.

BOX-2:

A Infanta, a 21-year-old BA graduate hailing from Fathima Nagar, who survived the police firing by a whisker, has been hearing gunshots in her sleep for the past five nights.

It was a carnival gathering of local people from Fathima Nagar, Therespuram, mini Sagayapuram at Our Lady of Snows Church to protest against Sterlite. ... Among the thousands marched towards Tuticorin collectorate was a group of three girls – A. Infanta, J. Snowlin and Feloni.

“We carried biscuits and bed sheets to camp at the collectorate as we had plans to stay in the sit-in.”

“We were hearing gunshots being fired from an elevated place. While running for life, Feloni slipped on a speed breaker. As I was helping her to get up, bullets whisked pass me”, Infanta said.

TOI, 28th May 2018 (Page 7)

On the morning of May 23rd, 2018, groups of people along with the families of those who were dead and injured due to police firing and lathi charge gathered in front of the government hospital, Tuticorin and demanded action against the police. The police resorted to lathicharge to disperse the crowd in front of the government Hospital.

A huge posse of police personnel were deployed in Anna Nagar who ransacked the houses and other properties in that area in the name of searching for unknown persons. The residents of Anna Nagar were in great shock to see this sudden commotion and locked themselves inside their houses.

The police had also opened fire at residents of Anna Nagar and many of them who were just standing near their houses received bullet injuries. One person Kalliappan, died on the spot from the police firing . His body was pulled along for 100 metres laid in the main road by the armed police. The police damaged the CCTV at the junction before they started pouncing on the people, indicating a deliberate attempt to remove any evidence of their action. Women were also beaten up when the police entered their houses and even a 5 year old boy was stamped on this stomach and his 2 year old sister was assaulted by the police. The FFT could see bullet piercing marks on the walls of the second floor on a building in Anna Nagar.

The witnesses confirmed that there was a massive and unwarranted door-to-door search in several areas. The police personnel forcefully entered into the houses, damaging the properties. Mostly young men were targeted and were illegally arrested and taken into custody. Those who were picked up were neither taken to police stations nor produced before judicial Magistrates. They were beaten up mercilessly, tortured continuously and were kept in the police for more than one and half days without providing food, water or any medical relief.

Many young men have been forced to leave from their homes, as they feared of arrest and torture by police though they were not a part of anti-Sterlite protests on May 22nd 2018 or before. Those who took part in the protests were apprehending arrests as police have filed open FIRs against thousands of unnamed persons. There were even instances where families altogether fleeing from their homes fearing false cases by police. FFT was informed that police chose to file separate cases for each property damaged

so that people are charged with umpteen cases and not able to come out on bail. Six activists were picked up under NSA and two activist lawyers were charged for instigating the trouble. Even those who had come for homage to Tamizharasan were arrested. Amongst them two were law students who were charged sheeted for inciting the people.

The team met some injured persons who were admitted for treatment at Government hospital at that time. Most of those who were injured due to firing or lathi-charge had got themselves discharged fearing false cases on them been foisted. Those injured and still been at the hospital for treatment were put along with other patients without segregating them for special treatment as was earlier followed in the immediate aftermath of the police firing and bullet injury. The FFT was told that the injured were being pressurised to get discharged soon. With the exception of two out of the 10 injured persons whom the team met at the hospital, all had fractured legs, hands, foot ankle due to bullet injury. In one case, a person called Princeton had his right foot to be amputated. The sub-Dean informed the FFT that around 125 were admitted due to injuries of which twenty five were due to bullet injuries. And that around twenty five of them were women amongst the injured.

From May 23rd onwards, internet connectivity was cut off for 3 days in Tuticorin and in the adjoining districts of Kanyakumari and Tirunelveli and restored only after the High Court intervention. This attempt, carried out in the name of preventing rumour, further instilled fear among the people about impending police arrest and threats.

