

Tamil Arasu

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER-DECEMBER - 2005





Tamil Arasu

*Magazine of the Government of Tamil Nadu
Thiruvalluvar Year - 2036*

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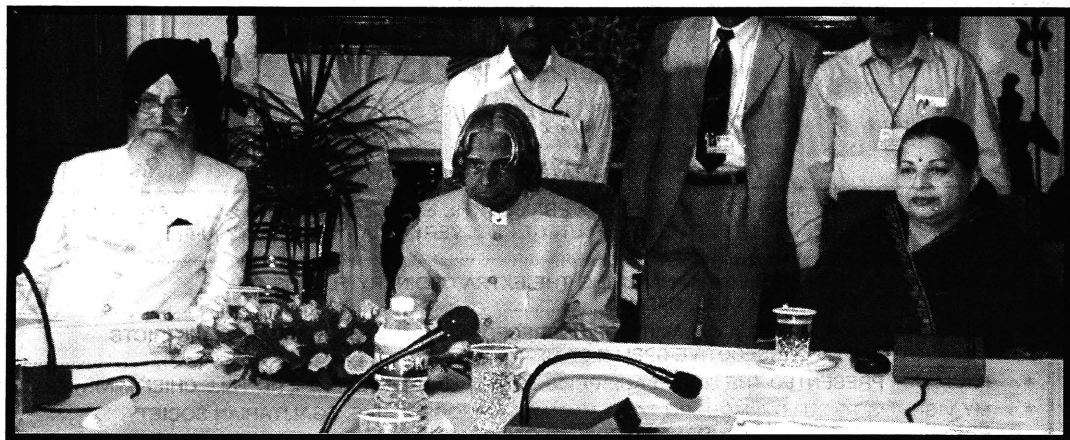
Rs.15/-

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**HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA
PRAISED THE EFFORT TAKEN AND
CONGRATULATED THE HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER
FOR THE FASTEST RECOVERY BY ANY SUCH CITY
AFFECTED BY SEVERE FLOODS**

On the instructions of Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa, a detailed presentation was made to His Excellency the President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam on 2.12.2005 at the Raj Bhavan, Chennai, on the flood situation in Tamil Nadu and the rescue, relief and rehabilitation operations undertaken by the Government of Tamil Nadu under the leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister. His Excellency the Governor of Tamil Nadu Thiru Surjit Singh Barnala was also present.

His Excellency the President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam spoke to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 29.11.2005 from New Delhi and enquired about the flood situation in Tamil Nadu. His Excellency the President of India had informed the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu that he would be

making a tour of Tamil Nadu and undertaking an aerial survey of the worst affected areas including Cuddalore District on 1.12.2005. The Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalalithaa had indicated to His Excellency the President of India that she would make a detailed presentation to the President on the flood situation in Tamil Nadu, the extent of damage to property and crops, and the prompt rescue and relief operations undertaken by the State Government on a war-footing. The Hon'ble Chief Minister had also indicated that the State Government had commenced immediately the restoration works. The Hon'ble Chief Minister had emphasized that the Government of Tamil Nadu would require all assistance and support from the Government of India for the relief and the massive restoration works to be undertaken. His Excellency the President of India had assured the Hon'ble Chief Minister



that all support would be extended to assist the Government of Tamil Nadu in this hour of extreme distress caused by repeated floods.

His Excellency the President of India undertook an aerial survey of Tiruchirappalli, Thanjavur, Nagapattinam and Cuddalore Districts on 1.12.2005. On the directions of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa, the Hon'ble Minister for Public Works, Prohibition & Excise and Revenue, the Hon'ble Minister for Labour and the Special Commissioner and Commissioner of Revenue Administration / State Relief Commissioner accompanied His Excellency the President during the aerial survey and briefed the President about the rescue and relief operations undertaken by the State Government.

On 2.12.2005, the Hon'ble Chief Minister made a detailed presentation of the floods in Tamil Nadu which struck the State thrice within a month and the relief, rescue and restoration operations undertaken by the State

Government. The Hon'ble Chief Minister emphasized that the recent floods in Tamil Nadu constituted an unprecedented calamity of rare severity. The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out to His Excellency the President of India the devastation caused by the floods in October, 2005, in Chennai and other Districts including the widespread damage wrought by the floods in the Cauvery System. His Excellency the President of India appreciated the splendid effort in saving Srirangam Town. His Excellency the President of India also appreciated the fact that the advance action taken to keep Chennai City's waterways and storm water drains desilted had enabled most parts of Chennai to be drained effectively. His Excellency the President of India praised the effort taken and congratulated the Hon'ble Chief Minister for the fastest recovery by any such City affected by severe floods.

His Excellency the President of India appreciated the point that the first spell of rain causing floods was immediately followed by a

second spell in early November, 2005. He congratulated the spirit and organizational skill with which the administration under the leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister faced this second challenge and implemented rescue, relief and restoration operations.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister brought to the notice of His Excellency the President of India the extraordinary situation of the floods following the third spell of heavy rains in the fourth week of November, 2005. In this context, the Hon'ble Chief Minister referred to the repeated floods in the Cauvery System, due to the heavy inflow into the Mettur Dam when the Dam was already full and subsequently due to intensive spells of rain. The Hon'ble Chief Minister highlighted the fact that the threat to Srirangam Town caused by the Cauvery floods in the last week of November, 2005, was again successfully handled by the administration. His Excellency the President of India congratulated the Hon'ble Chief Minister for this excellent management and praised the effort taken to save Srirangam Town.

His Excellency the President of India indicated that during the aerial survey he had seen the devastation to crops and infrastructure in the Cuddalore and Nagapattinam areas. He was able to see for himself the extent of the problem faced in handling the massive floods.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister emphasized that the assistance required totalling Rs.13,685 crores together with 2.58 lakh tonnes of rice and 43,200 kilo litres of kerosene as an additional allotment for the month of December, 2005, should be provided by the Government of India. His Excellency the President of India promised that full support would be extended to the Government of Tamil Nadu.

His Excellency the President of India was very appreciative of the fact that the Hon'ble Chief Minister had taken up the issue of inter-basin transfer of water within Tamil Nadu and appreciated the preparatory work done for establishing the Cauvery - Vaigai link. He commended this proposal as a forerunner to linking other rivers in the State. He also commended the initiative of the Hon'ble Chief Minister for taking up and completing the project to increase the bund height of Veeranam Lake. This had been most useful in the recent floods and had indeed saved the Veeranam Lake. His Excellency the President of India also suggested that similar technical solutions may be explored for flood control.

The meeting was attended by Senior Ministers and Officials including Thiru O. Panneerselvam, Hon'ble Minister for Public Works, Prohibition & Excise and Revenue, Thiru C. Ponnaiyan, Hon'ble Minister for Finance, Thiru K. Pandurangan, Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture, Thiru P. Annavi, Minister for Labour, Thiru K.P. Anbalagan, Hon'ble Minister for Information and Publicity and Local Administration, Thiru N. Narayanan, Chief Secretary, Thiru A. X. Alexander, Director General of Police, Thiru R. Santhanam, Special Commissioner and Commissioner of Revenue Administration/ State Relief Commissioner, Principal Secretary, Co-operation, Food and Consumer Protection, Secretary, Rural Development, Additional Director General of Police (Intelligence), Secretary, Revenue, Secretary, Municipal Administration and Water Supply, Secretary, Finance, Secretary, Agriculture, Secretary, Public Works, Secretary, Highways, Secretary, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries and Thiru A. Mohanakrishnan, Chairman, Cauvery Technical Cell.

The meeting lasted for more than an hour.

★ ★ ★

THE EXCELLENT WORK DONE IN HANDLING THE EXTRAORDINARY FLOODS ON MULTIPLE OCCASIONS IN TAMIL NADU



The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Selvi J Jayalalithaa met the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh on 16.12.2005 at New Delhi. The Hon'ble Chief Minister sought the immediate intervention of the Hon'ble Prime Minister to release the assistance required by the Government of Tamil Nadu from the Government of India for relief and restoration works on account of the unprecedented floods which had affected the State in five spells during the last two months. The Government of Tamil Nadu, under the leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister had sought an assistance totalling Rs. 13,685 crores together with 2.58 lakh tonnes of rice and 43,200 kilo litres of kerosene as an

- Hon'ble Prime Minister complimented
the Hon'ble Chief Minister

SELVI J JAYALALITHAA

additional allotment for the month of December, 2005, to undertake the immediate relief and restoration works on account of the devastation caused by the recent floods.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa thanked the Hon'ble Prime Minister for having sent a Central Team twice to assess the flood damages in Tamil Nadu in response to the Hon'ble Chief Minister's request.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out to the Hon'ble Prime Minister that Tamil Nadu has been battered by repeated torrential rains resulting in extensive flooding during the current North-East Monsoon. The State should normally receive 979 mm rainfall every year, of which 48%, that is, about 470mm is received during the North-East Monsoon season. But this year the rainfall between 1.10.2005 to 14.12.2005 has been as high as 813.09 mm in the State. In Chennai City alone the actual rainfall was 1869.7 mm as against the normal rainfall of 701.6 mm during this period. It is almost three times the normal rainfall and the highest in a century. The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that in the 22 affected districts, the actual rainfall from 1.10.2005 to 14.12.2005 was more than double, i.e. 898.8 mm as against the normal rainfall of 443.4 mm.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister also pointed out to the Hon'ble Prime Minister that apart from the heavy excessive rainfall, what really devastated the State was the fact that the rainfall was very intense and torrential during multiple short spells resulting in huge damage to physical infrastructure causing total disruption. In Chennai City and the adjoining Districts for instance, nearly 400 mm of rainfall occurred in an intense downpour experienced in less than 24 hours on 27.10.2005. This resulted in flooding and inundation of thickly populated built-up areas in the City and its suburbs. North Chennai and some localities in South Chennai were badly affected.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that while bountiful rainfall in a State like Tamil Nadu is welcome especially after unprecedented droughts in 2002 and 2003, yet the unprecedented, extraordinary and once-in-a-century kind of rainfall that the State received has put Tamil Nadu and its people to immense suffering and extreme hardship. The State was devastated by floods in four repeated spells from 23.10.2005 to 4.12.2005. Further, cyclone Fanoos again threatened Tamil Nadu from 5th to 10th December in a fifth spell. Although this cyclone weakened into a depression, it brought in its trail heavy floods in the Southern districts of Tamil Nadu.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that the State experienced the unusual spectacle of the highest inflow of 2.24 lakh cusecs of water into the Mettur Dam in the last 44 years on 24.10.2005 when the reservoir was full. This had to be discharged leading to flooding. The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that

