

42 illegal resorts around Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve told to shut down by January 12

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Officials serving notice to a resort operator at Hasanur in Erode district in Tamil Nadu on Tuesday | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement

The Erode district administration has, for the second time, **issued notices to 42 illegal resorts** operating around the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (STR), directing them to comply with **a Madras High Court order** and shut down by January 12, 2026, failing which action would be initiated.

Environmental activist R. Karpagam of Coimbatore had **filed a public interest litigation (PIL) petition in 2022**, alleging that illegal resorts functioning within the reserve were causing severe environmental damage to the hill region. When the matter came up for hearing before a Bench comprising Chief Justice Manindra Mohan Shrivastava and Justice G. Arul Murugan, the Erode District Collector — the sixth respondent in the case — informed the court that a joint inspection had been conducted at 53 resorts, lodges, and farmhouses in the hill area.

Of these, only 11 structures were found to have been constructed with valid building permissions and licences, while the remaining 42 were operating without licence. The Collector told the court that notices had been issued to the owners and leaseholders for erecting buildings without the required permissions from the competent authorities.

Earlier, the court had proposed to pass final orders and directed that illegal constructions be sealed, with a report to be submitted at the next hearing on January 5. When the case was taken up again, the Bench granted one more opportunity and directed the authorities to submit a status report on January 19.

District Collector S. Kandasamy told *The Hindu* that notices had been served on the building owners, asking them to close their operations by January 12.

Teams led by the Thalavadi Block Development Officer, comprising officials from the Rural Development Department, began serving the notices to resort owners from Tuesday in Thalavadi, Thalamalai, Hasanur, and Germalam. A Rural Development Department official said that if the resorts failed to shut down by January 12, the buildings would be sealed on the morning of January 13.

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