Version of the people of Tuticorin town

The team met Karthick's mother and sister at his residence at Caldwell colony. He was a second year BA student from the nearby Kamarajar College. His college students have been active in protesting against the polluting Sterlite industry and had been

on a protest strike for few days under the initiative of SFI. He had not been active in any form but the consciousness of the polluting industry and the struggle for closure that had gripped the entire port city, had definite impact on him. He was active on March 24th when more than 2 lakh people came on road in Tuticorin for Sterlite closure. On May 22nd, he had helped the injured to be taken to the hospital. He was targeted and killed at Collector office near the park. He was injured by bullet at his temple and the bullet did not come out. He was taken to the hospital at 12.30 noon and till 21.30 pm no treatment was tried on him and he suffered to death. The local SI, Velayudham, had threatened the family at early hours of 3 AM and asked them to receive the body immediately and calling the family to report to the SP's office the next day.

The FFT met family members of Maniraj of Damodhran nagar. Maniraj owns an electric shop. He had been married to Anushya and she was carrying for two months. His wife was in Annanagar at that time at her father's place. He had been away for some days to help his friend suffering from cancer and just returned on that day after the death funeral of his friend. He had rested for some time and just around that time he had a call from someone and he had left immediately towards south. There was firing in Anna Nagar. Afterwards the family heard only of his death near Chitra bank. He had received bullet injury at his head and it came out from the backside of his head indicating close range firing to death. The police did not allow the family to meet the deceased.

Jhansi's relatives recounts, "We did not go to the protest on 22nd May. We got to know that something was happening and offered food to the protesters. Around 2 pm, (after the police firing at the Collectorate), Jhansi went to her daughter's home which was nearby, to give her some fish. Around 2.30 pm we heard a lot of noise and realised there had been shooting by the police at Teresapuram. It happened at the junction near the main road, at the Auto stand. Immediately after the shooting the police

wrapped up a dead body in a banner and taken it away. We know the SI of the area, Maharajan, wrapped the body in the digital banner. Nobody knew who had died. At around 3 pm, when Jhansi did not return from her daughters home, her husband found her missing. They thought Jhansi may be hiding and her daughter cautioned her father not to go out since it was not safe. When Jhansi was still not returned by 5 pm, we started searching for her we went to the North PS. The SP denied that there was any shooting at Teresapuram and asked the family to enquire at south PS. When we enquired at south PS by 6 pm, we were asked to go and look at the General hospital. We found her dead body in the mortuary at hospital at 7pm. Her name was registered as 'Unknown'. She had been shot at the head and face. Her entire face had collapsed and we could only identify her through her necklace and bangles.”

The team went to Snowlin’s house at Fathima Nagar. The mother spoke to the team in sober mood. She said her child wanted everyone to participate in the protest. She had got ready that day very early to go the protest march getting her food packets ready. She had taken along with her, mother and her sister-in-law who came along with her young child carrying him in hand. They have gone there to petition in front of the Collector to stop Sterlite from operation. During the protest march on 24th March 2018, they have seen the sufferings due to cancer of the people in video and by direct narrations. They have known that one Rani and Rajesh from their place had died of cancer. After Sterlite plant opened, the trees have dried off in Tuticorin and occurrence of cough among people has increased. It was all these understanding that gave them the strength to go and petition to the Collector on that 22nd May. They did not expect any trouble as they were planning to assemble at the Collectorate peacefully. But once they reached the Collectorate, the police twisted the tails of a bull there and made it run berserk splitting the crowd. “I got separated from my child Snowlin and was standing on the otherside with my daughter-in-law. She had entered the collector office on the otherside of the road. Suddenly we heard firing

from inside the collector office just 10 minutes after entering the collector office that firing had started. She had rushed out with Vinolia and Infanta. Vinolia fell down in the rush. Infanta saw Snowlin falling to the bullet injury. Bullet had pierced her back head and come out of her mouth. A clear indication of a close range firing”.

