

Text of the D.O. Letter dated 11.9.2013 addressed by Selvi J Jayalalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to Dr.Manmohan Singh, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India is reproduced below:-

"As my numerous letters on a range of issues relating to India's relations with the present regime in Sri Lanka would have adequately revealed to you, there is a deep and widespread sentiment prevailing amongst all sections of Society and shades of political opinion in Tamil Nadu about the need to hold the Sri Lankan regime to account for the acts of genocide and war crimes committed in the closing stages of the civil war and the continued discrimination against the Tamil minorities in Sri Lanka who are treated as second class citizens in their own country. The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly had passed a historic resolution demanding that India should stop terming Sri Lanka as a "friendly nation". There have been protests and agitations against the training given to Sri Lankan military personnel in training facilities in India, especially in training establishments located in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lankan military personnel had to be even sent back. Not only has the Sri Lankan regime not responded positively to international pressure, but it has intensified its actions to deprive Tamils of even their limited political rights by proposing to dilute the Thirteenth Amendment. They have also intensified their actions against poor Indian fishermen from Tamil Nadu fishing in the Palk Bay and 97 fishermen continue to languish in Sri Lankan prisons losing their livelihood and suffering considerable mental agony.

In this context, I had been following media reports on the proposed sale of 2 naval warships by India to Sri Lanka. Given the strength of the public sentiment in Tamil Nadu, I was quite sure that the Government of India would not supply any military hardware to Sri Lanka, particularly naval warships which could be potentially deployed against Indian fishermen in the Palk Bay and the Gulf of Mannar. However, I was shocked to see media reports today in which the Union Minister of State in the Prime Minister's office confirms that the Government of India is in the process of supplying two naval warships to Sri Lanka. While the Minister of State appears to have indicated that he would communicate to the Prime Minister the strength of the emotions and feelings amongst the people and political parties in Tamil Nadu against any such move, what amazes me is that the Government of India could even contemplate such a move. Even if there is a commitment under an old agreement for such supply of naval warships, in the present circumstances, the Government of India ought to have cancelled such an agreement.

Any move to supply military hardware to Sri Lanka would be the most telling statement on the insensitivity of the Government of India to the strong sentiment in Tamil Nadu. Far from holding the Sri Lankan regime accountable for its acts of genocide and war crimes against the Tamil speaking minority in the country as any champion of democratic values should, the Government of India's action would be seen as an act of actively working with the regime and providing them with the necessary wherewithal to act even more strongly not only against the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka, but also against poor Indian fishermen. I shudder to even countenance such an insult to the people of Tamil Nadu.

In the circumstances, I strongly urge you to clarify this aspect without any delay and even if there is an existing agreement for supply of naval warships,

I request you to move immediately to cancel the agreement and ensure that no support of any kind is provided to the Sri Lankan military forces."

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