

P.R. No. 602

Date: 19.12.2016

PRESS RELEASE

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru O.Panneerselvam, met the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi at 5 PM today (19.12.2016) at the Prime Minister's Residence, Race Course Road, New Delhi. The Hon'ble Chief Minister thanked the Hon'ble Prime Minister for meeting him at short notice. The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that the meeting was taking place in sad circumstances soon after the demise of the late Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Puratchi Thalaivi Amma Selvi J Jayalaitaa. The Hon'ble Chief Minister thanked the Hon'ble Prime Minister for his presence at Chennai on 6th December to pay last respects to the late Hon'ble Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivi Amma who was one of the most influential leaders of our time and stated that this gesture of the Hon'ble Prime Minister in Tamil Nadu's hour of grief was a great consolation.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that while Tamil Nadu will sorely miss Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's leadership and guidance, the State Government is committed to ensure that the policy goals and objectives laid down by late Hon'ble Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivi Amma are fulfilled.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu then briefed the Hon'ble Prime Minister on the damages suffered when "Cyclone Vardah" struck Chennai and the Northern Districts of the State on 12.12.2016. The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that this was a very destructive cyclonic storm in which wind speeds reached up to 140 kilometres per hour and extensive damage has been caused in the Northern Districts of Tamil Nadu. The State Government had taken all necessary precautions which minimized loss of life and rescue and restoration work was taken up on a war footing.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister presented a detailed Memorandum on the damages suffered by the State and indicated that the total fund requirement of the State for relief and restoration works has been assessed at Rs.22,573 crores. The Hon'ble Chief Minister reiterated the request for an on account release of Rs.1000 crores from the National Disaster Response Fund immediately.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister thanked the Hon'ble Prime Minister for constituting a Central team to make an on the spot assessment of the damages and requested that Central assistance to Tamil Nadu under the National Disaster Response Fund and under other Central schemes may be sanctioned at the earliest to enable the State to undertake the ongoing restoration and rehabilitation works.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister recalled that the revered leader, the late Hon'ble Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivi Amma always championed the interests of Tamil Nadu and had presented Memoranda to the Hon'ble Prime Minister on crucial issues relating to the State which required urgent intervention at the level of the Hon'ble Prime Minister. The Hon'ble Chief Minister then presented a separate Memorandum containing 29 crucial issues relating to Tamil Nadu which require urgent attention of the Government of India and are important to safeguard the legitimate interests of the State and to propel the State on to a faster growth trajectory.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister indicated that the most pressing issue is the immediate constitution of the Cauvery Management Board in accordance with the Final Order of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal. The Hon'ble Chief Minister urged the Hon'ble Prime Minister to ensure that the Cauvery Management Board and Cauvery Water Regulation Committee are constituted immediately in accordance with the Final Order of the Tribunal.

The Memorandum also highlighted the concerns about the Mekedatu Scheme of Karnataka, the restoration of water level to FRL of 152 ft in the Mullai Periyar Dam, inter-linking of rivers, funding for the Athikadavu – Avinashi Scheme and Tamil Nadu's apprehensions about the proposed Dam Safety Bill, 2016 and the National Water Framework Bill, 2016.

Protection of the traditional fishing rights of Indian fishermen in the Palk Bay and ensuring their safety and security, retrieval of Katchatheevu Island, and early sanction of the Comprehensive Special Package for Diversification of Fisheries were also raised. The Memorandum also requested the rescinding of the Deep Sea Fishing Guidelines, 2014 and inclusion of fishermen in the List of Scheduled Tribes.

The expeditious approval of the revised bidding documents for the Cheyyur Ultra Mega Power Project, creation of a Dedicated Inter-state Green Energy Corridor to evacuate surplus wind power from Tamil Nadu and abolishing frequency linked penalty for

renewable energy rich States were the Power Sector related issues raised in the Memorandum.

Sanction of a recurring annual special grant of Rs.2000 crores to compensate Tamil Nadu for the adverse treatment by the Fourteenth Finance Commission, special allocation of funds for strengthening judicial infrastructure, sharing of the proceeds with the States of the recently introduced Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Cess and Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Deposit Scheme, early release of shortfalls in disbursement of share in Central Taxes as pointed out by the C & AG, pending 13th Finance Commission grants, and shortfalls in release of assistance from the National Disaster Response Fund for the floods of 2015 was sought. Tamil Nadu's concerns with the Goods and Services Tax proposals and the early release of Central Sales Tax compensation were highlighted.

Substantially enhanced allocation for the scheme for Modernisation of Police Force was sought.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister emphasized that Tamil Nadu has a fair and transparent admission policy for medical colleges. The imposition of National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) would cause grave injustice to students from rural areas and hence Tamil Nadu should be exempted from NEET. Similarly, opposition to the proposed National Pre Veterinary Eligibility Test for admission to Veterinary Colleges was also expressed.

Speedy establishment of AIIMS in Tamil Nadu, Tamil Nadu's concerns regarding the proposed National Medical Commission Bill, 2016, and the proposed amendments to the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 were highlighted.