The FFT met the family of Tamizharasan, an activist of the Anti Sterlite Movement for the past two decades. He had been targeted and killed at the collector office he had received the bullet injury at his right forehead and temple. He had been the district in charge of his Revolutionary Youth Front. He had been in the anti-Sterlite movement from 1996. He had, on the earlier day, gone to the city and came back a bit worried. He had told that “the government is conspiring to dilute the protest march. There may be trouble the next day. Really do not know what is happening.” Thamizharasan’s niece Thenmozhi told the team “Probably he had an inkling that there may be unprovoked violence let out on people. I do not know. I am just trying to look back after his death if this was what he was worried about.” She felt that Sterlite definitely had caused the environment damage in Tuticorin and her grandfather SankaraSubbu died of cancer serving as Station master at Meelavattan railway station, located just two kilometres away from Sterlite factory. The family told the FFT that immediately on hearing the death of Tamizharasan, Six youngsters including two law college students came to their house to arrange for his homage and funeral ceremony. The police came and threatened the family to let those six to be pushed out of the house else the whole family would be harassed. Then six of his organisation people came out of the house and they were severely beaten and thrashed and chargesheeted for inciting trouble.

The team also visited the families who had lost their kith and kin due to cancer. In Teresapuram alone, the team could find 4 people died of cancer. Selvarani W/OJesubalan died in 2017 after suffering from cancer for 9 years. They had to pay Rs 40,000 for

every session of chemotherapy and there had been 70 sessions. In addition, they had to spend Rs.7000 per month for medicines. Two children, Anushya and Divishya, aged 14 and 12 suffered from cancer. The 12 year old girl died in 2004, barely 2 months after being diagnosed with brain tumour. The cancer later spread to the legs, and she also lost eyesight in both her eyes. A boy 13 years old, Nadiben, has died of cancer.

Villagers' testimony

The team visited the villages Kumareddyapuram, Meelavattan, Therku Veerapandiapuram to meet the people and get their version on the protest. Kumareddyapuram is the place where the peaceful protest assembly against the expansion of the Sterlite had started in February 2018. The people in this village had given their lands to SIPCOT for the development as early as 1993-94. At that time Sterlite was not there. The government had promised compensation and job assurance to the people who gave the lands to the Tamil Nadu government under SIPCOT. But the compensation promised was not forthcoming and they continued their protest against it. In the meantime the government handed over the lands to Sterlite for the copper smelter plant.

After the plant came there was several environment problems the villagers used to face. The leak of sulphur dioxide caused eye irritation and some lost vision with time. Women developed more cases of abortion and menstrual problems. Some suffered breast cancer. Atleast 10 children were handicapped persons. Some children suffered holes in the hearts and also had kidney stones problems. One lady had undergone breast removal for breast cancer problem. While the men did not get jobs or compensation after losing their lands the increasing sufferings made life worse. During a protest fast at the collector office junction for a higher compensation, the local Congress leader Dhanushkoti Athithan, who was passing by, joined in and the Collector gave an assurance to settle it and give a written agreement the next day for a hike in compensation of 3 lakhs rupees from the original Rs 80,000/-

per acre offered to the protesting people. But unfortunately due to a car accident the local congress leader suffered injuries and the Collector reversed his stance on the written agreement for hike in compensation.

Now after all these sufferings, the people want the lands given to SIPCOT in good faith for the development be returned back to them as the development has not done any good but harm. The villagers did not realise the harms of the project at the initial days but now they have suffered, they don't want the project. The women told us that Vedanta frequently brought mobile medical camps to the village. One woman remarked that "Vedanta gave us medicines, and also diseases!" Now the plant is going to be expanded the hazardous impacts are going to be higher. Government hospitals are 10 km away and medical treatments were either inaccessible or unaffordable.

The whole villagers continued their peaceful protest at the village common area continuously from February. When the Sterlite company wanted to expand they came and dug a well near their village. The villagers protested and the police threatened to detain them. They started the protest at VVD signal area but as they were asked to vacate by the police, they assembled and sat near MGR park nearby. But the police came and detained all of them the next day On 23rd March, including women and children. They let off everyone around midnight and arrested 6 of them, Murugan and Mahesh from this village. They were released after 4 days. From then on, the villagers sat on dharna continuously in the village itself. This idea spread to other villages and they joined in village by village in Madathur, Meelavattan, Therkuveerapandiapuram, Pandarpatti etc.

