

PRESS RELEASE

Text of the D.O. letter dated 28.3.2012 addressed to Dr.Manmohan Singh, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India by Selvi J Jayalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu is reproduced below: -

“You are aware that writ petitions have been filed in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India regarding the Sethu Samudram Channel Project. Based on the strong opposition to the earlier Alignment 6 cutting across the ancient structure popularly known as Ram Sethu due to its immeasurable historical, archaeological and heritage value, a number of Writ Petitions were filed in the Madras High Court and in the Supreme Court of India. A writ petition (C) No.15 of 2007 was filed under Article 32 of the Constitution of India by me in the year 2007 praying for (a) a direction in the nature of a Writ of Mandamus directing the third and fourth respondents, namely, the Tuticorin Port Trust and Union of India, Ministry of Culture, to declare Adam's Bridge/Ram Sethu as a National Monument and take over, preserve and maintain the same and (b) forbear the first and second respondents, namely, the Union of India, Ministry of Shipping/Surface Transport and Sethu Samudram Corporation Limited from in any manner destroying/damaging the said Adam's Bridge/Ram Sethu in the process of execution of the Sethu Samudram Project and to pass further orders as deemed fit by the Supreme Court of India.

I wish to point out that, in the meantime, an Expert Committee under Dr.R.K.Pachauri was appointed by the Government of India in 2008 based on directions from the Supreme Court of India and the summary of the report of this Committee has been forwarded to the State Government for its remarks. I have had the report of the Expert Committee examined by the concerned Departments of my Government and a letter is being sent separately to the Ministry of Shipping communicating the views of the State Government.

It may have been brought to your notice that the case came up for hearing before the Supreme Court of India on 27.03.2012 and the Hon'ble Judges have directed the Additional Solicitor General to obtain the remarks of the Government of India before 29.03.2012 on the declaration of the site as a National Monument.

In view of the strong objection raised to the earlier alignment due to its archaeological, historical and cultural importance, I request you to take necessary action to communicate the views of the Government of India to the Supreme Court that it would take immediate steps for declaring the site as a National Monument without any further delay. The State Government would separately be filing a counter to express its stand in this regard.”
