

PRESS RELEASE

Text of the D.O. Letter dated 31.10.2014 addressed by Thiru O. Panneerselvam, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to Thiru Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India is reproduced below.

"I write to bring to your attention the pathetic plight of 22 fishermen who had gone to Saudi Arabia to work for a fishing company through an agent last year. The company is based in Jubail, Saudi Arabia. Of these fishermen, 12 are from Nagapattinam District, one from Cuddalore District and 3 from Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu. The remaining 6 are from Karaikkal District of Puducherry.

It appears that these fishermen are being forced to endure harsh working conditions and they are being physically abused and tortured. Despite their plea to be repatriated to India, as they are unable to bear the hardship, their employer is refusing to pay heed. These fishermen have not even been paid their wages as per the contractual terms. The family members of these poor fishermen have requested the Government of Tamil Nadu to intervene and ensure their safe return to India.

I request you to kindly intervene in the matter and direct the Embassy of India in Saudi Arabia to take immediate steps to contact the 22 fishermen and ascertain their well being. The Embassy of India may also be directed to contact the authorities in Saudi Arabia to ensure that the dues to these poor fishermen are settled immediately by the company in which they were employed. The Embassy of India may also be directed to provide all assistance to enable these fishermen to return home safely."

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