

PRESS RELEASE

**Press Release of the meeting of the
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu with the
British High Commissioner to India
on 15th December 2016**

Sir Dominic Asquith, British High Commissioner to India met the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Thiru O Panneerselvam today (15.12.2016) at the Secretariat, Chennai.

On behalf of Government of Tamil Nadu the Hon'ble Chief Minister welcomed the visiting dignitary. The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that the meeting was taking place in sad circumstances soon after the passing away of the revered leader, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the late Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu who was one of the most influential political leaders of independent India. The Hon'ble Chief Minister mentioned that the nation and the State of Tamil Nadu will sorely miss her guidance and leadership.

The British High Commissioner expressed his sincere condolences on the demise of the late Hon'ble Chief Minister and mentioned that she was a towering political personality and that India has lost a very dynamic leader.

Hon'ble Chief Minister asserted that the Government of Tamil Nadu is committed to following in the very illustrious footsteps of the late Hon'ble Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and to ensure that her policy goals and objectives are realised and fulfilled.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister mentioned that India and United Kingdom share many elements of a common heritage including political, economic, security, linguistic, cultural and

sporting ties. The two nations share values and are vibrant, secular and multicultural democracies with a free press and an independent judicial system.

Today, India and the United Kingdom have a strong and productive bilateral partnership. The economic relationship has grown since India's economic reforms in the nineties. Britain and Tamil Nadu have had strong economic and sporting relations for many years. In India, Tamil Nadu is the UK's natural partner. Britain would find Tamil Nadu a worthy partner. Within India, Tamil Nadu is one of the best performing states. At present, Tamil Nadu is the Second largest State economy in India. To reach the top position, the visionary Leader Puratchi Thalaivi AMMA had unveiled "Vision Tamil Nadu 2023".

The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that Tamil Nadu has been very supportive of innovation when partnering with multi-lateral and bi-lateral development partners. A few specific areas in which Britain and Tamil Nadu could collaborate further include higher education including English teaching, innovative financing mechanisms, particularly for infrastructure, and skill development amongst others. These areas should be further explored in the days to come.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that Tamil Nadu has been most welcoming to investors. Tamil Nadu has attracted over US Dollars 16 billion of foreign investment since 2001. Under the dynamic Leadership of the revered Leader Puratchi Thalaivi AMMA, Tamil Nadu has emerged as one of the largest manufacturing hubs in India. Tamil Nadu is a leader in the

production of automobiles and auto components, electronic hardware, engineering, textiles, and leather. Tamil Nadu is one of the Top 10 automobile hubs globally with a production capacity of 1.4 million passenger cars per year.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that Tamil Nadu offers a number of competitive advantages for investors and its biggest asset is the rich human resource endowment. Abundance of skilled human resource and harmonious and peaceful industrial relations make Tamil Nadu a preferred investment destination. While there are many British companies already located in Tamil Nadu, the State would welcome many more.

The British High Commissioner appreciated the commendable job done by the Government of Tamil Nadu and its agencies to restore normalcy in the city so soon after the devastating cyclonic storm.

The British High Commissioner mentioned that Chennai is already home to many British companies and many more of them were evincing keen interest to invest in Tamil Nadu. He wanted to understand the measures the Government of Tamil Nadu is taking to further attract investments in the State and the support that such investors could expect from the State Government.

The Chief Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu highlighted the measures being taken to further strengthen the "single window mechanism" of the Guidance Bureau, which is a very effective instrument in facilitating foreign and domestic companies. It was also highlighted that several surveys of the actual functioning of the investment environment by reputed

independent agencies, clearly rate Tamil Nadu as one of the most favoured destinations for investment.

It was highlighted that Tamil Nadu is a pioneer in financial innovation and the United Kingdom as a leader in the financial industry would support the innovative financial mechanisms promoted by the Government of Tamil Nadu including investment in the Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Fund Management Corporation and Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Fund. The High Commissioner stated that he would definitely take this proposal up with the concerned agencies in the UK Government and take the initiative forward.

The meeting was attended by the British Deputy High Commissioner in Chennai, Mr Bharat Joshi and other senior officials of the British High Commission. The Chief Secretary, Thiru P. Rama Mohana Rao, Adviser to Government, Tmt Sheela Balakrishnan, Additional Chief Secretary (Finance), Thiru K.Shanmugham, Officer on Special Duty, Tmt Shanta Sheela Nair, Principal Secretary, Planning and Development Department, Thiru S.Krishnan and other senior officials attended the meeting.

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