

மாண்புமிகு மீன்வளம், பணியாளர் மற்றும் நிர்வாக சீர்திருத்தத்துறை அமைச்சர்  
திரு டி. ஜெயகுமார் அவர்களின் அறிக்கை – நாள் 15.2.2020

மாண்புமிகு தமிழ்நாடு முதலமைச்சர் அவர்களின் உத்தரவின் பேரில், என்னுடைய தலைமையில், திரு.A.நவநீதகிருஷ்ணன், திருமதி விஜிலா சத்யானந்த், திரு. ஏ.கே. செல்வராஜ், திரு எஸ். முத்துசுருப்பன், திரு ஏ. விஜயகுமார், திரு என். சந்திரசேகரன், திரு அ. முகமது ஜான் ஆகிய நாடாளுமன்ற உறுப்பினர்கள் மற்றும் தமிழ்நாடு அரசு வேளாண் துறை முதன்மை செயலர், சுற்றுச்சூழல் மற்றும் வனத்துறை முதன்மைச் செயலர், புதுடில்லியில் உள்ள தமிழ்நாடு இல்ல முதன்மை உறைவிட ஆணையர் ஆகியோர் அடங்கிய குழு, 10.2.2020 அன்று புதுடில்லியில், மாண்புமிகு மத்திய சுற்றுச்சூழல், வனம் மற்றும் பருவநிலை மாற்றத்துறை அமைச்சர் திரு பிரகாஷ் ஜவடேகர், மாண்புமிகு பெட்ரோலியத் துறை அமைச்சர் திரு தர்மேந்திர பிரதான் மற்றும் மாண்புமிகு பாராளுமன்ற விவகாரங்கள் துறை அமைச்சர் திரு பிரகலாத் ஜோஷி ஆகியோரை சந்தித்து, மாண்புமிகு தமிழ்நாடு முதலமைச்சர் அவர்களின் கடிதத்தைக் கொடுத்தது. அந்த கடிதத்தில் உள்ள விவரங்கள் என்ன என்பது பற்றி சிலர் கேட்டிருக்கிறார்கள். அந்த கடிதத்தின் விவரத்தை மக்கள் தெரிந்து கொள்வது நல்லது எனக்கருதி அக்கடிதத்தை பத்திரிகைகளில் வெளியிடுகிறேன்.

Text of the D.O. Letter dated 10.2.2020 of **Thiru Edappadi K. Palaniswami**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu addressed to **Shri Prakash Javadekar**, Hon'ble Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change, New Delhi.

In my DO letter dated 21.1.2020 to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, I had mentioned about the amendment dated 16.1.2020 to the previous Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 by the Central Government whereby all the projects in respect of Off-shore and On-shore Oil and Gas exploration have been categorized as "B2 Projects" and that such projects shall not require prior public consultations. I had expressed

my reservations about this Notification in view of the fact that the Government of Tamil Nadu strongly opposes the Hydrocarbon extraction projects in the Delta Region of Tamil Nadu which is an **Ecologically Fragile Agricultural Zone**.

In continuation to my views expressed earlier, I would like to state that the Government of Tamil Nadu under the leadership of Hon'ble Amma, had constituted an Expert Committee to study the impact of Coal Bed Based Methane (CBM) Projects in Delta area during 2014 itself. The Committee among other things, pointed out the following observations:

**I. Cauvery Delta Region is the Rice Bowl of Tamil Nadu. The livelihood of the people in the Region is primarily agricultural based. The proposed CBM Projects will occupy about 4,266 acres of cultivable land and pump out ground water to an order of 1,00,000 Kilo Litres on a daily basis for the entire life period of 25 years. This will lead to ground water depletion and possible sea water intrusion.**

**II. The disposal of produced water will be a threat to a receiving environment. Criss-Cross pipeline network covering an area of 667 sq km. will also pose a hazard to the environment.**

**III. Flaring off, of gases will pollute the air.**

**IV. The Expert Technical Committee does not see any significant cost benefit on account of the project considering the impact it has on an Environmentally Fragile and Fertile Region. The Cauvery Delta is an historic reservoir of fresh water source serving millions of people in the State over the millennia.**

