

Under Rule 130 of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Rules, the following Bill which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly of the State of Tamil Nadu on 24th January, 2026 is published together with Statement of Objects and Reasons for general information:-

L.A.Bill No. 7 of 2026

A Bill further to amend the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994.

BE it enacted by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Tamil Nadu in the Seventy-sixth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the Tamil Nadu Panchayats (Amendment) Act, 2026. Short title and commencement.

(2) It shall be deemed to have come into force on the 6th day of January 2026.

Tamil Nadu Act 21 of 1994.

2. In section 261-A of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994 (hereinafter referred to as the principal Act), for the expression “upto the 5th day of January 2026”, the expression “upto the 5th day of July 2026” shall be substituted. Amendment of section 261-A.

3. Notwithstanding anything contained in the principal Act, the Special Officers appointed by the Government to exercise the powers and discharge the functions of the village panchayats, panchayat union councils or the district panchayats other than the panchayats in the districts of Kancheepuram, Chengalpattu, Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Vellore, Ranipet, Tirupathur, Tirunelveli, and Tenkasi with effect on and from the 6th day of January 2026, shall be deemed to have been appointed as such Special Officers under section 261-A of the principal Act, as amended by this Act, and anything done or any action taken by the said Special Officers during the period commencing on and from the 6th day of January 2026 and ending with the date of publication of this Act in the *Tamil Nadu Government Gazette*, shall be deemed to have been validly done or taken under the principal Act, as amended by this Act. Validation.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The municipal councils of Tiruvannamalai, Karaikudi, Pudukkottai and Namakkal have been upgraded as municipal corporations by including certain village panchayats under clause (c) of sub-section (1) of section 3 of the Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies Act, 1998 (Tamil Nadu Act 9 of 1999), with effect on and from the 12th August 2024.

2. Amalgamation of the said village panchayats with the municipalities will lead to decrease in the total number of village panchayats in the respective panchayat union councils and district panchayats and it will reflect in the overall process of delimitation and thereafter reservation of seats and office for the persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Women. Likewise, proposals are under active consideration of the Government for expansion of many municipal corporations, municipal councils and town panchayats by including certain village panchayats adjoining to these urban local bodies in 28 Districts. Finalisation of these proposals and notification of expanded urban local bodies will also alter the boundaries of village panchayats, panchayat union councils and district panchayats. After completion of the reorganisation process, definite timeline is required for delimitation of wards and thereafter reservation of seats and office for the persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Women, which are the fundamental requirements for conducting elections to the said panchayats.

3. The Hon'ble High Court of Madras in its Order, dated 21.12.2024 in W.P No.39526 of 2024 and W.M.P.No.42808 of 2024 has disposed the said Writ Petition after recording the submission of the Additional Advocate General that without completion of delimitation and the process required for announcing reservations, the election for panchayats will not be notified.

4. In the meantime, the tenure of elected representatives of panchayats in 28 districts other than the panchayats in the districts of Kancheepuram, Chengalpattu, Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Vellore, Ranipet, Tirupathur, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi was due to expire on the 5th January 2025. Since, the ordinary election to the said panchayats in 28 districts could not be conducted before the 5th January 2025, because of the non-completion of the process of delimitation/reservation of wards, section 261-A of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994 (Tamil Nadu Act 21 of 1994) had been amended by the Tamil Nadu Panchayats (Amendment) Act, 2025 (Tamil Nadu Act 6 of 2025) so as to enable the Government to appoint Special Officers for the panchayats in the said 28 districts to administer the aforesaid panchayats till ordinary elections to the said panchayats are held or till the 5th July 2025, whichever is earlier. The term has further been extended upto the 5th day January 2026 vide the Tamil Nadu Panchayats (Fourth Amendment) Act, 2025 (Tamil Nadu Act 53 of 2025)

5. The term of office of the Special Officers appointed as per section 261-A of the said Tamil Nadu Act 21 of 1994 was due to expire on the 5th January 2026. Since the process of reorganisation, delimitation of wards and reservation of wards in panchayats would require some more time, it was not possible to conduct ordinary election to the said panchayats on or before the 5th January 2026. However, in order to administer the day to day affairs of the panchayats in the said 28 districts, the Government issued orders extending the term of Special Officers for 28 districts appointed under section 261-A of the said Tamil Nadu Act 21 of 1994 to exercise the powers and discharging functions of village panchayats, panchayat unions councils and district panchayats with effect from 06.01.2026 to 05.07.2026.

6. In view of the circumstances stated above, the Government have decided to amend the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994 (Tamil Nadu Act 21 of 1994) so as to enable the Government to extend the term of office of the Special Officers for a further period of six months upto the 5th July 2026 or until the first meeting of village panchayats, panchayat union councils and the district panchayats, is held after the ordinary elections to the said panchayats, whichever is earlier and to validate the action of the Government having extended the term of Special Officers in the said 28 districts beyond the 5th January 2026 till the date of publication of this Act in the *Tamil Nadu Government Gazette*.

7. The Bill seeks to give effect to the above decision.

I. PERIYASAMY,
Minister of Rural Development.

Secretariat,
Chennai,
24th January 2026.

K. SRINIVASAN,
Principal Secretary.