there was yet another massive discharge of 3.35 lakh cusecs, the highest in the last 66 years, on 25.11.2005 in the Kollidam river causing even more flooding. It was a disaster thrice compounded.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that the temple town of Srirangam near Trichy was severely threatened with the banks of the river Cauvery nearly giving way. A major disaster on successive occasions was however averted due to the extraordinary efforts by the Government on the instructions of the Hon'ble Chief Minister.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that the Cauvery Delta districts of Nagapattinam and Cuddalore which bore the brunt of the Tsunami killer waves on 26.12.2004 have again been battered by the repeated floods. Cuddalore District was turned into a huge and very thick sheet of water during the third spell of rains and floods.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that the Government of Tamil Nadu rose to the occasion during every spell of heavy rain and floods and the entire Administration worked on a war-footing and took timely rescue and relief measures. The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that she had reviewed the flood situation with the Ministers and the officials on a daily basis during this period.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that she visited the flood-affected areas at once in Chennai on 27.10.2005 and the affected districts on 26.11.2005, 27.11.2005, 28.11.2005 and again on 4.12.2005 and 6.12.2005 and reviewed the relief operations



on the spot and provided necessary succour to the affected people.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that the State Government has already submitted two Memoranda and a Supplementary Memorandum making out a strong case for a total assistance of Rs. 13,685 crores from the Government of India. In addition, the State Government has sought a special allotment of 2.58 lakh tonnes of rice and 43,200 Kilo litres of kerosene.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that the Government of India has so far released Rs.500 crores as advance and 10,000 kilo litres of kerosene. The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that this is highly inadequate considering the intensity and magnitude of the flood damage.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that the State Government has already committed an

expenditure on relief and temporary restoration measures far greater than the advance given, and that the recent spells of rains and floods in Tamil Nadu together constitute a calamity of rare severity which happens once in a century. The plight of the farmers in the affected Districts and especially in the Cauvery Delta Districts is extremely pitiable. After facing successive droughts, floods and the Tsunami, the recent rains and floods have completely broken them. The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that there is thus a compelling necessity to look beyond the CRF and NCCF guidelines and make necessary relaxation of these guidelines to provide assistance to the farmers.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that she has proposed in the Memorandum that the scale of assistance for paddy should be enhanced from Rs.2,500 to Rs.20,000 per hectare and similar enhancement of the scales of assistance for other crops also. For desilting

of sand cast lands, the Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that she has proposed enhanced assistance of Rs. 18,000 per hectare. She has also proposed assistance for replacement and repairs of agricultural pumpsets which were damaged and washed away in the floods.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that considering the repeated devastation caused, especially to the farmers, she has requested assistance to fund the full waiver of Principal and Interest on co-operative loans due from farmers.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that she has also requested special assistance from the Government of India for a new housing scheme to construct new houses for the people whose houses were fully damaged.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that she has sought assistance for repair and restoration of the damaged infrastructure like roads, irrigation sources, drinking water supply schemes, community owned assets, etc. The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that the Government of Tamil Nadu needs substantial assistance to rebuild the battered infrastructure.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister specially highlighted the fact that as against Tamil Nadu's monthly requirement of 1,02,000 kilo litres of kerosene, the allotment was only 59,800 kilo litres which is barely 50%. The Hon'ble Chief Minister brought to the notice of the Hon'ble Prime Minister the letters she had written on this issue on several occasions and stressed the need to immediately provide

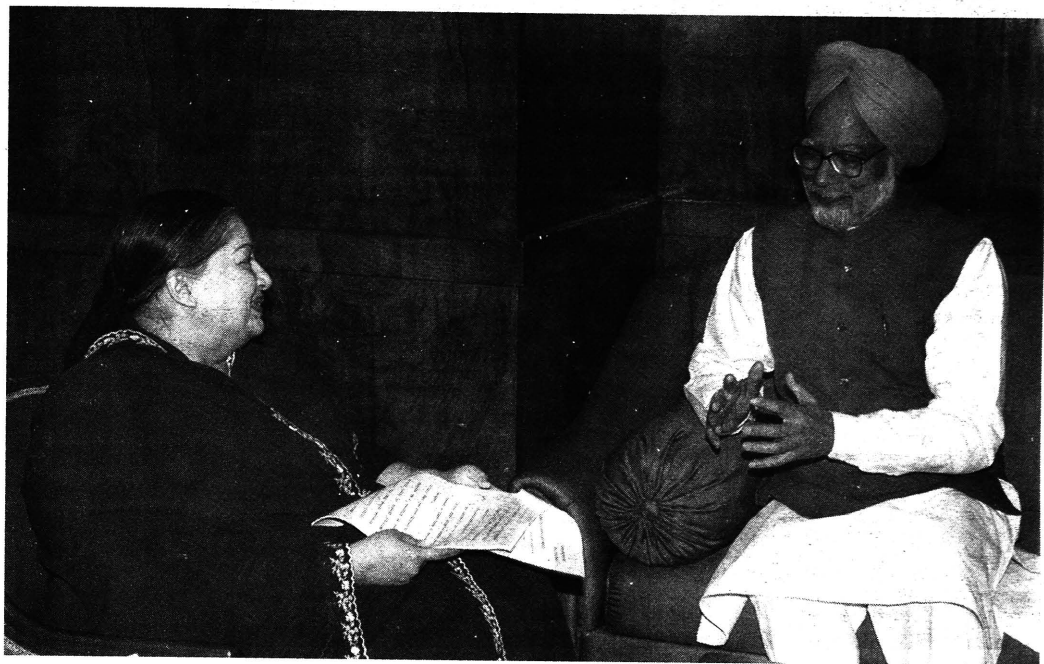
Tamil Nadu's monthly requirement of kerosene for the Public Distribution System.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister also took the Hon'ble Prime Minister through a detailed presentation on the five spells of heavy rainfall and floods, the damage wrought, the relief provided and the request for assistance. The Hon'ble Chief Minister appealed to the Hon'ble Prime Minister to take a positive view in extending full assistance to the Government of Tamil Nadu as per the request of the Government of Tamil Nadu at this critical juncture.

Hon'ble Prime Minister complimented the Hon'ble Chief Minister and the Government of Tamil Nadu for the excellent work done in handling the extraordinary floods on multiple occasions in Tamil Nadu this season. In particular, he referred to the effective maintenance of law and order in the State despite the serious flooding and inundation and this stood out as a model. He reassured the Hon'ble Chief Minister that the Government of India would provide maximum support to the Government of Tamil Nadu in this hour of need. He also said that he would personally monitor the flow of support and assistance to the Government of Tamil Nadu.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister was accompanied by Thiru N. Narayanan, Chief Secretary and Thiru R. Santhanam, Special Commissioner and Commissioner of Revenue Administration / State Relief Commissioner. The meeting lasted for 30 minutes.

* * *



TAMIL NADU WAS FACING A CALAMITY OF UNPRECEDENTED MAGNITUDE WITH 22 DISTRICTS DEVASTATED BY 5 CONSECUTIVE SPELLS OF HEAVY RAINS

- Hon'ble Chief Minister
SELVI J JAYALALITHAA

The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh spoke to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa, on 16.12.2005.

Earlier in the day, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Selvi J Jayalalithaa met the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India at New Delhi and sought the immediate intervention of the Hon'ble Prime Minister to release the assistance requested by the Government of Tamil Nadu from the Government of India, for the relief and

restoration works on account of the unprecedented floods which had affected the State in five spells during the last two months. The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa, had sought an assistance totaling Rs.13,685 crores together with 2.58 lakh tonnes of rice and 43,200 kilo litres of kerosene as an additional allotment for the month of December, 2005, to undertake the immediate relief and restoration works on account of the devastation caused by the recent floods.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister had pointed out to the Hon'ble Prime Minister that the



Government of India has so far released Rs.500 crores as advance and 10,000 kilo litres of kerosene but this was highly inadequate considering the intensity and magnitude of the flood damages. The Hon'ble Chief Minister had proposed in the Memorandum that the scale of assistance for paddy should be enhanced from Rs.2500/- to Rs.20,000/- per hectare and had sought similar enhancement of scales of assistance for other crops also. The Hon'ble Chief Minister had sought assistance for replacement and repairs of agricultural pumpsets which were damaged and washed away in the floods. The Hon'ble Chief Minister had requested assistance to fund the full waiver of principal and interest on cooperative loans due from farmers. The Hon'ble Chief Minister had requested special assistance for a new housing scheme to construct new houses for the people whose houses were fully damaged. The Hon'ble Chief Minister had sought

assistance for repair and restoration of the damaged infrastructure like roads, irrigation sources, drinking water supply schemes, community owned assets, etc., The Hon'ble Chief Minister specially highlighted the fact that as against Tamil Nadu's monthly requirement of 1,02,000 kilo litres of kerosene, the allotment was only 59,800 kilo litres which is barely 50%. The Hon'ble Chief Minister brought to the notice of the Hon'ble Prime Minister the letters on this issue she had written on several occasions and stressed the need to immediately provide Tamil Nadu's monthly requirement of kerosene for the Public Distribution System.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister had assured the Hon'ble Chief Minister that the Government of India would provide maximum support to the Government of Tamil Nadu in this hour of need.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh, who spoke to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa,

at 10 P.M. today informed the Hon'ble Chief Minister that based on the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa's specific request to the Hon'ble Prime Minister for immediate assistance, the Government of India has decided to release a further amount of Rs.500 crores to the Government of Tamil Nadu as assistance for flood relief works. The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India also informed the Hon'ble Chief Minister that he had given instructions to immediately make, in addition to the earlier allotment of 10,000 kilo litres of kerosene, a further additional allotment of 10,000 kilo litres of kerosene to the Government of Tamil Nadu, in response to the request of the Hon'ble Chief Minister for a special allotment.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India informed the Hon'ble Chief Minister that based on the Hon'ble Chief Minister's specific request for assistance for repair and restoration of damaged infrastructure like roads, irrigation, sources, etc, the Hon'ble Prime Minister had spoken to the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). The Prime Minister indicated that NABARD would provide additional funds from the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund for restoration of roads and irrigation systems in Tamil Nadu.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister further informed the Hon'ble Chief Minister that all the requests made by the Hon'ble Chief Minister during her meeting with the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 16.12.2005 will be considered further in detail by the High Level Committee.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India that the State of Tamil Nadu was facing a Calamity of unprecedented magnitude with 22 districts devastated by 5 consecutive spells of heavy rains. The damage to infrastructure and the

havoc caused to farmers was unparalleled. The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out once again to the Hon'ble Prime Minister that the norms for assistance under the Calamity Relief Fund and the National Calamity Contingency Fund will have to be revised considering the severity of the situation and a further supportive special package has to be provided to give immediate succour to the farmers who have faced successive droughts, floods, the tsunami and now the recent five spells of torrential rains. In this context, the Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalalithaa once again reiterated that the Government of India should give assistance to fund the full waiver of principal and interest on Co-operative loans due from the farmers.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister also brought to the notice of the Hon'ble Prime Minister that based on the experience following the tsunami tragedy a new housing scheme should be sanctioned to construct new houses for the people whose houses were fully damaged.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister stressed that the havoc was so severe that a major rehabilitation plan for the infrastructure covering roads, irrigation, works, etc., would have to be taken up and for this a separate package should be developed and announced.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa, pointed out that overall, in view of the widespread devastation, the Government of Tamil Nadu had prepared a comprehensive plan reflecting the urgent needs requiring a total assistance of Rs.13,685 crores as against which, so far only Rs.1,000 crores had been announced which is not adequate. Further packages are immediately necessary to undertake the restoration and rehabilitation measures in the affected districts of Tamil Nadu.