Based on the above recommendations and on the directions of Hon'ble Amma, the Government of Tamil Nadu had issued an order dated 8.10.2015 requesting Government of India **to stop any further exploration of CBM Projects in Delta area and requested the Government of India to consult the State Government before initiating action for any such projects.**

I wish to state the following additional facts (based on various empirical reports) which will clearly reinforce the need to preserve the Ecologically Sensitive Agricultural Zone of Delta region of Tamil Nadu comprising of Thanjavur, Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam Districts and Delta Blocks of Pudukkottai, Cuddalore, Trichy, Karur and Ariyalur districts, which contributes over 32% of State's food production in an area of 28 lakh acres.

- a. Already, based on the Expert Technical Committee Report, the Government of Tamil Nadu had observed that the Exploration of Coal-bed Methane would cause the risk of **Sea-Water intrusion** in the Delta Region, which is an agrarian belt of the State.
- b. The Cauvery Delta Region which is the Granary of Tamil Nadu, produces over 33.26 Lakh Metric Tonnes of food grains from an area of 28 Lakh Acres, besides being the major region for producing high value Coconut, Banana and other horticultural crops. This area is already highly vulnerable to frequent cyclones, floods and occasional droughts. The Gaja Cyclone of 2018 had destroyed over 65 Lakh Coconut trees, several thousand acres of standing agricultural crops, besides adversely affecting the livelihood of lakhs of dependant farming families. The exploration of Hydrocarbons would detrimentally affect the livelihood and food security of the State.
- c. Major agricultural operations in the Delta region are dependent on Bore Well Irrigation. However, as also already reiterated by the Government of Tamil Nadu in its G.O.(D).No.186, Industries (MMA1) Department, dated 8.10.2015, it is apprehended that the exploration of Hydrocarbons will adversely affect the sub-surface water, including causing possible damage to bore well shafts. Further, the criss-crossing of Gas and waste water pipelines will detrimentally affect the natural surface and sub-surface features now existing in the Delta Region.
- d. Already the ONGC Limited is carrying out the oil and gas exploration and extraction activity in this region since 1985. This is being monitored by the State and Central agencies. Any new or further exploration and exploitation will be detrimental to the ecological balance in the Delta area, as it is a very fragile sensitive wetland and agricultural zone which faces the danger of sea water intension and climatic change.
- e. The negative aspect of these Hydrocarbon projects outweighs the advantages claimed by the proponents. Pipeline failures, accidents, spills and explosions can lead to property and ecological damage, loss of life and adversely impact health and habitat in a densely populated agrarian belt.
- f. The delta region of Tamil Nadu is also rich in Mangrove vegetation and India's second largest Mangrove Vegetation of Muthupet lies in the ecologically, sensitive and fragile delta region.

- g. The Delta region of Tamil Nadu is known for its rich archaeological and cultural heritage since centuries. The famous archaeological monuments like Brahadeshwarar Temple of Thanjavur, the Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple, the Navagraha temples, the Velankanni Church and the Nagore Dargah lie in this region and it is apprehended that hydrocarbon exploration and the consequent mining of hydrocarbons will destroy the cultural heritage of our country.

It is hence requested that the Government of India should drop any future plans for the exploration as well as mining of Hydrocarbons in the Ecologically Sensitive Agricultural Zone of Cauvery Delta Region. Therefore, it is our strong view that the Ecologically Sensitive Cauvery Delta Region should be excluded from any exploration, development and production of hydrocarbons in future and the Government of India is requested to **add a proviso to the amendment Notification brought out on 16.1.2020, excluding the Ecologically Sensitive Agricultural Cauvery Delta region of Tamil Nadu from the purview of the above Notification.**

I would also bring to your kind notice that I have already announced that the State Government will take necessary legal action to declare the cauvery delta region as an Ecologically Sensitive Agricultural Zone and request the Government of India to support this endeavour of the State Government fully.

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வெளியீடு: இயக்குநர், செய்தி மக்கள் தொடர்புத்துறை, சென்னை-9