

Tamil Nadu

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Tamil Nadu - [Madurai](#)

Uthapuram Dalits get relief



D. Karthikeyan

Judge distributes compensation to 191 victims of alleged police atrocities

— Photo: S. James



MORAL STRENGTH: Principal District Judge N. Rethinaraj handing over a cheque towards compensation to a Dalit victim in Madurai on Tuesday.

MADURAI: The Dalits of Uthapuram, alleged victims of police atrocities, were provided an interim relief of Rs. 10,28,000 on Tuesday.

The relief was given to 191 victims through Madurai District Legal Services Authority.

The Principal District Judge, N. Rethinaraj, distributed the amount to the victims. The Madras High Court on August 5 directed the government to pay compensation to those injured in the alleged police excess on the basis of a report submitted by a two-member committee.

The committee was appointed by the High Court on January 22, following a public interest litigation petition filed by the All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA), which alleged that the police had perpetrated atrocities on Dalits on October 2, 2008, after a clash between them and caste Hindus over painting the wall of a temple.

The committee members — S. Thirupathy, a retired district judge, and K. Venkatasami, secretary of Madurai District Legal Services Authority, — said that there was a gross violation of human rights and the women had undoubtedly suffered great humiliation, physical assault, infringement of fundamental rights and mental agony.

The compensation was given, on the basis of the injuries suffered. Five women suffered termination of pregnancy and a woman lost her child during delivery.

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Five women were given Rs 20,000 each and two were given Rs. 25,000 each.

U. Nirmala Rani, the petitioner's counsel, described the award of compensation as a victory against "State-sponsored terrorism."

The AIDWA, hailing the role of judiciary, said that it would provide moral strength to Dalits across the nation. It also appreciated the role played by the media in exposing the atrocities against the Dalits.

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