★

ICICI - USA presented the 2005 Peace Prize to Selvi J JAYALALITHAA, Hon'ble Chief Minister



The International Congress of Indian Christians Inc., (ICICI) a grass-root level organization of Indian Christians established in 1899 with its headquarters in Chicago, Illinois, USA presented the 2005 Peace Prize to Selvi J Jayalalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 10.10.2005 at the Secretariat.

The International Congress of Indian Christians Peace Prize is awarded annually to a State Person / Leader who has significantly contributed to the protection and promotion of minorities and human rights and who has also made a meaningful and positive impact in the lives of the underprivileged by implementing progressive humanitarian initiatives.

The International Congress of Indian Christian's Inc., Oakpark, Illinois, USA has conferred on Selvi J Jayalalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, the ICICI Peace Prize 2005, in recognition of her dynamic leadership that has made a meaningful and positive impact in the lives of the underprivileged by implementing several progressive humanitarian initiatives including the effective Tsunami Relief and Rehabilitation efforts, Rain Harvesting initiative, Environmental Protection

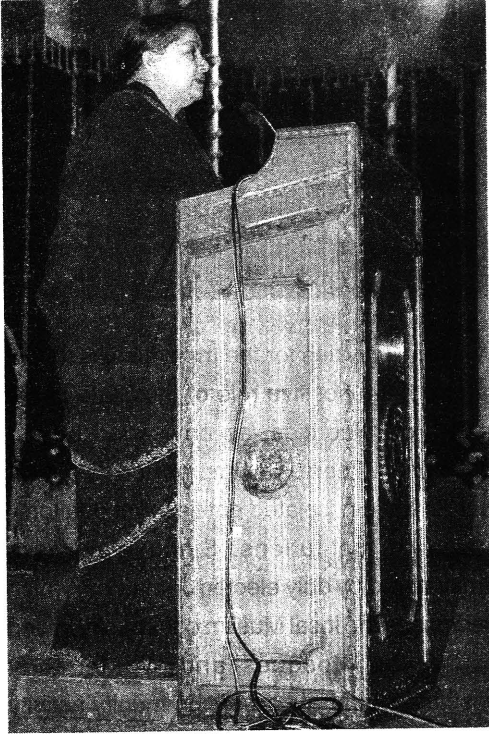
Programmes, Empowerment of Women through Self Help Groups, Free Bicycle Scheme for School Children, the Revolutionary Social Security Scheme for Farmers, the Cradle Baby Scheme and also for maintaining Communal Harmony in the State of Tamil Nadu.

The Rt. Rev. Dr. S. Jeyapaul David, CSI Bishop of Tirunelveli Diocese, Tamil Nadu, and President of the National Council of Churches in India, New Delhi, presented the ICICI Peace Prize 2005, to Selvi J Jayalalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 10.10.2005 at the Secretariat.

The International Congress of Indian Christians delegation who personally met and congratulated Selvi J Jayalalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, was led by Rev. Dr. Mrs. Prasanna Kumari, Vice President, National Council of Churches in India. President-elect, of International Congress of Indian Christians Inc. USA and Vice President of the Lutheran World Federation, Geneva.

Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. M. Azhariah, President, Indian Chapter of International Congress of Indian Christians. Mrs. Sarah Chanda, Secretary, Indian Chapter, International Congress of Indian Christians, Chennai, Mr. C. Subba Singh, Vice President, Indian Chapter, International Congress of Indian Christians, Sivakasi, Rev. Dr. Samuel Mashack, Director of Communications, Gurukul Theological Seminary, Chennai and Mrs. Sophia Chelladurai, Principal, National Christian Theological College, Chennai were the other members of the delegation who congratulated Selvi J Jayalalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on receiving the prestigious Award. Dr. Vijay G. Prabhakar, President, World Federation of Tamil Youth Inc., USA and Dr. R. Mylvaganan were also present during the presentation of the Award. ★

**MY VISION IS TO BUILD A MODERN TAMIL NADU
AS A PROGRESSIVE, EGALITARIAN SOCIETY,
PROVIDING SPACE FOR ALL,
IRRESPECTIVE OF CASTE AND CREED**



It gives me great pleasure to be here to inaugurate the National Conference of Chairpersons and Chief Executive Officers of State Wakf Boards, which has been organized at the initiative of the Tamil Nadu State Wakf Board. This National Conference is to discuss important issues like strengthening the State Wakf Boards, improving their functioning, exploring ways and means to secure repossession of encroached Wakf properties and also deliberate over the need to bring in legislative amendments to the Wakf Act, to enable the

- SELVI J JAYALALITHAA

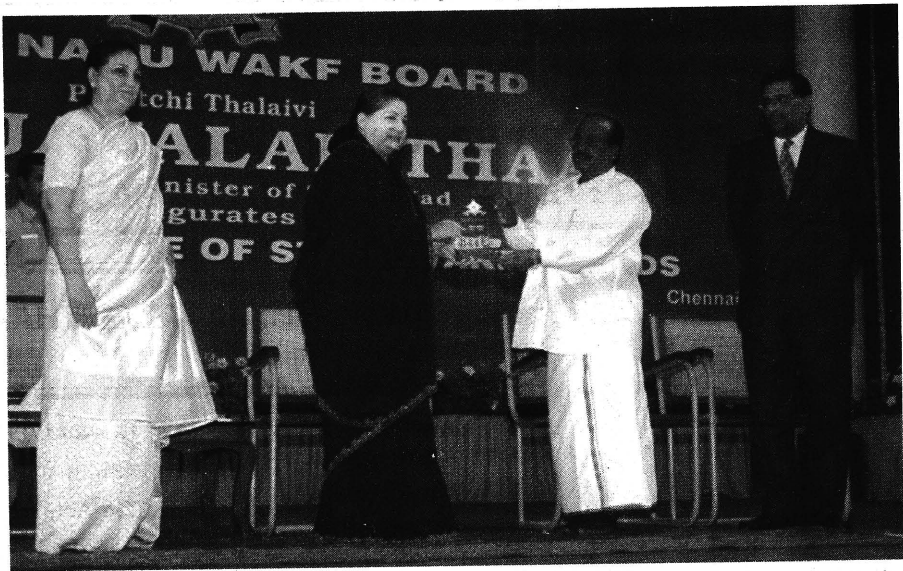
Hon'ble Chief Minister

Wakf Boards to have more powers, etc. The Government of Tamil Nadu is at the forefront in the implementation of the Wakf Act, 1995 and has been undertaking a number of progressive welfare measures for the needy and poor amongst the Muslim community. I am certain that the initiatives taken by the Tamil Nadu Wakf Board will be highlighted at the Conference and will be of great interest to other State Wakf Boards.

Wakfs and the activities of the Wakf Boards are a unique expression of the positive nature of Indian secularism, since they are committed to the welfare of needy Muslims, within a charitable institutional framework under State supervision. Wakfs owe their origin to a rule laid down by the Prophet and means, "the tying up of property in the ownership of God the Almighty, and the devotion of the profits for the benefit of human beings." The true measure of charity is indicated in the following verse of the Quran and I quote,

*"Ye shall never attain to goodness
till ye give alms of that which ye love, and
whatever ye give, of a truth, God knoweth"
(Unquote).*

(Surah 3 verse 92)



The concept of egalitarianism is central to Islam and the peaceful and voluntary redistribution of income in Society, through the institution of Wakfs, is a unique feature of the socio-economic structure set out in the tenets of Islam, which seeks to achieve the object of egalitarianism. The provision of dedication of property for religious purposes by Wakfs, not only reinforces the donor's faith by this expression of a strong desire to win Divine approbation, but also enables the peaceful redistribution of wealth to the poor and needy by charitable means.

It is a tribute to the founding fathers of our Constitution that they envisaged affirmative action in favour of the minorities. The Wakf Act of 1995 provides for the establishment of Wakf Boards vested with authority and vast powers. It vests the State Government with the supervisory responsibility of the Wakf Boards. A sound administrative structure to ensure the proper administration of the Wakfs in the country, and the involvement of the State

in welfare activities for the minorities, is thus a feature of the positive role of the State in the welfare of minorities, as envisaged by our Constitution. There is an impression that Wakf Boards are just isolated entities that deal only with Wakf institutions. Since Wakfs are administered by duly elected Jamaaths, which encompass the local Muslim community in and around the Mosques and Wakfs, they constitute a central part of community activity for the welfare of Muslims. Thus, the welfare of the Muslim society as a whole is the main focus of the Wakf Boards. I understand from the Chairperson of the Tamil Nadu Wakf Board that the agenda of this Conference includes a discussion on ways and means to repossess Wakf lands and properties that have been encroached upon, and measures to augment the revenues of Wakf properties so that the Wakf Boards can be financially independent and broaden their activities.

While there is no particular code of dedication of the property in order to constitute

a Wakf, under the Muslim law, the moment a Wakf is created, all rights of the property pass out of the Wakf or founder and vest in God Almighty. Hundreds of thousands of acres of properties have been dedicated over the years, but unfortunately, many of these properties have been lost by the Wakfs, either by way of encroachments or in other ways. Such loss of property of the Wakfs is an issue of concern to the Muslim community all over India. A duty is enjoined on the State Government to assist the Wakf Boards in reclaiming these properties. In Tamil Nadu, a survey of Wakf properties has been undertaken, to identify the original extent of the Wakf properties, in order that they may be restored to the individual Wakf institutions. On behalf of the Muslim community, my Government will provide all the necessary assistance to protect Wakf properties in Tamil Nadu, and will render all support to retrieve the encroached land of Wakfs, so that the original charitable purpose of the Wakfs is fully realised.

