

**FINAL REPORT OF THE**  
**SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEAM**

**ON**

**Acquiring “VEDA ILLAM” for conversion of the residence of former Chief**  
**Minister of Tamilnadu Selvi. J. Jayalalitha (late) “Veda Illam” at**  
**Poes Garden as Memorial - by the Government of Tamilnadu**

**Introduction:**

**District Profile of Chennai:**

**Chennai** also known as **Madras** is the capital city of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Located on the Coromandel Coast off the Bay of Bengal, it is a major commercial, cultural, economic and educational center in South India. It is also known as the "Cultural Capital of South India". According to the provisional results of 2011 census, the city had 4.68 million residents making it the sixth most populous city in India; the urban agglomeration, which comprises the city and its suburbs, was home to approximately 8.9 million, making it the fourth most populous metropolitan area in the country and 31st largest urban area in the world.

Poes Garden is an upscale neighbourhood in Teynampet, situated along Anna Salai, an arterial road of Chennai. The locality comes under Chennai Central parliamentary constituency under general category and in Thousand Lights assembly constituency. It is located in 118<sup>th</sup> ward that is Royapettah of Zone 9 of Greater Chennai Corporation. The total household in 118<sup>th</sup> ward is 8341 and the total population is 41706. The total houses in Poes Garden are roughly 50 houses inclusive of apartments and single houses. The total voters of this locality are 1257 as on the draft voters list issued by the Greater Chennai Corporation.

**About the Icon Leader:**

Born on 24 February, 1948 at the then Mysore State, Dr. Jayalalitha is remembered as "The 'Iron Lady'", a nickname that became associated with her

uncompromising politics and leadership style. She was educated at Bishop Cotton School at Bangalore and Presentation Convent at Chennai. Her father's sudden demise made her chose not to study beyond matriculation. Inducted into films at fifteen years of age, by her actress mother Sandhya, she excelled in films.

A Carnatic music singer, trained classical dancer, a popular lead actor in Tamil and Telugu movies in the sixties and seventies and she was also a writer with several published short stories and novels. The articulate Chief Minister had an excellent proficiency in English, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Hindi and Malayalam.

She was mentored by M. G. Ramachandran, himself a popular former Tamil actor and director and her co-star of many films, and entered politics in 1982. She became a member of the AIADMK; a party founded by MGR in 1977, and was chosen as its propaganda secretary. She was elected to the Rajya Sabha in 1984 and remained a member of the parliament till 1989.

Dr. M.G. Ramachandran fell ill in 1984 and Jayalalithaa assumed control of the party. AIADMK was successful in the Lok Sabha as well as the Legislative Assembly elections and after M.G. Ramachandran's death in 1987, she proclaimed herself his political heir. She being the elected General Secretary of the party and won her maiden Legislative Assembly election in 1989 from Bodinayakkanur and Jayalalithaa became the first woman leader of opposition in the state assembly.

She won the Assembly elections in 1991 from two constituencies - Bargur and Kangeyam. The AIADMK and Congress alliance won in 225 out of total 234 constituencies and Dr. J. Jayalalithaa became the Chief Minister for the first time. In 1991, Jayalalithaa became Chief Minister; Tamilnadu's youngest, for the first time. She was the first elected woman Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and lasted the full term until 1996. AIADMK had lost the next assembly elections and she came back to power in 2002 and was elected from Andipatti constituency. She then served her second term as Chief Minister till 2006. She was re-elected to the legislative Assembly in 2006 from Andipatti. In 2011, AIADMK was again voted to power and Jayalalitha became the Chief Minister in May 2011. On 23 May 2015, she held the office and was sworn in as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for the fifth time. She was re-elected in 2016 as the Chief

Minister of the State with a margin of 39,545 votes over her DMK rival, she retained the R. K. Nagar constituency.

Her thirst for learning never stopped and considering the well being of students she had given free laptops for students, canteens with subsidized food called Amma Unavagam for the homeless. Apart from the mid-day meal scheme, she introduced breakfast meals across government schools. The 'cradle baby' scheme, another brainchild of late Chief Minister Jayalalithaa in 1992 was initiated to battle female infanticide. The project which started in 1992 runs in towns and villages across Tamil Nadu.

She introduced the 'Thallicku Thangam' scheme to provide gold for mangal sutra and also financial assistance for conducting a marriage ceremony. Tamilnadu's experiment with the alternative water conservation technique of rain water harvesting (RWH) is a rare success story. The RWH scheme, a brainchild of Jayalalithaa, was launched in 2001 and helped the water-starved regions including Chennai by raising water tables in most neighbourhoods.

The Jayalalithaa government in 2003 banned the sale of all lotteries, including online, within the territory of the state, despite the risk of the state losing revenue. As a result of all the above said, people of Tamilnadu have fondly called and remembering her as "Amma". She is known for her quick, swift and timely decisions where other leaders dare to take. India's first company of female police commandos was set up in Tamil Nadu in 2003. They underwent the same training as their male counterparts, covering the handling of weapons, detection and disposal of bombs, driving, horse riding, and adventure sports. She is to the core that all the developmental programs were women centric and gender neutral.

Dr. J. Jayalalithaa was admitted to Apollo Hospitals, Greem's Road, Chennai, on 22 September, 2016 due to infection and acute dehydration. She was under treatment for 70 days. Her condition slowly improved and on 5 December 2016 unfortunately, she suffered a cardiac arrest at around 4.45 PM and in late hours, she passed away.

For her exemplary work in fine arts she was conferred with Kalaimamani Award by the Government of Tamil Nadu in 1972 and several honorary doctorates by various Universities which added feathers to her cap.

