

**PRESS RELEASE**

Text of the D.O.Letter dated 16.7.2016 of Selvi J Jayalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu addressed to Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India :-

"The unabated spree of apprehensions of Tamil Nadu fishermen constrains me to write once again to bring to your notice an incident in which 4 Tamil Nadu fishermen, along with their motorised fishing boat, who set out for fishing from Pamban fishing base of Ramanathapuram District, have been apprehended by the Sri Lankan Navy in the early hour of 15.7.2016 and taken to Thalaimannar, Sri Lanka.

The Sri Lankan Government continues to infringe upon the historically enjoyed rights of our fishermen to fish in the traditional waters of the Palk Bay. The Sri Lankan Navy has escalated the frequency and magnitude of incidents of abduction of our fishermen and seizure of boats and fishing equipment undeterred in recent days.

I once again reiterate that the position of the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) itself is a matter which is sub-judice in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. I have challenged the constitutional validity of the ceding of Katchatheevu through the Indo Sri Lankan agreements of 1974 and 1976 in my personal capacity, and subsequently the Government of Tamil Nadu impleaded itself in this case.

The Sri Lankan strategy of not releasing the boats of our fishermen is causing great frustration amongst the fishermen of Tamil Nadu. Without their livelihood base, these fishermen are in a state of despondency. I urge you to take up this matter with the highest authorities of the Sri Lankan Government through our High Commission in Sri Lanka and ensure the immediate release of the precariously berthed boats which continue to suffer great damage.

I request your urgent directions to the Ministry of External Affairs to initiate earnest efforts to take up this matter with the concerned authorities in Sri Lanka and bring an immediate halt to the apprehensions at high seas and secure the immediate release of our 77 fishermen and their 102 fishing boats, including the 4 fishermen and their one motorised fishing boat apprehended on 15.7.2016, without any delay.

May I request you to kindly issue directions to the Ministry of External Affairs immediately?"

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**Issued by: Director, Information and Public Relations, Chennai – 9.**  
**Date : 17.7.2016**