My Government has always pursued a proactive policy in implementing schemes for the welfare of the minorities. I have sanctioned a grant of Rs.2.10 crores to undertake the renovation of Mosques and Dargahs through the Wakf Board in Tamil Nadu. A scheme for the construction of compound walls and barbed wire fencing around burial grounds, with liberal Government grants, is also being implemented, so as to protect Wakf properties from unauthorized encroachments. In order to enable the Tamil Nadu Wakf Board to perform its administrative functions well, the Government of Tamil Nadu has sanctioned the construction of a new office building for the

Tamil Nadu Wakf Board at a total outlay of Rs.1.20 crores. I have also sanctioned a sum of Rs. 18.50 lakhs for office automation and computerization of the Tamil Nadu Wakf Board's Head Office and Zonal Offices.

Tamil Nadu is the only State in the country that provides a pension to retired Ulemas and my Government has sanctioned a pension of Rs.500 per month to 1,804 retired Ulemas in the State, providing Rs.1.20 crores for this purpose.

Retired Ulemas drawing a pension of Rs. 500/- per month have requested me to increase the scale of pension sanctioned to them. On the occasion of this National Conference of State Wakf Boards, I am happy to announce that the pension received by retired Ulemas will be enhanced to Rs.750/- per month with immediate effect. The total cost of implementing this improved scheme by the Government of Tamil Nadu will be Rs.1.80 crores per annum. As a measure of support to needy divorced Muslim women, my Government has sanctioned a sum of Rs.6 lakhs as a grant to the Tamil Nadu Wakf Board to meet the expenditure towards payment of maintenance amount to needy divorced Muslim women.

My Government, has also undertaken a number of measures to provide self-employment to Muslim youth and women. Under the Entrepreneurial Development Programme, 1000 Muslim youth are being provided job-oriented technical training. On completion of training, they are given a loan to the extent of Rs.25,000/- each, to enable them to start self-employment ventures. Industrial



Co-operative Societies for the benefit of Muslim auto-rickshaw drivers have been formed in Coimbatore, Tirunelveli and Vellore and 121 Muslim youth were recently given loans totalling Rs.1.01 crores for the purchase of auto-rickshaws.

The Self-Help Group movement, which I launched in the State in the year 1992, is bringing about a silent revolution in Tamil Nadu. It has resulted in improving the lives of lakhs of women. Today, there are more than 2.60 lakh Self-Help Groups in Tamil Nadu with a membership of nearly 43 lakh women, who have generated a total savings of Rs.810.51 crores, with a credit linkage of Rs.1429.17 crores. This pervasive Self-Help Group movement has also significantly improved the status of Muslim women. As many as 45,979 Muslim women have been enrolled in Self-Help Groups. These Self-Help

groups with representatives of other communities, will definitely reinforce communal harmony in our Society. The Self-Help Group movement has enabled Muslim women, most of whom belong to the economically weaker sections, to participate in capacity building and training, and to improve their access to micro finance institutions and Banks, and have enabled them to participate in the development process expressing their views boldly. Muslim women belonging to these Self-Help Groups have attached great importance to the education of girl children, which will have far reaching implications for our Society in terms of bringing down illiteracy, reducing Infant Mortality rates and upgrading nutritional levels.

In the aftermath of the unfortunate serial bomb blasts which took place in Coimbatore City in the year 1998, when the previous

DMK Government was in power, the entire economy of Coimbatore City had been shattered. A feeling of total insecurity prevailed. Recognizing that it was not enough to merely establish the rule of law and to deal firmly with the criminal and terrorist elements which, ofcourse, my Government did, I also initiated a series of proactive measures to provide economic rehabilitation and self-employment to Muslim women and youth, both in Coimbatore City and the entire District. The situation has been completely set right by my Government. 322 Self-Help Groups comprising Muslim women exclusively have been formed in Coimbatore District. There are also 140 mixed Self-Help Groups with Muslim women as members. A total sum of Rs.37.66 lakhs has been distributed as loan to these Self-Help Groups to undertake various economic activities. A special project to impart skills in various activities like glass painting, hand embroidery, candle making, agarbathi making and footwear making was started in Coimbatore. 450 women drawn from Kottaimedu and Al Ameen colony in Coimbatore City were given training and later, loans totalling Rs.13.15 lakhs were provided to them to undertake self-employment activities. In order to channelise the energy of Muslim youth into constructive activities such as economic activities, loans were provided to them through Co-operative Banks for a variety of self-employment ventures. 135 Muslim youth have been provided loans to the extent of Rs.1.32 crores.

My Government has always been proactive in assisting the minorities and securing for them their rightful due from the Government of India. A long-standing demand of the Muslims in the State was an increase in

the annual quota fixed for Tamil Nadu for undertaking the Hajj Pilgrimage. There has been an overwhelming increase in the number of applicants from Tamil Nadu who want to undertake the holy pilgrimage, with 3,900 applicants who had registered with the Tamil Nadu State Hajj Committee this year. As against this, the Tamil Nadu State quota was only 3,004. Naturally, a large number of hopeful pilgrims were disappointed. I took up the matter with the Union Minister of External Affairs and pointed out the disappointment and discontent amongst the Muslims of the State because of the restricted quota. Owing to the efforts taken by me, the Government of India was persuaded to arrange to release additional seats over and above the quota fixed for Tamil Nadu, and consequently, all the 3,900 applications received from Tamil Nadu for Hajj, 2006, were confirmed by the Government of India.

It is my firm belief that real progress for the Muslim community and particularly for Muslim women can be achieved only through education. The activities of the Tamil Nadu Wakf Board and, indeed, all State Wakf Boards, should therefore, increasingly focus on the expansion of literacy, education and imparting of life skills, particularly to Muslim women. This is also the key to Women's empowerment.

It is in order to demonstrate my Government's commitment to women's empowerment that the Tamil Nadu Wakf Board, which I reconstituted with 13 members in the year 2002, is now headed by a woman, Janaabaa Bader Sayeed, who has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Tamil Nadu Wakf Board. I am glad to note that the Tamil Nadu Wakf Board has been rendering



valuable service to the cause of economically backward Muslim women and children. The financial position of the Tamil Nadu Wakf Board has been set right and the revenues have now grown to Rs.1.60 crores. The Board, despite a number of legal problems, was able to secure possession of valuable Wakf properties, which were under encroachment.

Similarly, I am glad to note that under the aegis of the Tamil Nadu Wakf Board, as many as 12 Dargahs in the State are organizing Annadhanam or the scheme of free feeding of the poor and needy, taking a cue from the immensely popular and highly commended Annadhanam scheme for temples which I launched in the State. This is yet another shining example of the harmonious verisimilitude of welfare programmes that foster communal amity, irrespective of religious denomination, implemented by my Government.

I must also place on record my deep appreciation of the spontaneous and invaluable

help rendered by a number of Dargahs in the State, in the aftermath of the devastating Tsunami that struck Coastal Tamil Nadu in December, 2004. A number of Dargahs and Wakf institutions at Parangipettai, Cuddalore District and Colachel in Kanniyakumari District, as well as in Nagore and Chengalpattu, undertook immediate relief operations in the tsunami struck villages and provided shelter and food to thousands of victims, irrespective of caste and creed. They are also actively associating themselves in the task of the economic rehabilitation of the tsunami victims. This is a splendid example of grass-roots secularism, which is what we ought to encourage and foster.

The Minorities are safe and secure under the benevolent administration of my State Government. My Government has reconstituted the State Minorities Commission on 15.12.2004. The State Minorities Commission visits various parts of the State to study the problems of the Minorities, receives representations from the members of the

Minority Communities and Institutions, conducts personal hearings, gets reports from the Government Departments on the issues raised by them and recommends suitable measures to the State Government to ensure effective implementation of the Schemes for their welfare.

The Muslim community in Tamil Nadu has distinguished itself in every sector of the economy and in every walk of life. They have produced distinguished Jurists, Educationists, Businessmen, Sportsmen and Artists who have brought laurels to Tamil Nadu. The role of the Muslim community in supporting and developing the poorer, weaker and more unfortunate amongst them through charitable institutions cannot be over emphasized. The deliberations of this National Conference must explore ways and means to make the functioning of the Wakf Boards more effective and broad based, by legislative amendments, by drawing up a time bound action plan for the restoration of encroached properties to the Wakf Board and evolving new methods for providing, in addition to the Government's Social Safety Net, a community based support scheme for the poorer sections of the Muslim community, particularly Women.

India is an ancient civilization, a land of geographical, ethnic, cultural and religious diversity. Given the pluralistic nature of our Society, the unity of our country can be preserved only by a vibrant secular ethic. The Indian brand of secularism is a homogenous amalgam that combines together the diverse, non-homogenous strands of Indian culture and the different religious values of the various communities in our society. The doctrine of "Sarva Dharma Samabhaava" is the symbiosis

of the different religious strands prevalent in our country. Every religion is entitled to its own space and one religion cannot and should not encroach into another's space. The secular character of our Constitution enjoins upon us the duty to ensure that all the rights enjoyed by the majority community are equally enjoyed by the minority community. Not only must we understand the essence of pluralism of Indian society and allow freedom of space to all religions, I consider that the State also ought to be proactive in trying to nurture a pan Indian value system, which epitomizes a modern Indian society that upholds the rule of law, assimilates science and technology, is committed to the upliftment of the poor and gives real equality to women. My vision is to build a modern Tamil Nadu as a progressive, egalitarian society, providing space for all, irrespective of caste and creed, and preserving the preeminence of Tamil Nadu as a peaceful, tranquil and progressive State, reinforcing the feeling of security amongst all minorities resident in the State and standing out as a symbol of religious, cultural and linguistic harmony.

I wish the deliberations of this National Conference all success.

- Speech delivered by

SELVI J JAYALALITHAA,

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu at the
National Conference of Chairpersons and
Chief Executive Officers of
State Wakf Boards on 15.11.2005 at
Kalaivanar Arangam, Chennai.

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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “PROJECT SIKSHA” AS PART OF THE ‘PARTNERS IN LEARNING PROGRAMME’



A delegation of Microsoft Corporation led by Mr. Bill Gates, Chairman & Chief Software Architect, Microsoft Corporation, met Selvi J Jayalalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, at the Secretariat, on 9.12.2005.

improve the quality of education by empowering school teachers with technology to achieve their fullest potential.

Under this MoU, Microsoft Corporation will set up and run an Information Technology Academy in Chennai for a period of 5 years. The Government of Tamil Nadu has provided a building in which Microsoft is setting up a world class facility equipped with a state-of-the-art IT lab, which will be completed by February, 2006. Each batch of teachers will receive 12 days of training in computer literacy as well as computer aided teaching techniques.

