

**PRESS RELEASE**

Text of the D.O. letter dated 20.7.2016 of **Selvi J Jayalalithaa**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu addressed to **Shri Narendra Modi**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

"I write to bring to your urgent personal attention an unfortunate controversy that has arisen regarding the installation of the statue of Thiruvalluvar, the revered sage poet of Tamil Nadu at Haridwar, Uttarakhand. As you may be aware, Thiru Tarun Vijay, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) had proposed the installation of the statue of Thiruvalluvar at Haridwar, and he had offered to raise the funds for the purpose.

The Thiruvalluvar Ganga Payanam was flagged off on 18.6.2016, at Kanniyakumari by Thiru Pon. Radhakrishnan, Union Minister of State for Road Transport, Highways and Shipping, in the presence of Thiru Tarun Vijay and several other leaders cutting across party lines. The Thiruvalluvar Ganga Payanam reached Chennai and was flagged off at Chennai on 22.6.2016, by the Governor of Tamil Nadu, in the presence of the Union Minister of State for Road Transport, Highways and Shipping and two Ministers of my cabinet who were specifically deputed by me, apart from MPs and other dignitaries representing several Political Parties. The object of the Thiruvalluvar Ganga Payanam is to show solidarity of the North with the Tamil saint poet Thiruvalluvar's message of equality and ending social discrimination in society.

It is learnt that as local protests had prevented the installation of the statue at Har ki Pauri, the statue was installed at Shankaracharya Chowk, Haridwar, on 28.6.2016 and was to be unveiled on 29.6.2016 by the Governor and Chief Minister of Uttarakhand. However, continued protests by local elements prevented the unveiling and the statue was temporarily installed in the Dam Kothi Guest House, Haridwar, in the presence of the Governor of Uttar Pradesh and the Governor of Meghalaya and other dignitaries. It is learnt that the Thiruvalluvar statue is now lying in the Dam Kothi Guest House, Haridwar, in an abandoned condition. The visuals of the statue in this condition beamed on television screens is causing outrage in Tamil Nadu.

I request you to kindly take up this matter with the Government of Uttarakhand urgently and to ensure that the statue of Thiruvalluvar is treated with due respect and is installed at an appropriate location at the earliest. Failure to do so would lead to the whole objective of the project to install the statue of Thiruvalluvar in a pilgrim centre in Northern India being completely defeated. I request you to kindly accord this issue the highest priority and prevail upon the Government of Uttarakhand to resolve the matter at the earliest.”

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