

PRESS RELEASE

Text of the D.O. letter dated 4.6.2016 of **Selvi J Jayalalithaa**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu addressed to **Shri Narendra Modi**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

“I write to you once again to bring to your notice yet another incident of apprehension of 4 Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy in the early hours of 2.6.2016. It has been reported that 4 Tamil Nadu fishermen along with their mechanised fishing boat from Kottaipattinam fishing base of Pudukottai District on 1.6.2016, have been apprehended by the Sri Lankan Navy in the early hours of 2.6.2016 and taken to Kankesanthurai, Sri Lanka.

The Government of Tamil Nadu reiterates its stand that the Government of India should not treat the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) with Sri Lanka as a settled question as the constitutionality of the 1974 and 1976 agreements have been challenged on extremely valid and legal grounds in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in W.P. (Civil) No.561/2008. The Government of Tamil Nadu has also been subsequently impleaded in this case.

I have repeatedly brought to your kind attention, the Sri Lankan Government's inhumane and cruel strategy of delaying the release of the boats and fishing gear of our fishermen which is causing great loss of livelihood to our fishermen and their families. I am constrained to point out that despite my repeated requests, the seized boats and gear belonging to the fishermen of Tamil Nadu have not been released by the Sri Lankan authorities so far. I once again request that the fishing boats and gear of our fishermen should immediately be released and restored to them in a refurbished condition as long periods of disuse would have caused severe damage to them.

My Government has taken many steps towards diversification of fishing activities in Palk Bay so as to ensure better and alternative livelihood opportunities to the fishermen by providing subsidy assistance for purchasing deep sea tuna long liners etc. The comprehensive special package for deep sea fishing and infrastructure at a cost of Rs.1520 crores and a recurring grant of Rs.10 crores per annum for maintenance dredging which I had requested as part of the Memoranda presented to you on 3.6.2014 and 7.8.2015 must be urgently sanctioned.

I request you to immediately direct the concerned officials in the Ministry of External Affairs to take urgent action to secure the release of 11 fishermen and 90 fishing boats including the 4 fishermen and their mechanised fishing boat apprehended on 2.6.2016 without any delay.

May I request your immediate intervention in this matter? ”