This new innovative training programme was launched on 9.12.2005 through Video Conferencing, by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa in the presence of Mr. Bill Gates and other members of the delegation. This will now function in 5 Centres namely,



Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, Tirunelveli, Salem and Vellore, besides the IT Academy at Chennai. Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa and Mr. Bill Gates interacted with the teachers at those centres through Video Conferencing. This programme will benefit 80,000 teachers over a 5 year period and indirectly reach over 35 lakh students in schools in Tamil Nadu.

Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa released a hand book on "Using Information Technology in Learning" for teachers on this occasion and handed over the first copy of the hand book to Mr. Bill Gates.

Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa expressed her

happiness over the visit of Mr. Bill Gates to Tamil Nadu on her invitation. The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that the Government of Tamil Nadu under her leadership is firmly committed to leveraging Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) to leapfrog to the top in all spheres and bridging the digital divide. Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out to the delegation that a conducive physical as well as policy environment has been created in Tamil Nadu to achieve these goals.

Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa acknowledged with thanks the several initiatives, especially, the Partners in Learning Programme, which the Microsoft Corporation has partnered with the Government of Tamil Nadu and suggested that Tamil Nadu be included in the new programme announced by the Microsoft Corporation whereby schools in 6 States will be equipped with Computers.

Hon'ble Chief Minister appreciated the measures taken by the Microsoft Corporation to work closely with

the Government of Tamil Nadu on several e-Governance initiatives, such as conducting a workshop for senior Secretaries to Government and rendering technical advice for setting up the State Data Centre. Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that a cheaper Personal Computer (PC) loaded with appropriate software will go a long way in taking forward the IT revolution and that she has already made it possible for the government employees to buy PCs.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that her mission is to put the smile of prosperity on the face of every citizen of Tamil Nadu by leveraging Information Technology and that towards this end, she has launched an ambitious programme to take computers to every village panchayat in Tamil Nadu. The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that this truly path breaking venture will help bridge the digital divide and would actually take the benefits of the ICT revolution to the grass roots and make a visible and lasting difference to the lives of the poorest of the poor. The Hon'ble Chief Minister sought the support of the Microsoft Corporation for this initiative of the Government of Tamil Nadu. Mr. Bill Gates promised full support for this initiative.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister requested Mr. Bill Gates to establish a High Performance Computing Centre and an Engineering Product Design and Delivery Centre of Microsoft Corporation at Chennai, which is the ideal location for such a Centre with its vast pool of talent and the mature eco-system of Information Technology and Manufacturing industries as well as world renowned Academic institutions. The Hon'ble Chief Minister assured the delegation that her Government would allot the required land and render whatever support is needed for this purpose. Mr. Bill Gates indicated he was greatly impressed by the inherent strengths of Chennai and its exciting talent pool. He indicated that Chennai would certainly be on the top of the list when Microsoft finalises its expansion plans in India.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalithaa appreciated the tremendous humanitarian work of Ms. Melinda and Mr. Bill Gates, which is an inspiration and definitely a role model that is worthy of emulation. The Hon'ble Chief Minister expressed happiness that in response to her request in 2003, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation through the Avahan India Aids Initiative had launched a series of initiatives in Tamil Nadu in the area of AIDS prevention.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out to Mr. Gates that the prevalence of HIV infection in Tamil Nadu which was 1.25% in 2001, had come down to 0.65% in 2004, due to various pioneering efforts taken by her Government and that for the past three years Tamil Nadu has shown a continuous downward trend in the prevalence of HIV infection.

While thanking Mr. Bill Gates for the work done so far, the Hon'ble Chief Minister invited the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation to extend its support for acquiring equipment for CD4 Cell Count, Viral Load Determination and Genotype Resistance Assay and second line Anti Retro Viral Drugs.



The Hon'ble Chief Minister mentioned that she has put her heart and soul into achieving the Millennium Development Goals and thereby giving the people of Tamil Nadu a better quality of life. She requested the Gates Foundation to take initiatives in this sphere also.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister mentioned that the visit of Mr. Bill Gates and his team to Tamil Nadu augured well for a long and sustained partnership.

Mr. Bill Gates thanked the Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalalithaa for her invitation to visit Chennai and stated that he was happy he could be here. Mr. Bill Gates stated that he was greatly impressed by the rapid strides made by the State and the excellent facilities in Chennai with its vast talent pool. Mr. Bill Gates mentioned that he

is greatly impressed by the achievement of the Tamil Nadu Government in implementing the AIDS Control Programme and that Tamil Nadu stands as a model.

Mr. Bill Gates congratulated the Hon'ble Chief Minister for the success of the Self-Help Group Movement in Tamil Nadu and stated that he was greatly excited by the usage of ICT to enable these groups to access markets and felt the potential was immense.

Mr. Bill Gates was accompanied by Mr. Ravi Venkatesan, Chairman, Microsoft India, Mr. Rohit Kumar, Country Head (Public Sector), Microsoft India, Mr. Joe Cerrel, Director, Global Health Advocacy (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation), Mr. Ashok Alexander (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation) and Ms. Padma Chandra sekaran, Programme Manager, (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation).

Thiru O. Panneerselvam, Hon'ble Minister for Public Works, Prohibition & Excise and Revenue, Thiru C. Ponnaiyan, Hon'ble Minister for Finance, Thiru D. Jayakumar, Hon'ble Minister for Law & Information Technology, Thiru N. Narayanan, Chief Secretary and Secretaries to Government were also present. The meeting lasted for 30 minutes. ★

PUDHU VAZHVU -

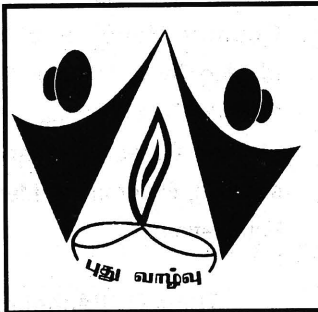
A NEW LIFE FOR TAMIL NADU'S RURAL POOR



Rs.717 Crore "Pudhu Vazhvu" scheme for rural poor

The Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalalithaa launched the Rs.717 crores World Bank assisted "Pudhu Vazhvu" Scheme on 15.11.2005. This Scheme is aimed at improving the economic conditions of poor and downtrodden people in Tamil Nadu.

The major objectives of the scheme, based on the community driven development approach include creating new employment opportunities for the poor, increasing their income, providing technical know - how and necessary financial assistance. Out of the total cost of Rs.717 crores for the scheme, the World Bank would provide Rs.541 crores, while the Government of Tamil Nadu Rs.122 crores as its share and the beneficiary people would contribute Rs.54 crores.



Pudhu Vazhvu Project

Tamil Nadu, the southern most State of India, nestles in the Indian peninsula between the Bay of Bengal in the east, the Indian Ocean in the south and the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea on the west. The estimates of poverty made by the Union Planning

Commission in 1999-2000 show that 21.12% of the state's population lives below the poverty line which is less than the all India average of 26.10%. Tamil Nadu has been witnessing fast reduction of poverty levels in both urban and rural areas by implementing innovative poverty reduction and

social security schemes.

Government of Tamil Nadu as early as 1992 pioneered the Self-help Group movement in the state. Today it stands as one of the most successful initiatives ever undertaken for the social and economic empowerment of women.



Today the Self-help Group movement in the state is all pervasive and visible in all aspects of life in the rural areas of the state and this enormous success has triggered other states to emulate Tamil Nadu's success in their respective states. As on September 2005 there are 2,60,844 SHGs with membership of 42,90,673 women. The savings mobilised by these groups is to the tune of Rs.810.52 crores and the credit linkage provided is Rs.1,429.17 crores.

Inspired by Honourable Chief Minister's vision to make Tamil Nadu, the *"numero uno"* State in the country and with the view to make a pronounced impact on the livelihood of the poorest people in the State including the disabled and most vulnerable such as the destitutes, widows, deserted women, the elderly and tribals the Government of Tamil Nadu has proposed to implement "Pudhu Vazhvu" project with World Bank's assistance. The project was approved by the World Bank in May 2005.

"PUDHU VAZHVVU" meaning 'New Life' is to create opportunities and build social capital in poor communities and to involve the communities themselves in designing and implementing the changes that will affect their daily life.

Target Group

It is envisaged that the project will cover around 3,50,000 target families in 2,300 Gram Panchayats comprising 12,185 habitations in 70 backward blocks spread over 15 districts. The target population under this project will primarily be:

- ★ Very poor and poor households.
- ★ Most vulnerable, destitute, widows, aged.
- ★ Marginalized communities and sections.
- ★ Physically challenged

The targeting will be based on participatory identification of the poor from

the above categories. The project will be implemented in 15 districts of the state in 70 selected blocks and 2,300 panchayats. It would be implemented over a period of 6 years at an outlay of Rs. 717 crores.

Project Objective

The overall goal of the project is to support Government of Tamil Nadu's strategy of reducing rural poverty with special focus on the poorest of the poor through support for productive activities and investments, using the Community-driven Development (CDD) approach. The specific project objectives are to improve the livelihoods and empower the target rural poor in Tamil Nadu (particularly women and other disadvantaged groups) through:

1. Developing and strengthening pro-poor local institutions/groups (including village panchayats);
2. Building skills and capacities of the poor; and
3. Financing productive demand-driven subproject investments.

Project Strategy

The project aims to achieve its objective of poverty reduction and empowerment through three strategic interventions.

(i) Community Driven Development Approach (CDD):

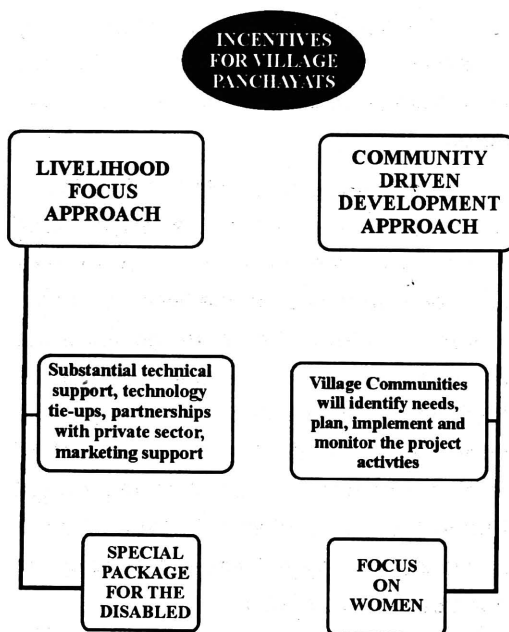
The project will follow the CDD approach wherein village communities will identify their own needs, design and plan interventions and implement and monitor them. The key non-negotiable principles that the process will

adopt are equity, inclusion, transparency, accountability, participation and facilitation. The project will have a special focus on women and the disabled.