On the day of May 22nd, the people from this village went by arranging vehicles and tractors to take them to Tuticorin. Youngsters came along in some two wheelers. After crossing over two villages they were stopped and the youngsters were picked by the police personnel. Villagers stopped back and insisted on

the youngsters, who were with them, to be left free and took them along with them. There was a big scuffle with police over this issue. “Once we reached the city we joined along with others who have come from different areas and joined the protest. But the police targeting the youngsters had different idea. Two days after the firing incident they came back targeting us and into villages and picked the youngsters Mahesh, Paulraj, Isruvel and Rajkumar. Even now at the time of the FFT visit, three from these village were yet to get the bail and were in prison.

The FFT visited TherkuVeerapandiapuram on its way to Meelavattan. Around 300 people from this village had gone to join the protest on 22nd May. But they were stopped at Maadatthur and allowed to proceed. Two people from this village have been arrested now after the anti Sterlite Protest. The villagers told the team that there have been raids in the area till recently (at the time of the visit of the FFT) and men are just absconding and not staying in house fearing arrest. The women are afraid of coming out fearing harassment. At the time of the FFT visit, the team could find a big posse of police posted at Therku Veerapandiapuram. When queried about the presence of police in the village even after restoration of ‘normalcy’ , the incumbent DSP Ramba denied knowledge of it.

At Meelavattan the team met an youngster aged 30 who had been incarcerated for standing in support of his sister who spoke of the dangers of Sterlite pollution to a news channel from Kerala. He was picked at late hours of night at 2 am and was arrested along with his brother and taken to the South PS. It was Hariharan in charge of the PS at that time who harassed them throughout night, kept in illegal custody and charged with inciting the people for violence. A friend of him who had just got passport to go to Gulf country was also foisted with false case and his passport was impounded by the police. SI Hariharan, the villagers reported, is known to be vindictive towards the people and harsh in torturing the people. After a day they were sent to prison at Palayamkottai and could come out on conditional bail after 15 days.

Testimony of activists and Anti-Sterlite Movement committee

The team met Advocates Ramachandran and Athisayakumar and Merchant Association leader Vinayagamoorthy. The Merchant Association of Tuticorin under Vinayagamoorthy's leadership controls more than 72 units each with 50 shop owners as membership in each unit. It is his call to join the protest with family along with the people on the 24th March that made a difference to the protest that was confined so far only to the villages around Sterlite. His participation along with the anti-Sterlite movement gave the movement a public outlook. He spoke to the team that on the said day of May 22nd, there was no inkling of violence from any quarters on the protesters side. And there was a general understanding to assemble at the Collectorate and then squat silently to petition the Collector before joining the demonstration at SAV ground already permitted by the police for demonstration. Immediately as they reached the Collectorate, they could hear targeted attacks on the frontline leaders. The killing of Tamizharasan or Snowlin or Gladston were all a targeted killings. Use of snipers to target the protesters is unprecedented. Police did not even heed to the pleadings of the injured and their families at the hospital and resorted to tough measures to control the people already suffering under the loss of kith and kin.

Advocate Ramachandran told the team that the police even tried to enter the court premises and threatened to target them. The lawyers at Tuticorin bar had decided to immediately approach the magistrate and had given petition signed by 150 lawyers to intervene to stop the illegal detention of the people of Tuticorin. They requested the court commissioner to be sent to the police stations and get the report on the illegal detention. When the court commissioner went to the police station to get the details he found many a youngsters (97 in number) were under illegal detention and 30 of them were juvenile. The magistrate, in cooperation with the court officers, and the lawyers went through the whole day and night to get them all released on bail on own bond. The bar that was divided all these years over

internecine clashes was united when the public issue called upon them to stay together. Ramachandran also informed the team of the hounding of lawyers by the police for taking up the cases of the firing victims. “At that time of the FFT visit still the search and arrest operation was going on and villagers were under panic over the late hour raids”, he informed the team.

