

# NGT committee to look into environmental degradation in Thadagam valley

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

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A joint committee formed by the National Green Tribunal Southern Zone will ascertain the extent of environmental degradation at Thadagam valley in Coimbatore district.

Taking the case suo motu based on a news report that in Thadagam valley, the entire part of western ghats was affected due to mining and brick kiln units, Justice K. Ramakrishnan and expert member Dr. K. Satyagopal formed the committee to ascertain the real issues.

According to the report, there was no regulation and unauthorised brick kilns were coming up overexploiting nature and the authorities were not taking proper steps despite the issue brought to their notice.

On going through the report, the NGT felt it appropriate to appoint a joint committee comprising Coimbatore District Collector, a senior officer from Tamil Nadu State Environment Impact Assessment Authority, a senior officer from Tamil Nadu Pollution Control

Board and one from Department of Geology and Mining to inspect the area in question and submit a factual as well as action taken report of violations found.

The committee would consider if the brick kilns have environmental clearances, obtained necessary permissions from the Mining Department and the process of regulation, and also find out if there was any excessive mining.

The committee would also find out if there has been damage to any of the water

bodies in the area and has mining affected them and the depletion of groundwater tables.

## **Nodal agency**

The Mining Department would be the nodal agency for co-ordination and also for providing necessary logistics for the purpose.

Filing a status report before the NGT, the Coimbatore District Collector had asked the departments concerned to appoint the committee members who will conduct a field inspection.