## **Why this study?**

Being a charismatic women leader and icon both in national and state politics, this iron lady who died after her tireless working, the Government of Tamilnadu wanted to honour and remembers by converting her residence in Poes Garden where she lived till her last breath, into a memorial. For this, the Government of Tamilnadu have accorded administrative sanction for acquiring land for an extent of 22 acres 60 Sq. meters (10 grounds 0322 sq.ft.) in Block No.31, T.S. No.1567/50 of Mylapore Part 1 Town, Mylapore Taluk, Chennai District under the provisions of RFCTLARR Act for the purpose of declaring the residence “Vedha Illam” at Poes Garden of former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu (Late) Selvi J. Jayalalithaa as memorial.

The Government of Tamilnadu called for tenders for doing a Social Impact Assessment Study stipulated under the RFCTLARR Act 2013 and accordingly Dr. A. Enoch, Assistant Professor, Madras School of Social Work, Egmore, Chennai had sent a proposal and the same was selected for the purpose of the study.

The components of the study shall comprise of quantitative and qualitative data, undertake detailed site visits, adopting participatory methods and appraisal techniques like Focus Group Discussions, and other relevant techniques and methodologies as and when required as envisaged under the Act.

### **Focus Group Discussions:**

Focus group discussion is one of the most popular qualitative research methods. It is a good way to gather people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest. The SIA team feels that as only one property is to be acquired focus group discussion would be the appropriate tool for the purpose of the study.

### **People’s Consultation:**

This is organised for the purpose of bringing out the views of public to ascertain the facts and to enhance the participation of the public at a larger level.

### **Submission of Draft Social Impact Assessment Report**

Based on all the above, the Draft Social Impact Assessment Report was submitted to the Appropriate Government / District Collector on 14.12.2018.

### **Publication of the Draft Social Impact Assessment Report**

The Appropriate Government / The District Collector published the Draft Social Impact Assessment Report in the locality and in other places as stipulated in the RFCTLARR ACT 2013 on 18.12.2018, giving opportunity to the general public to express their views and objections in public hearing on 02.01.2019, adhering to the statutory 15 days time.

### **Conduct of Public Hearing**

Subsequent to the publication of Draft Social Impact Assessment Report on 18.12.2018, a public hearing was conducted by Appropriate Government / District Collector on 02.01.2019 after giving 15 days time for the public to lodge their claims and objections. In the public hearing the people from the project affected area, namely the Poes Garden participated and submitted their suggestions and objections.

### **Referring the Claims and Objections of the Public to the requiring body and obtaining their views**

The Claims and Objections given by the public during the public hearing held on 02.01.2019 were handed over to the requiring body on the same day by the Appropriate Government / District Collector. The requiring body has given their remarks on the same to the Appropriate Government / District Collector on 15.02.2019.

### **Preparation of Final Social Impact Assessment Report by the SIA Agency**

The Appropriate Government / District Collector forward all the documents of the public hearing such as the attendance, proceedings, Claims and Objections, Remarks of the Requiring body, etc., to the Social Impact Assessment Agency on 22.02.2019. The same was carefully examined and necessary field inspections were carried out. All papers were carefully perused. After thorough scrutiny and considering the merits of the proposal and public's views the Final Social Impact Assessment Report has been prepared.

**No need for Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Study and Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP)**

As the proposed project does not involve any environmental issues, the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Study as stipulated in Section 4(4) of the RFCTLARR Act 2013 is not required, as concluded by the SIA Agency.

Similarly, the preparation of Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) is also not required in the present case, as there is no person / family affected due to this project.

The detailed Final Social Impact Assessment Report is thus submitted as under.

## **REPORT ON FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

**For**

### **Acquiring for conversion of the residence of former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu Selvi. J. Jayalalitha (late) “Vedha Illam” at Poes Garden as Memorial - by the Government of Tamilnadu**

**Date: 05.12.2018**

**Venue: Church Park School,  
Chennai.**

**Time: 11 am to 12.30 noon**

#### **Introduction:**

A focus group discussion was conducted on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at Church Park School among the women of self help group leaders to understand their level of perception towards this initiative and significant measures to implement the project by the Government of Tamilnadu.

A brief introduction was done by the SIA team about the proposal of the government of Tamilnadu on the conversion of Vedha Illam into the memorial.

Twenty Three women participated in the process with great enthusiasm. They all are happy on this initiative.

The women remembered the thaalikku thangam scheme, free bicycle scheme to girl students, marriage assistance given to women of poor families, Amma canteen and so on. The following are the concerns shared by the women in the discussion.

- The women expressed that as the former CM had not been into the institution of family leaving her property intestate, the same should be acquired by the Government of Tamilnadu for better administration. They were upset that a house lived by an icon is remain closed for several months and wanted the same to be open and remodelled at the earliest.
- Remembering her as an Icon who stood for the welfare of women and girl children, they expressed that in addition to memorial it shall be used for the purpose of running hospital for women and children exclusively.

- The neighbours of Poes Garden should lend their hands for this conversion process as the said house was a prestigious landmark in the history of Tamilnadu and India where several leaders visited. The women also expressed that only the 'Poes Garden Vedha Illam' where the former (Late) Chief Minister of Tamilnadu lived can be converted as memorial. The neighbours should be proud of living in the said locality.
- The women said that she did not have family and the question of legal heirs did not arise. Even if so, that should not be taken into account and they cannot accept that the Vedha Illam been given to anybody in the name of legal heir.
- They also wanted that all the household items used by the Former Chief Minister should be protected and displayed for public view.
- The awards and all the credentials received in her life time should be kept in the memorial with utmost protection which would motivate the present generation women to scale up in life.
- The women also wanted the life history of the Late Chief Minister to be displayed in walls and video and laser show portraying her political career and strategies with appropriate footages for the public.