Hon'ble Chief Minister highlighted the widespread resentment caused by the ban on Jallikattu and requested the Hon'ble Prime Minister to direct the Ministry of Environment and Forests to take necessary legislative steps to enable the conduct of Jallikattu in the ensuing Pongal festival.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister sought the Hon'ble Prime Minister's assistance for reviving the Electronic Manufacturing Hub at Sriperumbudur by resolving the issues relating to the Nokia plant. The realignment of the proposed Kochi-Bengaluru GAIL Pipeline, objections to the proposed privatization of Salem Steel Plant and shifting of the CIPET head office from Chennai to Delhi were raised. A special relief package for the MSME Sector and modification of

National Disaster Response Fund Guidelines to cover MSME units was also raised.

Higher Central subsidy for promoting Solar Power in Agriculture, sanction of a scheme for Replanting and Rejuvenation of Coconut Gardens in Tamil Nadu, issues regarding the Prime Minister's Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), expanding the National Horticulture Mission and Micro Irrigation Scheme in Tamil Nadu and the establishment of APEDA's Regional Office in Tamil Nadu, restoration of the original allocation under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, continuance of the Command Area Programme under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana and discouraging cultivation of Genetically Modified Mustard were also included in the Memorandum. Increased allocation for Tamil Nadu under the National Livestock Mission was sought.

Tamil Nadu is implementing the National Food Security Act with Universal coverage. As a result, an additional quantity of 85,000 metric tonnes of rice per month is required. The Memorandum sought supply of this additional quantity at a concessional rate of Rs.8.30 per kg. to relieve Tamil Nadu from an additional burden of about Rs.1453 crores per annum. Adequate Kerosene Allotment was sought for Tamil Nadu, and it was requested that Direct Benefit Transfer for Public Distribution System should not be implemented.

The Memorandum highlighted pending project and policy issues relating to the Chennai Metro Rail Project including support for securing JICA assistance for Chennai Metro Rail Project Phase-II, amendments to Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Government of India and Government of Tamil Nadu and changes in the terms on which Railway lands have been taken on lease by Chennai Metro Rail Limited. Tamil Nadu's concerns with the draft Joint Venture Agreement for the Special Purpose Vehicle for execution of Railway projects were also raised.

In the Rural Development sector, increased allocation of houses for those affected by Cyclone Vardah under the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) and early release of pending amounts under the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Programme were sought. In the Municipal Administration and Water Supply sector, inclusion of four more Municipalities under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), one time financial assistance to complete Drinking Water Projects taken up under the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP)

and Tamil Nadu's suggestions on the proposed revised guidelines under the NRDWP were highlighted.

In the Urban Development sector, inclusion of the Chennai Peripheral Ring Road Project, including the Intelligent Transport System and the Chennai Urban Infrastructure Project in JICA's rolling plan was sought.

In the Textile Sector, additional grants for completion of Common Effluent Treatment Plants in Tirupur, sanction of funds under the Integrated Processing Development Scheme (IPDS), and early release of Government of India's share under the Marketing Incentive Component of the National Handloom Development Programme were requested for.

Tamil Nadu's concerns with the proposed New Education Policy were detailed in the Memorandum. In the School Education sector, early release of balance grants due to Tamil Nadu as recommended by the 13th Finance Commission, under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan(SSA) and for implementation of the Right to Education (RTE) Act was sought. Release of balance funds due under the Post Matric Scholarships for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was emphasized.

Early approval of the Project for implementation of State led model of Bharat Net in Tamil Nadu and the grant of Digital Addressable System (DAS) License to TN Arasu Cable TV Corporation Ltd were requested.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister reiterated the request for investment from the National Infrastructure Investment Fund (NIIF) in the Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Fund.

In addition, the Sri Lankan Tamils issue and grant of dual citizenship for Sri Lankan Tamil refugees living in Tamil Nadu was raised. Restoring the Scheduled Caste status of Scheduled Caste converts to other religions was also sought. Adoption of Tamil as an Official Language of the Union and use of Tamil in the High Court of Madras were also requested.

Hon'ble Chief Minister requested the Hon'ble Prime Minister to kindly have the issues raised by Tamil Nadu in the Memorandum examined by the concerned Ministries and speedily resolved.

The text of the Memorandum presented by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to Hon'ble Prime Minister of India is enclosed.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister recalled that the late Hon'ble Chief Minister, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma who represented the hopes and aspirations of millions of people of Tamil Nadu had an appeal that extended beyond Tamil Nadu, with admirers and followers across the country. The Hon'ble Chief Minister emphasized that such an inspirational figure who touched the lives of millions through her great public service and innovative and unparalleled initiatives, richly deserves the nation's highest civilian honour and it would be a fitting tribute to the great leader for the Government of India to confer the Bharat Ratna on the late Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalalithaa and install a full length bronze statue of the departed leader in the Parliament House.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister assured the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu of early action on the issues raised in the two Memoranda presented by the Hon'ble Chief Minister and the request made for conferring the Bharat Ratna on the late Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalalithaa.

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