

**PRESS RELEASE**

Text of the D.O. letter dated 24.12.2015 of **Selvi J Jayalalithaa**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu addressed to **Shri Narendra Modi**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

"The Tamil Nadu Police Force is one of the most professionally competent Police Forces in the country and has consistently delivered a stellar performance by ensuring the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the State. To sustain this exemplary record, my Government has consistently ensured that resources for the emerging needs of modernization of equipment and updating of technology are provided to the Police Department.

The Tamil Nadu Police have different networks of communication which use different frequencies of the spectrum. There is a dedicated Very High Frequency (VHF) communication network within each District; an Ultra High Frequency (UHF) communication network for the Security Branch; Terrestrial Trunking Radio (TETRA) digital communication networks in selected cities; a Microwave network for voice communication between District Headquarters and State Headquarters and a High Frequency (HF) communication network for use during the monsoon period and as an emergency backup during natural calamities.

The frequencies used for these communication networks are allotted by the Wireless Planning and Co-ordination Wing (WPC) of the Department of Telecommunications under the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Government of India. Till 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2004, the State Police Departments were paying a nominal License Fee of Rs.100 per set. From 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2004, Spectrum Charges which include License fees for each communication set and royalty charges for the use of frequency by wireless sets are being levied even on the Police Departments.

The Government of Tamil Nadu has raised the issue of enhanced Spectrum Charges being levied on the Police Department with the Government of India ever since 2005. Despite the request of waivers and even before the issue of outstanding dues of State Police Departments, including Rs.73.10 crores which was outstanding as Spectrum Charges and late fees from Tamil Nadu could be resolved, the Spectrum Charges were revised again and increased almost threefold with effect from 1.4.2012. The annual Spectrum Charges payable by Tamil Nadu now amount to Rs.13 crores. The Wireless Planning and Co-ordination Wing of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology continues to charge 2% per month as late fees for delayed remittance of Spectrum Charges. The Directorate of Co-ordination, Police Wireless,

Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, has further indicated that the request for any fresh assignments or issue of operating licenses including import licenses for wireless and communication equipment will not be considered till the full payment of Spectrum Charges is made.

The Wireless Planning and Co-ordination Wing, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology has intimated on 14.8.2014 that the Spectrum Charges payable for frequencies allotted to the Tamil Nadu Police amounts to Rs.140.83 crores, inclusive of late fee. The Principal Secretary, Home, Government of Tamil Nadu, has yet again taken up the issue of waiver of Spectrum Charges with the Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, in a letter dated 4.9.2014.

In a situation where financial constraints stand in the way of the efforts of State Governments to further modernize and upgrade the Police Force and Central assistance through the scheme for modernization of the Police Force has been substantially reduced, any financial burden on the use of modern technology in policing is difficult for State Governments to meet.

Policing is an essential sovereign function of the State and charging such exorbitant amounts for the use of Radio Frequency for what is clearly a sovereign and public purpose is completely unjustified and unwarranted. The Police Radio Network is also used extensively in cases of natural calamities and for the maintenance of public order. Such heavy Spectrum Charges will prevent the Department from investing in essential infrastructure upgradation and modernization.

Hence I request that the Government of India must revisit the issue of levying Spectrum Charges on the Police Radio Network which is an ill advised move of the previous UPA Government, and exempt State Police Departments from payment of Spectrum Charges. I also request you to instruct the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology to urgently review the issue and waive Rs.140.83 crores levied as Spectrum Charges and late fees on the Government of Tamil Nadu."

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