### **Findings:**

- The SIA team found through Focus group discussions that, the general public especially women are very much interested in this initiative and very much positive.
- The women are placing the former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu (late) Selvi. J. Jayalalithaa as their role model and they wanted this mission to be completed at the earliest.
- It was found that the present situation of closed gates of the Veda Illam in Poes Garden shall be rectified at the earliest and the Government should open it as a Memorial with due respect as she was living in Veda Illam of Poes Garden till her last breath.
- The women had also given added suggestions as to using the Veda Illam of Poes Garden for women empowerment programs and so on.

**Conclusions:**

- Based on the Initial Focus Group Discussion, the SIA team concludes that with people's support and cooperation this Proposal of acquiring Vedha Illam in Poes Garden shall be completed at the earliest with utmost care by the Government of Tamilnadu which is the need of the hour. Through this, the accomplishments of the Former Late Chief Minister will be remembered and honoured.
- In case if the land is to be acquired from Stella Maris College for reaching the memorial in future from Sivasankaran Road, the college management should be compensated at the market value as stipulated under the Act.

**Enclosed as Annexure:**

1. Attendance sheet of participants
2. Feed-back forms of participants.

**REPORT ON PEOPLES CONSULTATION**  
**For**  
**Acquiring for conversion of the residence of former Chief Minister of**  
**Tamilnadu Selvi. J. Jayalalitha (late) “Vedha Illam” at**  
**Poes Garden as Memorial - by the Government of Tamilnadu**

**Date: 08.12.2018**

**Time: 11 am to 12.30 noon**

**Venue: Community Hall, COC,**

**Chennai – 600 086.**

**Introduction:**

The public hearing started at 11 am and **Dr. Enoch, Project Director** welcomed the gathering and explained the participants regarding the background of the study. He said that the Government of Tamilnadu wanted to honour and remember the former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu (Late) Selvi J. Jayalalithaa for which have accorded administrative sanction for acquiring land for an extent of 22 acres 60 Sq. Meters (10 grounds 0322 sq.ft.) in Block No.31, T.S. No.1567/50 of Mylapore Part 1 Town, Mylapore Taluk, Chennai District under the provisions of RFCTLARR Act 2013 for the purpose of declaring the residence of “Vedha Illam” at Poes Garden as Memorial where the Former Chief Minister was residing till her last breath.

He added that the Government of Tamilnadu invited tenders for doing a Social Impact Assessment Study stipulated under the Act and accordingly Dr. A. Enoch, Assistant Professor, Madras School of Social Work, Egmore, Chennai had sent a proposal and the same was selected for the purpose of the study.

He concluded that as part of the Study this People’s Consultation was called upon inviting public to view their opinion which would enable him to submit a report to the Government which is a mandate under the Act.

**Mr. Pandiyan**, member of the SIA team briefed the gathering that the proposal was given by Madras School of Social Work along with other agencies and the same was accepted by Government of Tamilnadu for conducting the SIA. The study has various components which include focus group discussions and listening people’s opinion. For conducting the same, publicity was given through handbills and notices

welcoming the people to express their views not only from Poes Garden but also from other parts of Tamilnadu. He also added that the suggestions of people will be noted and reports will be submitted to Government for further action. He concluded that video documentation of the consultation is also done and the District Administration shall be conducting a public hearing giving 15 days notice in advance soon. He requested the gathering to render solidarity and cooperation to end this process peacefully.

**Ms. Lalitha. N** of the team was assigned the process of documentation of the whole process.

### Details of Participants

| S.No. | Category of Participants                 | Numbers                       |
|-------|--|-------------------------------|
| 1.    | Residents of Poes Garden                 | 31                            |
| 2.    | Residents from in and around Poes garden | 7                             |
| 3.    | Print Media                              | Thamizh 10<br>English 5       |
| 4.    | Visual Media                             | 12 News Channels              |
|       | Total participants                       | 65 & few government officials |

The **views of the participants** with name specifics are as follows:

- 1. D. Sivaraj, Ward 118 Ex-Councilor, Corporation of Chennai:** He was the Ex Councilor of the Poes Garden Locality and resides in Teynampet. He expressed that the former Chief Minister was living in Poes Garden till her last breath. Only the last residing place can be converted as a memorial. We have case studies of Chief Ministers of Tamilnadu like Thiru. Kamarajar, Thiru. M.G. Ramachandran and Thiru M. Karunanithi wherein their residences were converted into memorial and hospital respectively. Here the former Chief Minister has only relatives. Remembering her exemplary services, her residence should be converted as memorial at any cost. He added that the residents of Poes Garden need not

come to Binny road and the way via Chokalingam Nagar can be used by them. He said that for not using the pathway Stella Maris College had obtained a stay, which they cannot do. The Pathway is under the control of Corporation of Chennai and he requested the SIA team should take note of that for further action. He also requested the residents of Poes garden to give fullest cooperation in making this project a success.

**2. Ramakrishnan, resident from Poes Garden:** He is living in Poes Garden locality for over a period of 55 years. His house is located two houses after the former Chief Minister's residence. He said that if one look into the layout of the Poes Garden, they can understand the problem. The area had narrow streets with single way. No thorough way is there and this was taken care of by the former Chief Minister and she never allowed any hindrances to the residents of the Poes Garden. He added that the check post way is the only entrance and people have to come back from the very same entrance. He said if the project is implemented all the above said should be taken into consideration and the same protection should be ensured. He concluded that 40 years of three generation lives should not be affected and when the former Chief Minister came and settled there 40 years before, she considered all these aspects and protecting them till her last breath.

