

**Speech of Thiru Edappadi K. Palaniswami,
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in the Defexpo 2018
April 11th to 14th, 2018 at Chennai Dated 12.4.2018**

Hon'ble Prime Minister Thiru Narendra Modiji,

Hon'ble Governor,

Hon'ble Union Defence Minister,

Hon'ble Deputy Speaker,

Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Finance and Shipping,

Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Defence,

Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

My Cabinet colleagues,

Hon'ble MPs, MLAs

Secretary, Defence Production Dr. Ajay Kumar!

Chief Secretary Dr. Girija Vaidyanathan!

Additional Chief Secretary, Industries Department

Thiru K. Gnanadesikan!

Chiefs and Vice Chiefs of Defence Forces,

Other Officers,

Dignitaries from various countries

Industrialists and Delegates,

Defence veterans,

Friends from Press and Media,
Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to thank Hon'ble Prime Minister and Hon'ble Defence Minister for having organised this grand Global event in Chennai, Tamilnadu.

**“உறுப்புஅமைந்து ஊறுஅஞ்சா வெல்படை வேந்தன்,
வெறுக்கையுள் எல்லாம் தலை”**

The greatest wealth for a country is its wholesome defence capability - said our legendary saint Thiruvalluvar.

Tamil Nadu is known for its military capabilities since ancient times, especially from the periods of Cholas, Cheras, Pandias to Pallavas. The kingdoms had large armies and their campaigns, took our language, culture and tradition across the Bay of Bengal and beyond.

Making arms and ammunition is not new to Tamil Nadu; Centuries ago, Tamil Nadu had produced innovative weapons and mastered metallurgy. Tamil Nadu is well poised to make defence combat systems, aero components, ship building, electronic warfare, combat clothing, etc.,

The “Vision Tamil Nadu 2023” document unveiled by our late Hon'ble Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, lays special emphasis on Aerospace & Defence Sector.

As we all know, the strong industrial environment and availability of highly skilled human resources are our fundamental strengths which keep Tamil Nadu in a leadership position in

automobile and engineering manufacturing. The next logical step for our manufacturing sector is towards Defence and Aerospace manufacturing.

There are large number of aerospace and defence related companies in Tamil Nadu, catering not only to our Defence PSUs, but also supplying their components to larger global companies.

Hon'ble Prime Minister Sir, Tamil Nadu would like to contribute 25% of India's defence needs in terms of products and services. We shall support our defence forces by providing them capabilities to effectively protect our border.

To meet this objective, the State Government has enacted a Business Facilitation Act for ensuring timely clearances and ease of doing business in the State. Government of Tamil Nadu is in the process of coming out with an exclusive Aerospace & Defence Policy with an objective of achieving 25% share of the sector in India and creating high-end employment opportunities for around 1 lakh persons in Tamil Nadu. Development of Chennai Aerospace & Defence Park in Sriperumbudur is one such initiative to start with. This Park is being set up in 250 acres in the 1st phase which is expandable to 500 acres in the next phase.

I thank the Hon'ble Prime Minister for the announcement of Defence Corridor project, in the last Union Budget. In fact, it has come handy for our efforts in enhancing the prevailing defence manufacturing ecosystem.

Government of Tamil Nadu will provide its wholehearted support to the Defence Corridor project and will provide proper Road connectivity, full power supply and other infrastructure requirements.

The new Defence Procurement Policy (DPP) announced by Government of India has created excellent business opportunities to Indian companies. This policy, combined with the manufacturing capabilities of the domestic companies, have opened up new vistas in the Aerospace & Defence manufacturing sectors in India in general and Tamil Nadu in particular. This is in tune with the 'Make in India' policy launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister.

Tamil Nadu has the largest number of Medium and Small Scale Industries in the country. They should come forward to take up large projects and programmes from Defence forces, DRDO, ISRO and other Central Defence PSUs. The State Government will readily support such moves by the MSME.

Aircraft Maintenance Repair and Overhauling (MRO) activities are equally important area in Aerospace & Defence Sector which offer huge employment and economic opportunities. Hence, we are focussing on establishing an MRO complex in Chennai, as Chennai has all capabilities to emerge as the Global MRO hub. The State welcomes reputed MRO operators to set up their operations in Tamil Nadu.

I take this opportunity to welcome all to invest in Tamil Nadu and I assure you all support and assistance on behalf of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

I request the Hon'ble Prime Minister to consider establishing a manufacturing facility by HAL for Light Combat Aircrafts and Helicopters in Salem and also consider establishing a defence MRO in Coimbatore Airbase.

Tamils are known for courage and patriotism. We shall always fulfill our responsibilities to our motherland and we shall take the lead in manufacturing the best aircrafts, ships and armaments for our soldiers.

Long live India, Long live Tamil Nadu, long live our brave sons and daughters who are at the forefront safeguarding our country!

நன்றி!
வணக்கம்!

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