The fact finding team also met Reagon from Teresapuram. He had been part of the rally that assembled at Madakoil and moved towards VVD signal to the Collectorate. He was with the protesters at that time. He told the team that, when the team crossed the VVD signal, there was some stone thrown at the protester from a different corner from near the shops. He suspected that there was a plan to cause violence and target the peaceful protesters. He informed the team that police might have sneaked in under cover of black shirts to cause violence and on that pretext retaliate on the peaceful protesters. He told the team that as they neared the collectorate, a bull was allowed to run berserk and split the crowd entering the collectorate. He entered the Collectorate along with his people. As he entered the Collectorate, shots were fired from the pistol on the protesters entering in and Gladston, who was with him, fell to the bullet shot at a very close range. He immediately tried to lift Gladston and get him to the hospital calling for the ambulance. He went to the hospital along with Gladston’s body and as he reached the hospital, Gladston was pronounced dead beforehand. There he could see other people arriving with bullet injuries. As the injured and dead were arriving at the hospital, the hospital scene has become tense. Police started targeting the irate crowd at the hospital who had come to look for their kith and kin injured. The police also targeted the family members of the deceased and threatened them to receive the body and disperse.

Reagon told the FFT that the idea to petition the Collector was planned at a gathering in Pandarapatti where Adv. HariRaghavan addressed the people. The people had originally planned it on 14th of May but due to consensus not arrived on the exact date, it

was rescheduled for 21st May, Monday when the collector meets the public and receives the petition. Later since 22nd May is 100th day of peaceful protest, anti-Sterlite movement committee members, decided to assemble on 22nd to petition the collector. The plan was to assemble in large numbers at the Collectorate to petition for closure of the Sterlite plant and squat till it is yielded. He told the team that many youngsters were arrested illegally from Teresapuram and the police was trying to pressurise them to stay away from the anti-Sterlite protests.

Official version

The FFT made several attempts to meet the DSP of the police but, despite giving verbal assurance over telephone by his office, the appointment was not given. The FFT members could meet the District Collector Nanduri who was brought on transfer to Toothukudi district by the state government after May 22nd firing. The team met Nanduri and apprise itself of the steps taken to assuage the populace of the feeling of desolation. The team queried the collector why such a drastic steps to fire to kill the people at short range and why the use of snipers were resorted to disperse the protestors. The Collector did not seem to be apologetic for the police action. Instead he suggested to the FFT that if the drastic step were not taken probably whole Sterlite employees quarters would have gutted due to fire by the protesters. Such is the response of the incumbent collector brought in to restore normalcy speaks volumes on the justice towards people's plight. When queried how the Collector could be absent when such a large protest is taken up and Section 144 is pronounced in the whole district and who is assigned the responsibility of taking decision in case of any emergency, the incumbent collector told the FFT that responsibility was assigned to nine designated commissioners on duty, namely the deputy Tehsildars. They have been delegated the powers in case of any exigencies. He did not have a clear answer for the FFT on regards to why and how Sniper was used. For a suggestion from the FFT that the injured and deceased should be given higher

compensation as being provided in Mandsaur police firing (atleast an amount of 50 lakhs and 1crore), he said he can forward this demand to the CM cell as suggestion.

Condition of the people working in the Sterlite factory

The FFT made a conscious attempt to meet some of the workers (most of the workers hired by the Sterlite company were migrant contract labours and they had left the town fearing trouble after the firing incidence and subsequent closure of the factory).

Some members of the team also met Kartheepan, who had been a worker at the Sterlite Plant. He had joined the company in 2016 as a helper. He had worked for a year. In March 2017, Kartheepan was sent at night to remove the waste material from the turbine, with the help of a shovel. While cleaning, his shovel got entangled in the conveyor belt, and his hand got stuck there. There was no operator present there at that time and as a result, Kartheepan was hanging upside down for atleast 15 minutes. He was taken to the hospital, but then shifted one after another to 3 different hospitals. In spite of being in the hospital for 2 months, Kartheepan lost his hand, as doctors refused an adequate treatment despite his repeated pleas. The company did not compensate him with even a single rupee. His wife was given work at the canteen for merely a month. The family is in a desperate condition as Kartheepan is physically in no condition to work. In spite of this, he is part of the protests against Sterlite and continues to raise his voice.