**3. Balasubramaniam, resident of Kasthuri Estate:** He is 80 plus and one of the oldest residents of Poes Garden area. He strongly oppose this proposal because their civic life will be disrupted. They were all safe when she was alive. The roads leading to Veda illam is restricted with one way only. If this memorial is allowed, there will be tremendous off shoot with regard to mushroom growth of small vendors having shops in footpath coupled with littering in streets. It will be a basic havoc to human being with severe traffic congestions. During her tenure as Chief Minister, public will suddenly come to see her and the police used to control them. He had witnessed that several times. There are several old aged people in the locality and if the conversion happens, there will be no space for even to

ambulance to come in times of emergency. Also there are several temples inside the locality and they will not be having any privacy including their children's play area. Hence, the Government should defer this proposal and move the memorial to some other place. The streets are very narrow and he handed over the photographs of the streets to the SIA team.

**4. Nitin Shah, residing in No.97, Poes Garden:** He is residing in Poes Garden area and the locality ends with dead ends and there is no 2 way traffic as of now. The children play a lot and if this memorial is allowed they will lose their right to privacy. So, this proposal should be withdrawn.

**5. Prithvirajan, resident of Chetpet, Chennai – 600 031:** He is residing in Chetpet. The former Chief Minister has no family and it is her self-acquired property. The former Chief Minister Thiru Karunanithi's residence will be converted into hospital as per his will. The Former Chief Minister J. Jayalaitaa did not anticipate her illness and hence no will was written by her. Choosing another place instead of her residence Veda Illam is meaningless because she lived there only till her last breath. Even her funeral procession started from her residence after completing the rituals. She had given a meaningful government considering the plight of poor and living in the hearts of millions. He saw the advertisement in Puthiya Thalaimurai TV and came there to express his views. He could understand that the residents of Poes Garden are worried about the conversion. But, he suggested that the Government of Tamilnadu can use the internet for prior booking of visitors with limited numbers as that of Tirupati temple through online when the residence is converted as memorial. Also fixed timings can be allotted without disturbing the residents of Poes Garden. Parking shall be arranged without disturbing the resident commuters and school children. Guidelines with strict implementation shall be considered when the residence is converted as memorial. The rural students were highly benefitted by the Jayalaitaa government and hence for future generation this memorial will be a prominent landmark in understanding more about her and scale up in life

especially for women and girl students. So, he pleaded that the residents of Poes Garden should fully cooperate in making this conversion and government should ensure their safety and security as of now.

- 6. Arunachalam, 65/72, Poes Garden:** He is residing next to her house. It's a boon for us. The government should give full support and protection as it was before when the former Chief Minister was alive. We were not disturbed by any of her political leader visits to her residence. The same protection should be ensured to us.
  
- 7. Prabhu, resident of Chamiers Road, Teynampet:** Thiru. Kamarajar has a memorial. Ms. Jayalalithaa has concerns for women and children and all her schemes focused them and gender neutral. Her credentials include cradle baby scheme, and she was the first woman opposition leader of Tamilnadu Assembly. The future generation should know about her and the memorial will serve the purpose, which the younger generation will be motivated and become aspiring women participating in politics at all levels. Hence, Veda Illam should be converted into a memorial and requested the residents of Poes Garden to cooperate and support for this noble project.
  
- 8. Padmanabhan, AIADMK Cadre resident of Royapettah:** He is working as a cadre in AIADMK for more than 35 years. Amma was a people's leader. She sacrificed her life for the citizens of Tamilnadu. As a mark of respect and to enlighten the future generation women, her house should be converted as a memorial.
  
- 9. Gayathri Old No.72, resident of Poes Garden:** She had been living there for 40 years. The former Chief Minister is her senior in Church Park School. She is a lovable soul who had more concerns about the residents of Poes Garden. She was a person who loved privacy throughout her life. She opposed the proposal of the government in changing her residence into a memorial. It is her private

property and this move of the government is a violation to her privacy. She added that the roads are very narrow in the locality with plenty of water scarcity. If this is allowed, the children cannot play. Small vendors will have their shops in pavements and the safety of the residents will be compromised. There is already traffic congestion because of dead end roads and one way roads and this will add additional hindrance to the residents. She concluded that residential neighbourhood cannot be used for public purposes and hence this proposal should be dropped and gave 108 petitions signed by the residents of Poes Garden to halt this proposal.

**10. Kishore, No.87, resident of Poes Garden:** She was living there for decades. During her life time, she was protecting us. By converting her house as a memorial, she should not be confined to a small place. Perhaps she is a very private person too, that should be kept in mind by the Government of Tamilnadu.

**11. Kailash, resident of Poes Garden:** He is a resident of Poes Garden for the past 40 years. The government should keep the public and residential places apart. Ours is a residential area and that cannot be made as a public place by converting the residence of Former Chief Minister into a memorial. They respect her privacy and it is her private property. She has already a memorial in beach and hence her memorial shall be in a larger public place where more people can access rather than this narrow residential place. The water scarcity and frequent power cuts are the key issues in Poes garden. As resident he opposed the proposal of the government.

**12. Sivaprasad, No.78, resident of Poes Garden:** He is residing in the locality for more than 30 years. The residence can be used for any social purpose other than memorial. The memorial built for other leaders of Tamilnadu has a thorough way. Here the streets are narrow with dead ends. There is only one way, with huge traffic congestion. If the memorial is built, the situation will worsen. She is a

national leader and let her glory be confined to a larger place other than her residence.

