

PRESS RELEASE

Text of the D.O. Letter dated 20.3.2013 addressed to Dr. Manmohan Singh, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India by Selvi J Jayalalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu is reproduced below:

"I wish to bring to your kind attention two outrageous incidents of attacks on Tamil Nadu fishermen in 3 Fishing Boats on 19.3.2013 and in the early hours of 20.3.2013 in the Palk Bay area of Tamil Nadu. In the first incident, 8 fishermen of Pudukkottai District, who had ventured into the sea in Vallam boats on 19.3.2013, were beaten up by Sri Lankan Navy personnel with iron pipes in mid sea. In the second incident which occurred early in the morning on 20.3.2013, one Fibre Reinforced Plastic Boat No.TN/04/5963 of Nambiar Nagar of Nagapattinam District, which ventured into sea with 6 Crew members was attacked by the Sri Lankan Navy with swords, in which 4 fishermen suffered serious cut injuries on their hands and arms. The above mentioned fishermen have been hospitalized.

The continuing murderous attacks on Tamil Nadu fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy have to be condemned in the strongest terms. Despite repeated protests by the Tamil Nadu Government, it is disappointing that no strong deterrent diplomatic initiatives have been taken by the Government of India. This has resulted in even more outrageous, unprovoked and lethal attacks by the Sri Lankan Navy on Tamil Fishermen. The latest incident involves their use of swords and iron rods to attack our fishermen, an act that is medieval in its barbarism. India cannot maintain a pusillanimous equanimity in the face of such repeated brazen and uncivilized assaults on innocent fishermen belonging to Tamil Nadu, who are also citizens of India.

I am pained to point out that in the space of the last one month itself, this is the fourth serious incident of attack or unwarranted apprehension by the Sri Lankan Navy which is really worrisome. Already 19 fishermen of Rameswaram are still languishing in Sri Lankan judicial custody since the past one week, despite this issue being brought to your notice on 14.3.2013 by me. I once again request you to take pro-active steps to stop these unabated brutal attacks as well as arrests of our innocent Tamil Nadu fishermen."

Issued by: Director, Information – Public Relations, Chennai.9

Dated : 20.3.2013