(ii) Livelihoods Focus:

There is a Shift in focus from group formation to livelihoods. The project will provide improvement in productivity of existing skills, assets and businesses.

- Sustained technical support to SHGs (skill development, marketing, technology) by establishing partnerships and tie-ups with private sector, research institutes and other agencies to provide technical know-how, product development and market linkages.
- Higher investment per family Rs.28,000 (Rs.14,000/-from project, Equal Bank linkage)
- Focuses primarily on poor women and disadvantaged sections like the disabled,





(iii) Providing Incentives for Pro-poor Governance:

Grama Panchayats (GPs) will be involved in the project processes and will be provided incentives to (a) improve their governance by becoming transparent and accountable to their community members; (b) respond to the needs of the poor by effective

widows, destitutes etc., and reducing vulnerability.

- Promote higher level economic activities and federations for sustainability.

identification of the poor and vulnerable; and (c) provide support to the VPRC to implement the VPRC fund efficiently and in accordance with the agreed rules and procedures.

Basic Information on the 15 Project Districts

No.	Districts	Selected Blocks	No. of Panchayats in the blocks	No. of Villages	No. of Families	Total Population
1.	Coimbatore	5	102	290	131804	458751
2.	Cuddalore	4	207	761	115844	493083
3.	Kancheepuram	4	186	1097	87689	479352
4.	Nagapattinam	5	187	1224	109980	481611
5.	Namakkal	6	114	1006	130416	337989
6.	Ramanathapuram	3	94	676	52687	199994
7.	Salem	6	140	1213	140489	512214
8.	Theni	4	80	538	100671	494943
9.	Thiruvallur	5	182	782	87043	558385
10.	Thiruvannamalai	4	183	893	78531	369100
11.	Thiruvavarur	4	159	702	87584	380107
12.	Tirunelveli	6	187	633	122354	465205
13.	Tuticorin	4	200	541	73384	330748
14.	Vellore	5	198	1004	141275	662037
15.	Villupuram	5	130	825	112497	453493
	Total	70	2300	12185	1572248	6677012

"Non-Negotiable" Principles of the Project

The project staff, the facilitating teams and the community will adhere to the following "non-negotiable" principles of the project:

1. Inclusion : Inclusion of the poorest and poor women, and disadvantaged sections of the community (disabled, widows, destitute and other vulnerable) will be the key guiding principle of the project. 90% of the project benefits will flow to poor women and the disadvantaged sections of the community.

2. Equity : Women will play a determining role in all community organizations promoted and in decision-making processes related to project activities and funds.

3. Participation : All project activities and programmatic decisions of the project at the village shall be based on participatory processes involving all primary stakeholders and representation of at least 60% of the target poor.

4. Transparency: All project decisions will be made in a transparent manner and the project will ensure that all project information, details of funds and benefits is available to all stakeholders.

5. Accountability : Village institutions and project teams will be accountable to the community and will ensure display of information, beneficiary list and funds disbursed in public places.

6. Facilitating Style : The project shall have faith in the capacity of the poor to undertake, control and decide on all the activities of the project. The project teams, resource organizations and support staff will adopt an enabling style so as to ensure self help and transfer of control to the community.

Project Phasing

The 15 selected districts would be initiated into the project in 2 phases of 7 and 8 districts with a gap of 6 months and in four phased but overlapping batches. The first batch would constitute 474 GPs from 15 blocks of the first 7 districts. The second batch would consist of 486 GPs from 15 blocks from 8 districts. The third and fourth batches consisting of 20 blocks and 670 GPs each.

Key Project Design Elements :

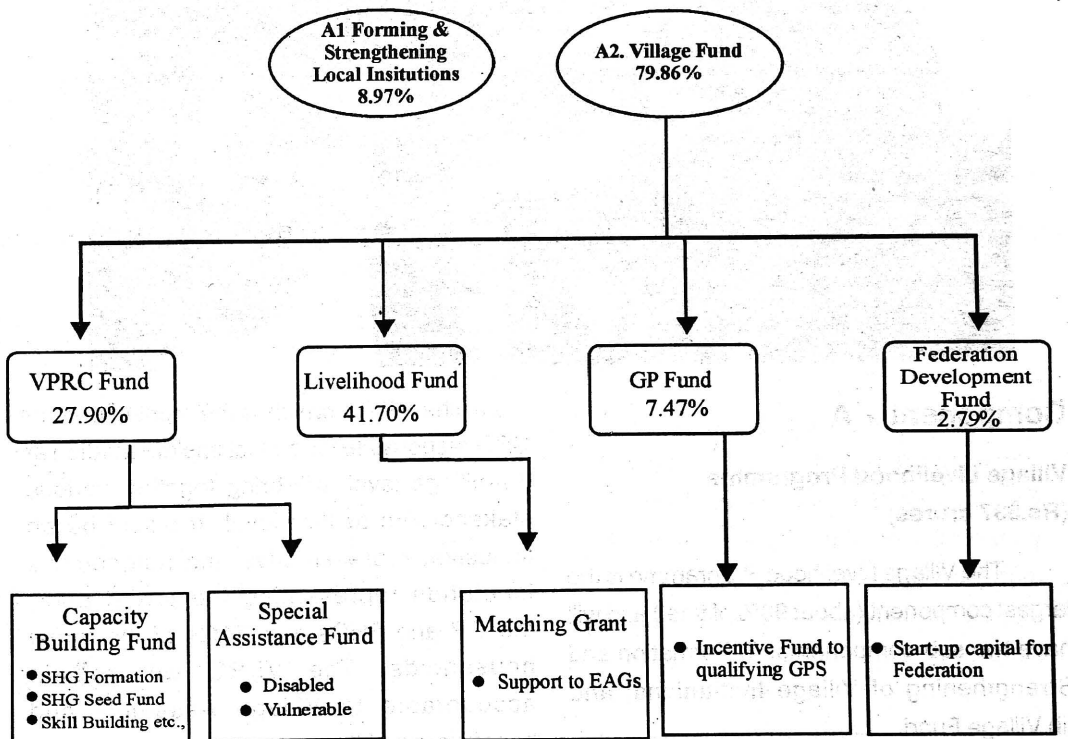
The following key principles have been incorporated into the project design :

- Transferring control over decision making and resources to the community, and local institutions (identify, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate sub projects);
- Focusing on the poorest by including the ultra poor (bottom 50 percent of the poor), and special groups that include disabled, destitutes, widows, deserted women, the aged, orphans and tribals.
- Building and empowering community institutions and organizations to take full responsibility for sustaining activities in the future;

- Developing simple and transparent rules of engagement and building accountability (downward and upward) and transparency at all levels;
- Developing a facilitating and enabling style and culture at all levels of project management; and
- Ensuring independence and autonomy of the “Guardian of the Rules” to ensure that the project and technical teams have total independence and autonomy to appraise and monitor the project in accordance with the agreed rules and procedures.

S. No.	District	Block	No. of G.Ps.
1.	Salem	Yearcaud	9
		Ayothiapattinam	32
		Thalaivasal	35
2.	Coimbatore	Palladam	20
		Udumalpet	38
3.	Thiruvavur	Kottur	49
		Koradacherry	44
4.	Thiruvannamalai	Chengam	44
		Pudupalayam	37
5.	Namakkal	Erumaipatti	24
		Kolli hills	14
6.	Theni	Aundipatti	30
		Mailadumparai	18
7.	Vellore	Gudiyatham	44
		Madhanur	36
Total		15	474

Project Components



Component	(Rupees in Crores)
A. Village Livelihoods	637.00
A1. Forming and Strengthening local institutions	640.3
A2. Village Funds	572.70
A2a. VPRC Fund	200.00
A2b. Livelihood Fund	299.00
A2c. GP Fund	53.60
A2d. Federation Development	20.00
B. Institutional Strengthening Support	31.54
B1. Capacity Building at State & Dist. Level	10.68
B2. Support to Livelihoods	15.60
B3. Monitoring and Learning	5.26
C. Project Management	48.56
Total	717.10.

A1: Formation and Strengthening of Village Institutions (Rs.64.31 crores):

The objective of this subcomponent is to support and develop inclusive, self-reliant, self-managed and sustainable community organisations for livelihoods improvement. This subcomponent will facilitate and support formation of Village Poverty Reduction Committee (VPRC) through

- * Communication campaign
- * Orientation of the Village organizations.
- * Participatory Identification of poor
- * Initial formation of SHGs



Component - A

Village Livelihood Programme (Rs.637 crores)

The Village Livelihood Programme is the largest component (about 90% of total) and will have two sub-components: (i) Formation and Strengthening of Village Institutions; and (ii) Village Fund.

The VPRC, which is the most important CBO responsible for project implementation at the village level, will bring together various stakeholders at that level. It would be an inclusive, representative and autonomous institution representing the target poor, the GP and SHGs and EAGs of the target households. The VPRC will remain accountable to Village Assembly and beneficiaries of the project.

A2. Village Fund (Rs.572.70 crores):

Village fund will be allocated to each Village/GP initially based on the total population and number of tribal families and later based on their needs as reflected in the overall Livelihood plan.

A2a. VPRC Fund - Rs. 200.1 crores

(i) Capacity Building Fund

- ★ Formation of new SHGs
- ★ Revival of defunct groups
- ★ Training Village Organisations
- ★ Promotion of Economic Activity Groups
- ★ Operational costs of VPRC
- ★ Skill Development training
- ★ Technical assistance for preparation & appraisal of proposals and business plans
- ★ Credit rating of the non-linked and new/revived groups of poor women
- ★ Release of the seed capital to the credit-rated groups of poor women

ii. Special Fund

- ★ Supporting livelihood activities of the disabled and most vulnerable either as groups or as individuals.
- ★ Institutional support and Seed Fund to solidarity groups/ Federations
- ★ Rehabilitation and treatment of severely disabled

- ★ Skill development
- ★ Other vulnerability reduction measures/ schemes
- ★ Educational assistance to disabled children, children of disabled and orphans

A2b. Livelihood Fund -

Rs. 299.00 crores

- ★ SHGs/Economic Activity Groups prepare proposals for economic activities with PFT help
- ★ District unit will check the proposals and sanction
- ★ Up to 50% of project funds as grant
- ★ 40% bank linkage
- ★ 10% from group savings

A2c. Gram Panchayat Fund -

Rs. 53.60 crores

- ★ Project initiation fund
- ★ Incentives to Gram Panchayats which implement the project pro-actively and are pro- poor

A2d. Federation Development & Paraprofessional Development Fund - Rs. 20.00 crores

- ★ This fund will be used to promote federations which will provide the services demanded by SHG and EAG members like monitoring, capacity building, conflict resolution, internal audits, facilitation of external audits, linkages with banks and insurance companies, etc.