**13.Vidya, No.69, resident of Poes Garden:** She had been living here for generations. They lack security if the Veda Illam is converted as memorial. At times of schoolchildren visit, there will be huge disturbances. She strongly opposed this proposal.

**14.Srikanth, No.89, resident of Poes Garden:** She is her nextdoor neighbour. It is a residential area and the memorial should be constructed outside Poes Garden, which will avoid disturbances to residents. There are plenty of public spaces for the same. If the memorial is constructed, the small vendors come and occupy the footpath and there will be traffic chaos. That will also affect the children's play area. She is a national leader and hence memorial shall be constructed outside the Poes Garden.

**15.Sundaresan and Aarthi Krishnan, residents of Poes Garden:** They had already expressed their concerns through their representations to the SIA team. They don't want this memorial in their residential area.

**16.Shoba, No.66, resident of Poes Garden:** It is a small place and shall not be converted as a memorial. She might be a political leader for the public and at the same time, we need to respect the soul of her who loved privacy. It is her private property and should be maintained properly by the Government but not in the name of memorial. They cannot allow public in private place. The government should take note of the concerns of residents and opposed this proposal.

**17.Roopaa Srikanth, No.89, Poes Garden:** The memorial should not be constructed in a residential area.

## Findings of the SIA Team:

1. From all the participants of the consultation, the SIA team found that the residents of Poes Garden are under fear that their right to privacy will be affected if Veda Illam is converted as a memorial.
2. The SIA team also found that the streets of the Poes Garden are narrow with dead ends paving way for only one-way traffic.
3. Some of the residents of the Poes Garden expressed that if they could get the same concern, security and care when the former Chief Minister was alive by the Government of Tamilnadu then there will not be any problem.
4. The SIA team also found that the residents did not want to convert Veda Illam into memorial as it is located in the residential area.
5. The SIA team found that there is a way close to Chokalingam Nagar, which is under the control of the Corporation of Chennai and a stay is been obtained by Stella Maris College. If that is looked into the residents of Poes Garden can use that way and majority of the traffic woes will be curtailed.
6. Similarly the team found that in case if the house is converted into a memorial, the residents of Poes Garden are worried about the street vendors who will be a hindrance and hitting their right to privacy.
7. Some of the participants of the consultation expressed that instead of memorial, the residence shall be converted into an academy for women empowerment wherein limited access to public will be maintained.
8. One participant also expressed that how best the memorial could be constructed and it's after usage by limiting the visitors through online bookings and stipulated

timings like Tirupathi temple, so that all the apprehension of the residents of the Poes Garden shall be met out and taken care of.

9. The residents of Poes Garden also gave written representations to the SIA team opposing the proposal of conversion.
10. There is no question of resettlement and rehabilitation under the Act, as the existing house of former Chief Minister (late) Dr. J. Jayalalithaa is been acquired and converted as memorial.

**Recommendations:**

1. After analyzing the pros and cons, it is evident that the concerns of the residents of Poes Garden need to be addressed. No doubt that she is a universal icon and her leadership qualities with high influencing and convincing capacity is not debated. Keeping this in mind the Government of Tamilnadu should find ways to implement this proposal at any cost.
2. The SIA team feels that only the house where the former Chief Minister lived till her last breath can be made as a memorial and hence, if the queries and concerns of the residents of Poes Garden are taken care of by the Government, then the proposal shall be implemented.
3. The issue of single through way, dead end roads and the children's play area should be taken care of. The visitors should be admitted in stipulated timings through online booking restricting to numbers per day will definitely avoid all confusion. Further, the vehicles of the visitors to the memorial shall be parked in apt parking lots outside the Poes Garden.
4. The High Court Stay with regard to the Chokalingam Nagar thorough way behind Stella Maris College which would give two ways to the residents of Poes Garden should be looked into and sorted out on war footage by the Government of Tamilnadu.

5. The SIA team also recommends that only the house where the former Chief Minister was living in can be converted as a memorial and the larger interests of the people shall be considered rather than the smaller sect of people.
6. The SIA team concludes that if the entire above said are sorted out, this conversion of Veda Illam into a memorial shall be implemented as planned.

**Submitted by**

**Dr.Enoch  
Project Director**

**Annexures:**

1. Representations given by the residents of Poes Garden
2. Media clippings and photographs of people's consultation
3. Video Coverage of the process

## **REPORT ON FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

**For**

### **Acquiring for conversion of the residence of former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu Selvi. J. Jayalalitha (late) “Vedha Illam” at Poes Garden as Memorial - by the Government of Tamilnadu**

**Date: 11.12.2018**

**Time: 4.15 pm to 5.30 pm**

**Venue: Community Hall COC,**

**Chennai – 600 086**

#### **Introduction:**

A focus group discussion was conducted on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at Community Hall of CoC wherein the residents from Muthaiya Street, Varadhajapuram, Seenivasaperumal Sannithi Street, Chokalingam Colony, Royapettah, Ellaiyamman Colony Teynampet, Vellala Teynampet living in and around of Poes Garden locality participated. The participants are living in the locality for almost three generations. This was done to understand their level of perception towards this initiative by the Government of Tamilnadu.

Twenty seven people (14 men and 13 women) were participated in the process with great enthusiasm. They all are happy on this initiative.

A brief introduction was done by the Social Impact Assessment team about the proposal of the government of Tamilnadu “on the conversion of Vedha Illam into the memorial”.

The people remembered the day when the former Chief Minister Selvi. J. Jayalalithaa purchased the land and built the house. They also remembered her humbleness when she was in power and even when she lost the elections, she remained calm and behaved with utmost modesty. The following are the concerns shared by the people in the discussion.

