

Permission to build memorial for Gokulraj denied

SYED MUTHA HAR SAQAF

SALEM: The Omalur Town Panchayat has declined permission for any construction activity on the burial ground maintained by the local body at Omalur town.

The direction followed the steps taken by the relatives of Dalit youth V. Gokulraj, whose murder led to tension in the western districts a few months ago, to build a memorial on the local burial ground without permission.

The relatives of Gokulraj attempted to construct a memorial in mid November on the spot where his body was buried. A section of the local

people opposed construction of any memorial stating that it was a common site where the mortal remains of people belonging to different castes were being laid to rest.

Wrong precedent

As such, the construction of memorial for a particular individual would set a wrong precedent, they alleged and submitted a petition in this regard to the Omalur Town panchayat office.

The officials of the local body, after holding discussions with the revenue and police, stalled the construction of the memorial.

They pacified the relatives

of Gokulraj, who later came forward to demolish the pillars they had raised.

Meanwhile, Umarani, executive officer of the Omalur Town Panchayat, has displayed a directive at the gate of the burial ground a few days ago to prevent any such construction activity in future.

The directive stated that permission of the Omalur Town Panchayat should be sought for cremating and burying the bodies by furnishing all the details and address of the dead by their relatives. No construction activity would be allowed inside the burial ground at any cost.