- ★ Support to higher level economic activities through federations
- ★ Identifying local resource persons and provide training as para professionals
- ★ Capacity building of state and district staff including International Exposures
- ★ Demand-driven capacity building
- ★ Develop all necessary communication material, development and facilitation assignments.

Component - B

District and state support for village

Livelihood program (Rs.31.53 crores)

The objective of this component is to

- (i) nurture and develop competent staff, resource persons and agencies with required skills and capabilities at both the district and state levels to support village institutions, (ii) establish service standards to enhance responsiveness and timely support of district and state levels to village institutions, (iii) build linkages and tie-ups with support organizations and service providers to enable communities to broaden livelihood options and improve sustainability of livelihood activities, and (iv) establish monitoring, evaluation and learning systems to monitor project progress.

BI - Capacity Building at the State & District Level (Rs. 10.68 crores)

- ★ Induction of the state and district staff
- ★ Capacity building of technical support persons, appraisers and environment resource persons
- ★ Orientation to Facilitating Agencies
- ★ Sensitization of the line departments and bankers
- ★ Workshops for various functional areas developing manuals for main project activities giving operational guidelines

B2 - Support to Livelihoods (Rs. 15.60 crores)

- ★ District livelihoods sector-based activity resource centers or demonstration sites
- ★ Livelihoods Advisory Groups (thematic) at state and district level
- ★ State and District Livelihoods Capacity Building / Resource Organizations
- ★ Bringing in technology tie-ups, working out product development activities, market feasibility analysis etc.
- ★ Working out strategic alliances and partnerships with producers' co-operatives, private sector, commodity boards, industry confederations, export promotion organizations etc. Developing new livelihood options in the fields like ICT, Non-farm, Corporate Services, Lifestyle needs
- ★ Undertaking market scanning to identify new emerging opportunities for enhancing the livelihoods of the poor
- ★ Promote innovation within the community for addressing the livelihood needs of the poor including vulnerable within the present constraints.

B3 - Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (Rs. 52.6 crores)

- ★ Development of Systems MIS, FMS, Accounting packages for SHGs and EAGs and Community Monitoring
- ★ Internal learning forums

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning exercises like process monitoring, mid term review and end of project evaluation.

Component - C

Project Management (Rs.48.58 crores)

This component would facilitate overall co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and learning of the project at state and district levels. It would include setting up and strengthening state and district level project units, providing office infrastructure and logistic support and setting up monitoring, evaluation and learning systems.

Project Implementation Arrangements

The implementation arrangements at various levels are described below:

(a) Community and Village Level: The proposed institutional arrangements would ensure that communities are in the driving seat in terms of organizing themselves, identifying the target poor, prioritizing their investments, allocating resources, preparing and implementing livelihood subprojects, and maintaining their assets. The following community organizations would play an important role: (i) Village Assembly, (ii) Grama Panchayats, (iii) VPRC and (iv) EAGs and their Federations.

(i) The Village Assembly, consisting of all voting households in a village, would be the supreme body and will approve the list of eligible beneficiaries (identified through participatory identification of the poor), the Overall Capacity Building and the Village Livelihood Plans, formation of Village Poverty Reduction Committee and a Social Audit Committee (SAC).

(ii) The Grama Panchayats (GP) would be responsible for kick-starting project implementation and facilitating the start up activities including formation of the VPRC as well as for implementing GP Incentive Fund. The GP representation in the VPRC is expected to bring in synergy within the village



institutions and develop a relationship of trust between the elected representatives and community members.

(iii) Village Poverty Reduction Committee (VPRC) would be an inclusive and autonomous institution at the village level, accountable to the Village Assembly and would be responsible for implementation of the project. Each hamlet in the village would be represented in the VPRC through a woman SHG member elected from the target poor. The existing village level institutions - GPs and SHGs- will also be

represented in VPRC to ensure convergence and partnerships. VPRC will have representation from the SC and ST communities and also the disabled. At least 50 percent of the representatives will be women.

(iv) Economic Activity Groups: The EAGs would be responsible for planning and implementing livelihood/income generating activities.

(b) Cluster Level: At the cluster level, a Project Facilitation Team (PFT), covering about 10-15 Gram Panchayats, will be set up with the key responsibility of forming and strengthening local institutions of the poor in the village. The PFTs would be accountable to the District Project Management Unit (DPMUs) as well as to the beneficiaries that they serve and their continuation would depend on the satisfactory report cards from the beneficiaries and evaluation from the DPMUs.

Each PFT will have the following 5 members

1. Team leader
2. Facilitator, Social mobilization
3. Facilitator, Livelihoods
4. Facilitator, Micro finance and Enterprises
5. Facilitator, Accounts & Monitoring.

(c) District Level: At the District level, the responsibility for guiding and facilitating the implementation of the project will be vested with the District Pudhu Vazhvu Society registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975, and will have a 15 member General Body chaired by the District Collector. The District Project Manager (DPM) would be the Member-Secretary of the district society and the team leader of the District Project Management Unit (DPMU).

(d) State Level: Given the larger mandate of the project to address livelihood issues of both women and men amongst the vulnerable and disadvantaged, an autonomous Society has been set-up at the state level to provide overall guidance, vision and direction to the program and manage, coordinate and monitor project implementation. The State "Pudhu Vazhvu" Society has been registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975, and will have a 15 member General Body chaired by the Finance Secretary. The management of the Society is vested with an Executive Committee chaired by the Secretary, Social Welfare and will include representatives from government, non-governmental, corporate and civil society organizations. The Project Director will be the Member-Secretary of the Society and will be assisted by a multi-disciplinary team of specialists.

Expected Outcomes/ indicators of the Project

- ★ 20% increase in incremental income against base year for 50 % of the target households by end of project.
- ★ 70% target households should have increased their income.
- ★ At least 70% of all identified vulnerable population e.g disabled and tribals are organized into SHGs and have accessed special assistance funds.
- ★ At least 70% of SHGs/EAGs of the poor have accessed funds through linkage with banks and other financial institutions.

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Rs. 50 CRORES FOR IMMEDIATE RESTORATION WORKS



I reviewed the flood situation in Chennai City on 30.10.2005 with special reference to the removal of water from areas that were waterlogged till yesterday.

The flood water in Pulianthope, Perambur, Vyasarpadi and Tondiarpet has receded almost completely, thanks to the special steps taken yesterday by the Public Works Department and Corporation authorities. The water logging in a few by-lanes in the above areas is also likely to be set right by this evening. The water stagnating in

Erukkenchery and Ganesapuram Subways has been pumped out and the roads have been opened to traffic. The Corporation has taken up conservancy work and public sanitation measures on a mass scale in the areas which were water-logged till yesterday namely, Pulianthope, Perambur, Vyasarpadi and Tondiarpet. Mobile Health Centres are also operating in these areas.

On my directions, Metro Water Board has pressed into service a large number of water tankers to supply drinking water in these areas.

The Corporation of Chennai has distributed 1,25,000 food packets this morning. I have directed that the distribution of food packets should be continued to all those who may need it.

The Tamil Nadu Electricity Board has restored power supply in all the 808 11 - KV feeder lines which are supplying power to Chennai City.

As regards milk supply, Aavin has ensured despatch of the entire quantity this morning also. Instructions have been given to Aavin

to increase the production capacity in the city dairies and also to bring in additional supply from the districts to meet the increasing demand in the city.

I have had detailed discussions on the nature of the relief assistance to be provided. In all the districts affected due to the floods in the Cauvery and other rivers such as the Thenpennaiyar, Palar, etc., the Collectors are completing the enumeration of the families affected so that a relief package can be extended. In Chennai City, the enumeration is about to commence. I have reviewed the position with reference to the need to ensure prompt distribution of the relief package to all those who are affected. Keeping this in mind, I have decided to provide the people affected with the following relief packages in order to enable them to come back to full normalcy quickly.

A relief package consisting of cash relief of Rs.2,000/-, 10 Kgs. of Rice, 1 Dhoti and 1 Saree and 1 litre of Kerosene will be given to each family which has suffered with the hut being fully damaged. For a partly damaged hut, cash relief of Rs.1,000/-, 10 Kgs. of Rice, 1 Dhoti and 1 Saree and 1 litre of Kerosene will be given. This relief package will be given to all those affected throughout the State immediately. I have directed the Collectors of all districts to distribute this relief package at once. This will commence tomorrow.

For those affected by the floods in Chennai City and adjoining areas, apart from the above package for huts, I have set out a special relief package taking note of the built up nature of these areas. The Collector together with the Corporation Commissioner in Chennai City are enumerating the Streets in low-income areas where flooding occurred. All the families in such streets holding a ration card or who have been enumerated for issue of ration card will be provided the relief package. This relief package will consist of a cash relief of Rs.2,000/-, 10 kgs. of Rice, 1 Dhoti and 1 Saree and 1 litre of Kerosene.

The District Collectors are taking up a detailed assessment of damages to crops in the flood affected areas. A separate package of relief to the farmers whose crops have been affected will be announced separately.

In order to enable the Collectors to take up immediate restoration works covering roads, irrigation systems and tanks and buildings, I have sanctioned a sum of Rs.50 crores. A detailed assessment has been taken up and based on this detailed assessment, a Memorandum requesting assistance from the Government of India will be finalised shortly.

- Statement of SELVI J JAYALALITHAA,
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

30.10.2005

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INTER-MINISTERIAL CENTRAL TEAM FOR AN ON THE SPOT ASSESSMENT OF THE FLOOD DAMAGES IN TAMIL NADU



The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Selvi J Jayalalithaa had written to the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 3.11.2005 enclosing a detailed Memorandum and requesting him to depute a Central Team immediately to assess the damage caused by torrential rains and floods in Tamil Nadu for determining the assistance required from the National Calamity Contingency Fund. The total assistance sought earlier from the National Calamity Contingency Fund was Rs.1,120 crores.

In response to the request of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, the Government of India has deputed an Inter-Ministerial Central Team for an on the spot assessment of the

flood damages in Tamil Nadu. The Central Team headed by Thiru D.S.Mishra, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi met the Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalalithaa on 17.11.2005 at the Secretariat. The Hon'ble Chief Minister indicated her thanks to the Hon'ble Prime Minister and the Hon'ble Union Home Minister for deputing the Central Team to Tamil Nadu on her request. The Central Team were in Tamil Nadu from 17.11.2005 to 20.11.2005.