- They expressed that the house where the former Chief Minister lived till her last breath alone can be converted as a memorial. It has various historical and political importance. The fear of the residents of Poes Garden is baseless and as they claimed and portrayed in media that the area is not congested. The Kasthuri

lyengar road has 5 separate roads and all can be used for commutation of vehicles.

- The people said that there are various ways to reach Vedha Illam. That is from Binny Road extension the backside of Stella Maris College compound wall can be reached and the same will lead to Sivasankaran Road and Chokalinga Nagar. There the visitors vehicle shall be parked which has ample space for parking. The Corporation of Chennai can very well get the land from the said college paying due compensation, there will not be any necessity to go to Binny Road via Cathedral road resulting in traffic congestion as stated.
- The people also expressed that Amma purchased the land some 40 years ago and constructed her house. The then Chief Minister Dr. MGR was also there and he was instrumental in purchasing the land for her. Before she constructed her house there, the area was shabby and the residents who are calling themselves as elites were known for their misbehaviour in public. They added that the celebrities who have their residences used to park their car and in the car itself they used to do immoral traffic activity. This was seen by Muthaiya Street women who were domestic workers in the houses of Poes Garden.
- The people stated that even after Amma occupied her house, this did not stop. Only after she became the Chief Minister this sorts of unruly misbehaviour by the residents of Poes Garden in public stopped especially after deploying police. Even after 1996, when she was not in power, the celebrity dance master who used to work in movies used to dance with music in high decibel in public causing hindrance to public which was not objected by the residents of Poes Garden. The other cine actress cum dance master who is now booked under drunk and drive case also used to sexually behave with men in car in the midst of public. Even there are instances of rapes before she came to that locality. All that stopped after her arrival as a resident of Poes Garden with utmost police security.
- The people suggested alternate routes for vehicle parking for the visitors of the memorial and added that when Vedha Illam is reached from Binny Road, there is a way on the right hand side which will reach Stella Maris Road to reach

Chokalingam Nagar. So the problem of traffic congestion will not rise. Also at present, for reaching Eldams Road, people come from Mount Road and in order to avoid traffic, uses Binny Road which is the reason for traffic congestion which the residents of Poes Garden are quite aware of. This is been tolerated by the residents of Poes Garden and even Mr. Rajnikanth being an actor and a celebrity is planning to float his political party whereby several visitors come to Poes Garden. On his birthday of December 12, and on his every film release, there will be huge traffic congestion which is been tolerated by the residents of Poes Garden. Furthermore, his house is at dead end where people who visit him should come out on the same way they entered resulting in huge traffic. If all the above said can be tolerated, the meagre visitors who visit the memorial as a mark of respect should be respected and the co resident Selvi. J. Jayalalithaa who herself was a high security for the residents of Poes Garden should be given due honour and respect.

- In terms of parking the visitor's vehicle who visit the memorial, their vehicles can be parked either in Semmozhi Poonga and Sivasankaran Road close to Chokalingam Colony. St.Ebbas School can also be used and which is now used by Music academy as they don't have separate space for parking.
- The people said that the master plan of Poes Garden is well with the Greater Chennai Corporation. Upon looking us one can see the quantum of deviations that had happened and especially the Stella Maris College had given a space for scheme road leading to Anand Saidaam Temple and for the same constructed a compound wall and occupied the Greater Chennai Corporation ground. The college had also constructed unauthorised buildings inside the same without patta whereby blocking the way to Poes Garden locality. If the compound wall is opened and the way is used for public thorough way, one can reach Poes garden memorial without traffic congestion.
- The people said that similarly, One Mr. Sivasankaran during 1982 had given a small place for scheme road and occupied 4 grounds and the area is named after him as Sivasankaran road. The said road is between DMS and AGS office and in the same road parking of visitor's vehicles can be allowed.

- The people expressed that after the settling of Selvi. J. Jayalaithee, the ground value of the Poes Garden locality has raised. The residents are elite and none of them even walk. Last but not the least she was the Chief Minister for the state of Tamilnadu and not restricted to Poes Garden alone. We the larger sect of vulnerable downtrodden people are benefitted and taken care of by her tireless services and in order to honour her services we request the government to convert her residence as a memorial by taking the people's views and concerns.
- The only tea vendor and a woman food seller who were asked by the Chief Minister through a special order to continue with the shops in Poes Garden despite the complaints given by the residents of Poes Garden to Greater Chennai Corporation also expressed their wish and support for conversion of Vedha Nilayam into memorial.
- The people also suggested that in terms of timings to visit the memorial, it can be opened on all days except Tuesdays. Tuesday shall be a holiday for doing maintenance and except Sundays the timings shall be from 10 am to 3 pm for visitors and on Sundays the timings shall be from 10 am to 5 pm. Also the visitors shall be restricted to 150 per day.

### **Findings:**

- The team found through Focus group discussions that, the residents of Muthaiya Street and Chokalingam colony who stays around Poes Garden are very much interested in this initiative and very much positive with various suggestions.
- The women are placing the former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu (late) Selvi. J. Jayalaithee as their role model and they wanted this mission to be completed at the earliest.
- The team found that there are alternate ways to reach Vedha Nilayam. That is from Binny Road the backside of Stella Maris College compound wall can be reached and the same will lead to Sivasankaran Road and Chokalinga Nagar. Those spaces can be used for parking for the visitor's vehicle. The team also made site visits to the said areas mentioned above and making this specific observation.

