

# News

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## **Tamil Nadu government is asked by the Supreme Court to provide information about FIRs in cases involving illegal sand mining.**

The Tamil Nadu government was asked by the Supreme Court today to provide information on all FIRs filed against the suspected Rs. 4730 cr in illegal sand mining and mineral theft in the state. Following hearings from Senior Advocate Amit Anand Tiwari (for State), Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, and Advocate Prashant Bhushan (for petitioner), a bench consisting of Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Chief Justice Surya Kant requested the data.

Details of all FIRs filed in connection with illicit sand mining and mineral theft are among the data that the state must provide. According to what CJI Kant stated orally, it will also contain information about FIRs that were closed after the accusations were shown to be untrue.

Bhushan argued at the beginning of the hearing that the High Court had dismissed the underlying case because the Tamil Nadu government had consented to stop the sand mining. But after looking into the situation, the Enforcement Directorate discovered that over Rs. 4000 crores had been illegally mined for sand.

According to the attorney, the petitioner is requesting a CBI probe because the ED investigation was stopped because there was no predicate offense.

Tamil Nadu's attorneys disputed the petitioner's location and claimed that key facts had been suppressed. One of them pointed out that the petitioner had sought the High Court to cancel environmental clearances, but now the CBI was being ordered to look into the matter. She further insisted that since there was no predicate offense, the material gathered by ED could not be used.

The CJI made the following observation at this point: "There is no predicate offense, thus ED is powerless. You won't let the CBI look into it. Since a cat cannot take care of the milk, your own police won't. How the public at large will come to know the truth, what has happened? Instead, you ought to take a proactive stance. We are prepared to confront the situation, nothing has gone wrong, and a retired judge may be nominated. You may even enter a plea. The charges involved unlawful sand mining worth Rs. 4730 crores, the CJI added. "It looks like a well-planned and well-calculated theft of this mineral," said SG Mehta.

Notably, the state's affidavit revealed that it had taken criminal action in relation to the illicit mining, as noted by Justice Bagchi. The court asked, "Then isn't that predicate offense?" It was further stated that "what you were doing is you were omitting theft...you were just

registering the criminal case under the Mines and Minerals Act and in that way, you were coming up with a stance no predicate offense because PMLA Act does not [include Mines and Minerals Act as a scheduled offence]"

CJI Kant subsequently stated that if thousands of crores had allegedly been taken away as a result of unlawful sand mining, the state should be more resentful than anybody else.

Amit Anand Tiwari spoke on behalf of the state, stating that only the Water Resources Department is permitted to do mining in Tamil Nadu and that private mining is prohibited. He stated that although theft is not a predicate violation, it is included in every case. "Yes, sir, it is. Just examine PMLA", replied Justice Bagchi.



Tiwari later argued that the matter was closed because the state provided the investigating agency with information about all FIRs in accordance with another case that the ED had filed. He added that CCTVs are used to monitor Tamil Nadu's mines and other facilities, and that a centralized bureau in Chennai keeps an eye on mining in all 38 districts. According to the senior counsel, ED's allegations are predicated on a supposition that emerged from satellite photos of a river taken at two distinct times. He further said that the petitioner suppressed the ruling that made ED a party in the High Court proceedings and that the petitioner had a political objective.

**Title of Case: The Union of India and Ors. v. M. Lakshmanan, SLP(C) No. 25765/2025**