

**PRESS RELEASE**

Text of the D.O.letter dated 26.2.2019 of Thiru **Edappadi K.Palaniswami**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu addressed to **Shri Narendra Modi**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

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This is to bring to your kind notice, yet another incident, wherein 7 fishermen in a motorised country craft who set sail for fishing from Nagappattinam fishing base of Nagappattinam District have been apprehended by the Sri Lankan Navy in the early hours of 9.2.2019 and taken to Trinconamalle, Sri Lanka. I also wish to bring to your notice that in the past 2 months, 42 fishermen belonging to Ramanathapuram, Thanjavur, Pudukkottai and Nagappattinam districts were apprehended in 9 different incidents by the Sri Lankan Navy.

It is very unfortunate that this trend of apprehension and prolonged incarceration of our fishermen in the Sri Lankan Jails is subjecting them and their families back home to untold misery and push the families into abject poverty.

The Government of Tamil Nadu strongly reiterates the need to restore the traditional fishing rights of our fishermen in the Palk Bay by annulling the Indo-Sri Lankan agreements of 1974 and 1976, as the constitutional validity of these agreements have been challenged on extremely valid and legal grounds in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in W.P. (Civil) No.561/2008.

I urge the Government of India to prevail upon the Government of Sri Lanka to release the 26 boats of our fishermen which have been seized and kept in the custody of Sri Lankan authorities for long periods leading to its ruin.

I request the Central Government to act decisively to find a solution and permanently resolve this long standing issue. I request you to immediately direct the officials concerned in the Ministry of External Affairs to take concrete action through diplomatic channels to secure the immediate release of 46 fishermen and 26 fishing boats.

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**Issued by:- Director, Information and Public Relations, Chennai-9.**