- The team after visiting the Stella Maris College compound wall at Sivasankaran road found that there are several buildings built by Stella Maris College inside the campus and close to the compound wall.
- The team also found that there are ample spaces for parking of vehicles inside DMS compound and Semmozhi Poonga which the Government of Tamilnadu can consider.
- The team want to reiterate the fact that the deceased Former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu Dr. J. Jayalalithaa is an icon in Indian Politics and several people whom the team met in FGDs and Peoples consultation wanted Vedha Illam to be converted as memorial.

**Conclusions:**

- Based on the FGDs, the SIA team concludes that this Proposal of acquiring Vedha Illam in Poes Garden shall be completed at the earliest with utmost care by the Government of Tamilnadu which is the need of the hour. Through this the accomplishments of the Former Late Chief Minister will be remembered and honoured.

**Submitted by**

**Dr.Enoch  
Project Director**

**Enclosed as Annexure:**

- Attendance Sheet of the participants of FGD
- Feed Back Forms of the participants of FGD who know to read and write
- Photographs of 2<sup>nd</sup> FGD
- Video Coverage of the Process

# **CONSOLIDATED FINAL REPORT**

## **Acquiring for conversion of the residence of former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu Selvi. J. Jayalalitha (late) “Vedha Illam”**

**at**

## **Poes Garden as Memorial - by the Government of Tamilnadu**

**Introduction:** The SIA team conducted two focus group discussions among the residents of Poes Garden and public on 5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018 respectively followed by a people’s consultation on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2018. The District Collector as per the requirements of the RFCTLARR Act 2013 conducted the public hearing in the project-affected area on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2019. Both oral and written representations, public suggestions, objections were heard. 47 persons attended the public hearing and all of them were given due opportunity to express their views in free and fair manner. The views/objections raised by the public were sent to Tamil Development and Information (Memorials) Department for their remarks. Accordingly, the said Department offered their remarks for each and every objections/suggestions raised by the public. A careful scrutiny of the same was done along with necessary instructions and the final Social Impact Assessment study report is prepared as under:

The issues raised by the public revolves around ***traffic/ entry and exit, parking, medical emergency and the existing dead end roads followed by infrastructure, water, hygiene and sanitation. The other issues are security, peace and privacy of the residents of Poes Garden, conversion of residential into commercial, the encroachments made by Stella Maris College, relocation of the memorial, not receiving report and considering the views of the minority people, requesting another Public Hearing, getting environmental clearance and conducting referendum.***

**Traffic/Entry and exit, parking, medical emergency and the existing narrow and dead end roads:** (issues raised by Anitha Arun Kumar, Aarthi Krishna, Chandrika, Mala Sarat Chandra, Geetha Raja, Jaggi, Kavitha, Ram Chandra Mani, Smitha Shah, Sundaresan, Shoba Rao, Usha Krishna, Krishnan, Arunachalam)

Traffic is definitely an issue and will be planned meticulously with police and care will be taken to regulate the number of visitors by restricting the visiting hours duly considering the views of the local residents. Vehicle movements will be regulated by making alternate vehicle parking areas outside the Poes garden i.e. Semmozhi Poonga and DMS. The above said is applicable for medical emergency also and in case of any encroachments on the road, the same will be removed ensuring free movement of ambulances and emergency vehicles. The entry and exit issue thus can be regulated as and when required. In addition, traffic control and regulations by Traffic Police officials will also be done to ensure smooth flow of traffic within the Poes Garden area and not affecting the normal life of the local residents.

**Infrastructure/water, hygiene and sanitation:** (raised by Anitha Arun Kumar, Aarathi Krishna, Geetha Raja, Jaggi, Preethi Krishna, Rama Chandra Mani, Smitha Shah, Sundaresan, Usha Krishna, Rekha Rangaraj)

The existing infrastructure facilities will be sufficient to handle the restricted number of visitors by way of restricting the visiting hours. Creating additional infrastructure facilities like streetlights, dustbins for garbage collection etc. will be considered. Government will ensure adequate availability of drinking water supply in all areas including Poes Garden. Special attention will be given by Greater Chennai Corporation to maintain a clean neighbourhood and periodical clearing of garbage for a healthy environment.

**Security, peace and privacy of the former Chief Minister Premises and residents of Poes Garden:**

(raised by Anitha Arun Kumar, Aarathi Krishna, Arianna Asrani, Aemand Asrani, Deepak Asrani, Preethi Krishna, Rama Chandra Mani, Smitha Shah, Sundaresan)

The police will ensure necessary and adequate security arrangements to check the entry of anti social elements in Vada Illam and Poes Garden area. By regulating the visiting hours and screening of the visitors, entry of unscrupulous and anti social elements will be under constant check. By implementing the above said, the peace of the residents shall be ensured and remain undisturbed. In terms of the privacy seeking nature of the former Chief Minister, it is highly hypothetical and not fit for consideration.

**Conversion of residential into commercial :** (raised by Aarathi Krishna, Preethi Krishna, Raveendran, Smitha Shah, Rekha Rangaraj, Nitin Shah)

Setting up of a memorial is a non-commercial activity. No commercial activity will be allowed by the government. The contention that the entire Poes Garden area is a private property is not true. Like any other residential colony, Poes Garden is also a public area. The Government will not collect any entry fee for visiting this memorial. The intention of the Government is to showcase the greatness of the Honourable Former Chief Minister Selvi. J. Jayalalithaa to the common public.

