

P.O. No. no: 23

16/6/09



**M. KARUNANIDHI**  
CHIEF MINISTER

SECRETARIAT  
CHENNAI - 600 009

Date.....

**D.O. Letter No. 2687/CMO/2009 dated 16 .6.2009**

Dear P.M.,

I regret to bring to your kind notice, that in spite of the repeated requests made by the State Government and the assurance given by the Sri Lankan authorities to the Government of India, the incidents of harassment of Tamil Nadu fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy continues unabated. I wish to quote a few incidents for your kind information and further action.

The yearly fishing ban on mechanized fishing boats and trawlers for conservation of fishery wealth imposed by the Government of Tamil Nadu in the east coast of Tamil Nadu ended on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2009. In as much the political situation in Sri Lanka has undergone a change, the fishermen ventured out into the sea off Rameswaram for their livelihood hoping to conduct fishing in a peaceful manner. To their shock, the Sri Lankan Navy has continued its tirade against the poor fishermen, by damaging their boats, seizing the fish catches and harassing and intimidating them in the mid sea.

On 9.6.2009, the Sri Lankan Navy apprehended 2 boats and nine fishermen of Mandapam village of Ramanathapuram district and remanded them to Police custody at Thalaimannar. They have been ordered to be released due to the diplomatic effort of the State and central Governments.

Recently, on 15.6.2009, the fishermen of Rameswaram who went into the sea for fishing near Katchatheevu have been rounded by the Sri Lankan patrol boats and were threatened, nets and prawns were seized and chased away. In the process, a boat bearing registration number TN/10/MFB/660 has been badly damaged and sunk putting the life of the fishermen in danger. Another boat bearing registration No TN.10/MFB/573 was also badly damaged. However, fortunately there is no loss of life.

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The above incident have really shaken the Rameswaram fishermen and created a sense of insecurity, helplessness and frustration among them.

It is also reported in the newspapers, dated 1.6.2009 Daily Thanthi, 2.6.2009 and 3.6.2009 Dinamalar paper and also on today's editions of Malaimurasu and Tamil Murasu, regarding the proposed intention of the Sri Lankan Government to set up a watch tower and a military base in the Katchatheevu by the Sri Lankan Navy. This unilateral action of the Sri Lankan Navy is a cause of great concern for the fishermen and State Government. It should be verified by the Government of India with its agencies.

When the Government of India and Sri Lankan Government have signed a joint press communique on 26.10.2008 which states that both Governments agreed to put in place practical arrangements to deal with the bonafide fishermen crossing IMBL and also agreed to work out a fishing arrangement, it is shocking to know the new developments taking place near Katchatheevu.

I, therefore, request you to impress upon the Sri Lankan Government not to violate the decisions agreed to at diplomatic levels and stop harassing the fishermen. As the livelihood of the fishermen is involved in this sensitive issue, I request you to kindly take up the issue with the appropriate authority at Sri Lanka at the earliest.

*Kind Regards*

Yours sincerely,

*M. Karunanidhi*

(M.KARUNANIDHI)

To

**Dr. Manmohan Singh,**  
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India,  
Government of India,  
New Delhi -110 001.

வேளியீடு, இயக்குநர்:  
செய்தி, மக்கள் தொடர்புத் துறை,  
தலைமைச் செயலகம், சென்னை-1

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