

HC orders cleaning up of Rameswaram as a mark of respect to Kalam

Mohamed Imranullah S.

MADURAI: The Madras High Court Bench here on Tuesday gave life to an old public interest litigation (PIL) petition pending before it with respect to sprucing up Rameswaram municipality and cleaning up the Ramanathaswamy temple as a mark of respect to former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, who hailed from the island town.

A Division Bench of Justices R. Sudhakar and V.M. Velumani directed the municipality officials to file a report by Monday on steps taken by them pursuant to a list of suggestions made by three court appointed advocate commissioners — S. Srinivasaraghavan, S.S. Sundar and N. Krishnaveni — on January 7, 2014 after inspecting the municipality.

The Advocate Commissioners had inspected the holy 'theertham' sites at the temple and said that sewage from public toilets and commercial

complexes near the temple were let into the sea thereby polluting the 'Agni Theertham' where hundreds of devotees take a holy dip every day.

"The Agni Theertham is not even conducive and hygienic for the devotees to drench their legs and sprinkle water on their heads," their report stated and suggested that a water treatment plant in existence should be replaced with a new and effective plant at a far away place. They also stated that polluted water does not enter the sea.

The other suggestions made by the Commissioners included construction of toilets in a vacant space on the eastern side of Agni Theertham, removal of abandoned clothes from the entire stretch of the seashore at least thrice a day, provide sufficient parking place for the vehicles, install sufficient number of dustbins and street lamps and prevent stray cattle and dog menace.