**Encroachments made by Stella Maris College and other encroachments of street vendors likely to happen:** (raised by Jaggi, Mala Sarat Chandra, Rama Chandra Mani, Krishnan, Rekha Rangaraj)

The reporting land measuring 3 grounds and 2,205 sq. ft., in T.S.No. 1565/2 in Block No.31, Mylapore Village has been transferred to Stella Maris College vide G.O. No.2087, Rural development and land Administration Department 26.12.1975. Hence it is not an encroachment. It is a minority institution imparting education for thousands of young girls for more than several decades protected under Article 30 of the Constitution of India and cannot be disturbed. Any encroachments in any form including petty shops, pavement vendors on the roads leading up to Veda Illam will not be allowed.

**Relocation of the memorial and alternate idea of commencing a TV channel showing Veda Illam** (raised by Jaggi, Rama Chandra Mani, Smitha Shah, Shoba Rao, Arathi Krishna)

The Hon'ble Former Chief Minister Selvi J. Jayalalithaa lived in Veda Illam for more than 30 years and the intention of the government is to convert Veda Illam into a Memorial since she lived there until her last breath. Setting up of the memorial in another location will defeat the very purpose of the intention of the people as well as the government. Starting a TV channel does not suits well with the sentiments of the people and the very purpose of establishing the memorial to showcase the achievements of the Hon'ble Former Chief Minister Selvi. J. Jayalalithaa to the public will be nullified.

**Not receiving report, considering the views of the minority people and requesting another Public Hearing:** (raised by Aarathi Krishna, Sundaresan)

As per Section 6(1) of RFCTLARR Act and Rule 11 of the Act, all the requirements for a public hearing were adhered to. The Draft Social Impact Assessment Report in Tamil was published in the official website of the Appropriate Government (District Collector), copies of the draft report in Tamil were also published in conspicuous places like Veda Illam, Ward and Zonal Offices of the Greater Chennai Corporation, RDO, Tahsildar and District Collector's office. The press had also given wide publicity about the Public Hearing and the SIA Report shall be very much downloaded and accessed from the official website of the appropriate government. The government is always concerned about the views expressed by everyone, irrespective of the issue of either majority or minority and all the views concerns and suggestions of the public are taken into consideration. Another public hearing cannot be held as per the provisions of the RFCTLARR Act 2013.

**Getting Environmental Clearance:** (raised by Raveendran)

This project involves acquisition of land and building owned by an individual where the former Honourable Chief Minister Selvi J. Jayalalithaa lived until her last breath. So, the question of getting environmental clearance does not arise.

### **Conducting Referendum:** (raised by Raveendran)

Converting Veda Illam into a memorial is being done by the Government with good intention, duly following the procedures laid down in RFCTLARR Act 2013. Hence conducting Referendum is not necessary.

After carefully observing the suggestions/objections/concerns/views of the public, the SIA team is **summarizing its findings and conclusions** as follows:

- In terms of displacement of families, the issue does not arise as no person is residing in Vedha Illam.
- Only one house that is Vedha Illam is involved in the Project and the same will not be demolished but remodeled into a memorial. Hence, no public property or common properties will be affected by acquisition.
- As the scope of the project is to convert the former Chief Minister's residence into a government memorial, the land and connected building located in Thousand Lights Assembly Constituency, in Ward No.118, measuring an extent of 22 acres 60 Sq. meters (10 grounds 0322 sq.ft.) in Block No.31, T.S. No.1567/50 of Mylapore Part 1 Town, Mylapore Taluk, Chennai , is the absolute bare minimum extent needed for the Project.
- This project does not goes against the scope of the G.O, as the house where the icon leader lived in only could be converted as a memorial. Hence, the question of alternate place for memorial does not arise.
- There is no social impact involved in this project as per our study and survey.
- As this project is focused on only alterations there is no question of EIA and also no impact on the geo spacial or geographical features of the area and the environment, the question of conducting EIA does not arise.
- As there are no residents residing inside Vedha Illam the residence of the former Chief Minister, the question of social impact management plan does not arise.
- After making site inspections, the SIA team suggests that in terms of parking vehicles and managing the visitors who would visit the memorial, parking shall be provided in by making alternate vehicle-parking areas outside the Poes garden i.e. Semmozhi Poonga and DMS campus. In Semmozhi Poonga there are 18

grounds vacant land and 15 grounds parking area is available wherein 30 Buses and 60 cars can be parked and in DMS there are around 60 cars can be parked.

- In terms of regulating the visitors and protecting the residents of the Poes Garden, the SIA team suggest to have on line bookings for the visitors who visit the memorial as that of Governor's Bungalow and the same shall be made known to the Police Personnel well in advance which would avoid traffic congestions and security issues to a considerable extent.
- The SIA team found that the reporting land measuring 3 grounds and 2,205 sq. ft., in T.S.No. 1565/2 in Block No.31, Mylapore Village has been transferred to Stella Maris College vide G.O. No.2087, Rural Development and Land Administration Department 26.12.1975. It is a proper transfer and not an encroachment. It is a minority institution imparting education for thousands of young girls for more than several decades protected under Art. 30 of the Constitution of India and hence cannot be disturbed.
- Being an iconic leader, the former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu Selvi J. Jayalalithaa is a source of inspiration to the women in India and she had emerged as an irresistible tireless leader until her last breath in a patriarchal society with her diplomatic moves in politics which is undisputable and prompted the Government of Tamilnadu to convert "Veda Illam" at Poes Garden as Memorial portraying the glory of the iconic leader.
- **We the SIA agency are totally convinced that the proposed acquisition for the conversion of former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu Selvi J. Jayalalithaa (late) "Veda Illam" at Poes garden as Memorial – by the Government of Tamilnadu serves public purpose.**

**Submitted by**

**Dr. A. Enoch**

**Project Director**