Kartheepan informed us that the plant had about 3000 contract workers and 1000 regular workers. Majority of the contract workers were from migrants from UP, Bihar and Jharkhand. After working at the plant, they would be unable to do any other work at home because of exhaustion. There would be regular health check-ups by the company of the workers, and if any sign of illness was found, the worker would be fired. Kartheepan could recall the death of a regular worker, Shyam, by cancer. Another temporary worker, Gunashekaran had died in an accident inside the plant in 2018.

Trade unionist Mani Achari, from AITUC, also told us that 5 to 10 workers have died in the plant. The migrant workers are not given any accommodation by the company. They are paid way below the minimum wage. For loading work, they may get Rs.80, and no extra wage was given for overtime. He also informed the team that the company has no safety norms for workers. Early attempts to form the union for the unorganised did not materialise.

He said that while all chemical industries are hazardous to nature and human health, what was needed was to manage it within safe limits. For example, the international standards for the release of hydrogen sulphate being released into the atmosphere needs to be followed.

Summary of the major findings

- The police did not follow standard operating procedures to disperse the crowd.
- The police used excess force in many separate places and at many different times against the marchers often without provocation. Police violence was not with the intention of dispersing the crowd but intended to intimidate, hurt and panic them.
- The presence of sharp shooters/snipers placed strategically at roof/van tops, widely believed to be police men in plainclothes, is evidence of unprecedented pre-mediated police planning with a view to maim and kill.
- There is reason to suggest that the stone pelters and arsonists may have been from within the police itself.
- There is sufficient cause to initiate a criminal investigation for murder into the killing of Jhansi, a well-known anti-Sterlite organiser, at Teresapuram which is several miles away from the site of the rally as well as those of many others.

- The targeted killing of Kalliappan at Anna Nagar and pulling his dead body for 50 - 100 metres away from the cross street to the main road showed sheer brutality and arrogance of police forces. DSP Mahendran who led the team is responsible for the unprovoked killing of Kalliappan.
- The police force had entered the houses and pulled out innocent juveniles and beaten them mercilessly in an attempt to terrorise the public as a revengeful action for accommodating the protesters who had taken shelter to escape the police lathi charge the earlier day on 22nd May.
- It is observed that the Thoothukudi police have registered over 240 FIRs all over the district from May 22nd to May 28th, all of them related to incidents on May 22nd and thereafter. And that at the time of registration of a large number of FIRs, the city police was directed by Additional Director General of police.
- Not as large a crowd, as claimed by police in the FIRs, had actually entered the Collectorate and they were not violent as projected by the police. Had the people planned violence, the protestors would not have gone with food and children.
- While some vehicles may have been on fire and glass panes damaged, the entire campus was not, by any stretch of the imagination, in such a pandemonium that it warranted the police to shoot dead almost six persons.
- It is very likely that the vehicles at the Collectorate had been set on fire and were burning even before the protesting crowd had reached the Collectorate in order to justify a police brutality that followed.
- It is blatantly clear that Sterlite has tried to outwit the procedures /authorities to continue its operation without

regard for any safeguards on plant safety, environment safety, health aspects of the surrounding people of Tuticorin.

- Minimum green belt of 250 metres insisted by the Tamilnadu Pollution Board before consent to operate was issued. However, it was reduced 25 metres with a single stroke of pen by the same TNPCB.
- The Supreme Court decision to allow the Sterlite plant to function staying the Madras High Court order, just granting the compensation for violation of environment norms gives cause to worry as it disregards the life and sufferings of the people and tries to settle the violations by big corporate with mere penalty clause.
- This stands in great contrast with early Supreme court judgements in cases like Vellore tanneries case , 1996 wherein more than 57 tanneries were closed summarily for polluting water and not maintaining treatment plants and close to 840 tanneries were directed to pay damages to the affected villagers.
- When it comes to violation of environmental laws, Judiciary often adapts stringent measures against small scale industries. In Delhi under a Supreme court order (MC Mehta case 1996) , approximately Thousand small industries were closed or relocated by the Delhi government making Fifty thousand workers jobless. Continuation of this order also resulted in closure of approximately Three thousand small industries in Delhi by the year 2000.
- There is a glaring contrast in the approach of highest strata of Judiciary to violation of Environmental laws by different strata of the capital. On one hand small industries face closure and on the other hand corporations like Vedanta escape with paltry fine.


- As per early SC directives like in the Vellore Tanneries case, Development cannot disregard the environmental impact and environment impact studies should include the disturbance on the livelihood of the people as such and not be brushed aside with mere technical expertise.
- The people of Tuticorin have lost faith in the political parties and their commitment to their life and safety. They consider themselves cheated by the subsequent governments which had promised equitable compensation and better livelihood when taking overland for SIPCOT for development criteria. Now that the Government has pooled the land under SIPCOT and handed over to big corporate to loot and plunder their life, they want their lands returned back to them.
- The erstwhile Collector of Tuticorin, Venkatesh's action to negate the impending protest of the May 22nd and leaving it into hands of the law and order machinery to handle shows the scant regard for the people's protest and sentiments over the Sterlite plant's pollution. He had, after ordering Section 144 prohibitory order for two days from 21st evening to 23rd morning in Tuticorin, left for the nearby village for a Jambandi that day. Thereby, he left the law and order to be handled by the higher police officials and deputy collector.
- The government's failure to charge the Collector, the DGP and the DSP on grounds of murder after the massacre on May 22nd and instead merely transferring them is an attempted cover-up and exposes its connivance with the corporate giant.
- Even after the new Collector and the new DSP taking over the administration of Tuticorin, Sterlite has been allowed to continue its administrative wings and 'minimum' operations of sulphuric plant gives credence to hypothesis

of backdoor settlement with the corporate beyond the people's interest.

- The judiciary's intervention based on the court action of the activists to order CBI enquiry and quashing of the cases on the activists foisted with false cases and the combining together of the umpteen PPDA cases into single FIR is a victory to the people's resistance and saner voices.
- Failure of the judiciary to suo moto intervene to close the plant and charge the Collector and the DGP and DSPs for the dereliction of duty of providing safety to life of the people that led to such a big massacre exposes the limits of judicial intervention.
- The restriction imposed by the government of Tamil Nadu on internet connectivity led to severe curtailment of the flow of information by the media and barring communication access by the people in most distressed time. Any restriction on fundamental rights must be proportionate to the threat posed, provided for by law and strictly necessary to achieve a proper public purpose such as public safety. It is upto the State to demonstrate that a network shutdown is proportionate to the threat posed.
- The weapon used in firing, based on the description of the eye witness, appears to be 7.62 self loading rifle (SLR), which is not advisable to be used against unarmed people and should not have been used in crowd management. It is further reported that even the people who used the SLR were plain-clothed men.

Our demands given to the Press on 18th June in Toothukudi Press Club

1. All cases registered against the protestors be withdrawn with immediate effect.
2. All the arrested anti-Sterlite protestors, including those booked under NSA, be released unconditionally.
3. Immediate permanent closure of Sterlite copper smelter plant as a policy decision by the Government.
4. Criminal Action under Section 302 of IPC should be initiated against the civil, police and Management of the Sterlite company for their criminal negligence of duty and massacre of anti-Sterlite protestors in Thoothukudi.
5. All land acquired for the Sterlite plant through SIPCOT be returned to its original land owners.
6. The compensation amount should be increased for those killed and injured, akin to the Mandsaur MP firing victims where Rs 1 crore was granted to each person killed and Rs 50 lakhs to the injured.
7. To conduct health/Epidemiological survey in the Industrial belt of Thoothukudi to assess the various increasing disease patterns prevalent in the region.



Participant organisations

- 1) People's Union for Democratic Rights, Delhi
 - 2) Association for Democratic Rights, Punjab
 - 3) Committee for Protection of Democratic Rights (Maharashtra)
 - 4) Committee for Protection of Democratic Rights (Tamil Nadu)
 - 5) Committee for Civil Liberties, Andhra Pradesh
 - 6) Committee for Civil Liberties, Telengana
 - 7) Centre for Protection of Civil Liberties - Tamil Nadu
 - 8) Janakeeya Manushya Avakasa Prasthanam, Kerala
 - 9) Minority Rights Watch, Kerala
 - 10) Women against State repressions & Sexual harassment
- 