During the discussion, the Hon'ble Chief Minister informed the Central Team that Tamil Nadu normally receives 979 mm rainfall every year, of which 48% is from the

North-East monsoon. The State had faced an unprecedented drought in the years 2002 and 2003. It continued to reel under the drought conditions till the middle of September, 2004. Two Central Teams visited the State in February and September, 2004 to assess the drought situation in the State. In the last week of October, 2004 abnormal rainfall in the coastal districts resulted in localized floods causing heavy damages to crops, roads and irrigation systems. On the request of the State Government, the Government of India deputed a Team which visited the State in December, 2004.

Following these successive droughts and floods, the State had to face another disaster of unprecedented magnitude, i.e., Tsunami on 26th December, 2004. While the Tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction works are still going on, the State received a rainfall of 291.66 mm in October, 2005 against the normal rainfall of 187.10 mm in October. On 24-10-2005 the Mettur dam received an inflow of 2.24 lakh cusecs of water. After 1961, this is the first occasion that Mettur Dam witnessed such a massive inflow. When this occurred the Mettur Reservoir was already full. The State Government had no option but to discharge the entire surplus water into the Cauvery system resulting in floods in the Cauvery districts which were already receiving heavy rainfall at the same time. This resulted in damage to more than 50,000 hectares of crops and marooning of several villages.

This was the first time in more than forty years that water of this quantum was

discharged into the Cauvery system. Consequently, this was a calamity of rare severity. The unprecedented flow of water in the Cauvery river posed a major threat to the temple town of Srirangam in Trichy district. By regulating the discharge of the surplus waters judiciously and taking all preventive measures on a war-footing, the State Government was able to avert a major disaster in Srirangam.

Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri districts are drought prone districts in the western part of the State. There was unprecedented rain followed by floods. Two lanes of the National Highway to Bangalore were washed away. Tanks breached and the South Pennaiyar river was in spate.

Chennai City and adjoining districts experienced torrential rains exceeding 44 cms over a span of 48 hours from 8.30 A.M. on 26.10.2005 to 8.30 A.M. on 28.10.2005. Of this, nearly 40 cms. was received between 3.30 A.M. and 4.00 P.M. on 27.10.2005.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister further informed the Central Team that she visited the areas battered by incessant rains in Chennai city on 27.10.2005 itself. She also reviewed the situation every day with the Ministers and officers concerned till normalcy was restored. Ministers and I.A.S. Officers were deputed to the different districts and Chennai to co-ordinate the relief and rescue operations. Nearly 6.50 lakh people had to be evacuated from low lying areas and accommodated in more than 500 relief centres in the affected districts. More than 68 lakh food packets were supplied at the

relief centres. The help of the Army was taken in the rescue operations and movement of supplies in Pulianthope area in Chennai city and also in Trichy district for strengthening the bund on the Cauvery at Srirangam. The help of Indian Air Force was taken on 24.10.2005 to rescue 27 persons who were marooned in Salem district. The Coast Guard helped in Madipakkam area in Chennai.

The State Government has so far sanctioned Rs.130 crores to provide relief to the affected families in Chennai city and other districts. Sanction has also been accorded for Rs.50 crores for immediate restoration works, covering roads, irrigation systems, tanks and buildings. 158 persons lost their lives due to rains and floods for which the State Government has sanctioned Rs. 50,000/- as relief to each of the families of deceased persons. The Agriculture Department has taken steps to save as much of the inundated crops as possible. The Revenue and Agriculture departments are jointly assessing the damage to the crops. Large areas of agricultural crops are still under inundation in a few districts. The crop damage in these areas will be assessed as soon as the water recedes. As per present indications, 89,653 hectares are likely to suffer either total damage or yield-loss of more than 50%. The tanks, river banks and channels which have breached have to be strengthened. The roads have suffered the worst damage. The Highways and Rural Development departments have incurred a lot of expenditure to restore these roads to their original condition.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalalithaa informed the Central Team that the State's Calamity Relief Fund has been totally exhausted because of Tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction. The State Government has no option but to seek liberal assistance from the Government of India to tackle the situation arising out of this calamity of rare severity. Never in the past has the State suffered continuously from one type of natural calamity or the other for four consecutive years as at present. The Hon'ble Chief Minister stressed that what Tamil Nadu faces today is a calamity of extreme severity and relief from the Government of India should be substantial.

In the Memorandum already sent to the Government of India on 3.11.2005, the State Government had requested for an assistance of Rs.1,120 crores from the National Calamity Contingency Fund. Subsequently, five districts viz., Chennai, Thiruvallur, Kancheepuram, Nagapattinam and Cuddalore received very heavy rains in yet another spell worsening the situation further. The Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalalithaa indicated that the damages caused by these subsequent heavy rains have been assessed and the total assistance required from the National Calamity Contingency Fund comes to Rs.1,742 crores.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalalithaa requested the Team Leader and Members of the Central Team to visit the affected areas and interact with the officials of the State Government to make a proper assessment of the overall impact of the torrential rains and floods.

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FLOOD SITUATION AND RELIEF OPERATIONS

I reviewed the flood situation and relief operations in the State on 8.11.2005 at the Secretariat.

In the 24 hours ending at 8.30 a.m. on 8.11.2005, Nagapattinam District has received the highest rainfall in the State. It has recorded an average rainfall of 18 cms in one day, following continuous rain in the previous days. Consequently, a large extent of agricultural land has been inundated. It is estimated that about 40,000 hectares of agricultural lands are under inundation. The Collector, Nagapattinam, has made arrangements to evacuate people from low lying areas and shift them to relief centres. 50 relief centres have been opened and 77,000 people have been accommodated at the relief centres. They are being provided food, drinking water and other facilities. I have directed the Collector, Nagapattinam, to continue with these arrangements. I have deputed the Minister for Food & Co-operation and the Minister for Forests and Environment to Nagapattinam District to oversee the relief operations. I have deputed a senior IAS Officer to co-ordinate the relief

operations, supporting the Collector, Nagapattinam District.

In Cuddalore District also the heavy rainfall has led to inundation. People in the low lying and inundated areas have been evacuated by the District Administration and accommodated in 30 relief centres. Food packets are being supplied to about 5,000 persons in the District. Due to the heavy inflow into the Veeranam Tank, the flood surplus has been opened today 8.11.2005 at about 10.00 a.m. As a precautionary step the Collector, Cuddalore is organizing relief centres to accommodate persons from villages below Veeranam Tank. The District Administration has alerted the people lying in these areas. The Paravanar River has breached near Boothampadi village. About 25 families living in low lying areas in 2 villages have been evacuated from this area. The river breach is being closed. The District Administration and the Public Works Department are constantly keeping vigil and are in a state of readiness to take necessary measures. I have asked the Minister for Health and the Minister for Education and

Commercial Taxes to oversee the relief operations in Cuddalore District. A senior IAS Officer is also being deputed to Cuddalore to assist the Collector, Cuddalore District, in relief operations.

Considering the rainfall in the tail end districts of Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur and Cuddalore, the discharge from Grand Anaicut into Vennar and Cauvery rivers has been totally stopped. Due to lower surplus at Mettur the flood discharge through the Coleroon has got reduced. The Public Works Department is constantly monitoring the situation and regulating the water discharge judiciously.

In Chennai City, the rainfall has come down considerably. In the 24 hours ending at 8.30 A.M. on 8.11.2005, Chennai recorded a rainfall of 1.9 cms. Consequently, the water in most of the inundated areas is receding rapidly. On 7.11.2005, about 4.5 lakh food packets were supplied to the affected persons. I have directed that this should be continued today.

I have directed the Chief Engineer, Highways, to immediately attend to road cuts and road damages in Chennai City. I have asked the Commissioner, Corporation of Chennai, to do so in respect of Corporation Roads. Yesterday (7.11.2005) there was considerable water over flow on the Inner Ring Road between Koyambedu and Vadapalani, due to a breach in Maduravoyal Eri. I had asked the Highways and Public Works Departments as also the Chennai Corporation to co-ordinate and restore traffic. Today traffic has been restored.

I have given special instructions to the Managing Director, Metro Water, to ensure that the pumps in all the 178 sewage pumping stations function without any break down. Metro Water is ensuring that all the pumping stations function round the clock. Metro Water is actually clearing 700 MLD through the sewerage system against a normal daily throughput of 350 MLD.

The Special Relief Package comprising Rs.2000/- cash, 10 Kilos of rice, saree, dhoti and one litre of kerosene has been very well received as a substantial and timely support package for those affected. On my directions the number of relief package distribution centres in the two taluks of Fort - Tondiarpet and Perambur - Purasawalkam have been increased from a total of 20 to 40 and all the 40 centres are functioning today. I have instructed that the number of centres can be further increased based on need. So far, about 1.25 lakh families have been provided with the relief package given by my Government in Chennai. The speed of issue of coupons at the Public Distribution System outlets has been stepped up from 30,000 per day to 50,000. I have instructed that additional staff from all departments should be mobilized so that the number of centres can be further increased. I have instructed the Collector, Chennai, and the Commissioner of Chennai Corporation to verify all cases of grievances of exclusion thoroughly and provide the relief package to genuinely affected families.

- Statement of

SELVI J JAYALALITHAA,

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu,
on 8.11.2005

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AN ADVANCE OF Rs.3,000 CRORES MAY BE RELEASED FROM THE NATIONAL CALAMITY CONTINGENCY FUND



I am writing this letter to request you to depute one more Central Team to assess the extensive damage caused by the latest floods since 21.11.2005.

You may recall that I had written to you on 3.11.2005 requesting you to depute a Central Team to assess the damage caused by torrential rains and floods in Tamil Nadu. In response to my request, you were kind enough to depute an Inter-Ministerial Team which visited the State between 17.11.2005 and 20.11.2005 and toured some of the affected Districts. I am sure the team would be submitting its report to the Government of India shortly.

As you are aware, even before we could recover from the damages suffered by the torrential downpour in two spells, first in the

second fortnight of October and again in the first fortnight of November, the State has had another spell of heavy downpour which is unprecedented in our living memory. Between 21.11.2005 and 24.11.2005, the affected 15 Districts have received an average rainfall of 263 mm. The latest spell has caused unprecedented and extensive flooding in 15 Districts in the State. The Cauvery Delta Districts which include Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Thiruvavur and Trichy have borne the brunt of the damage yet again.

I would like to inform you that some of these Districts were affected by floods last year followed by the tsunami in December, 2004. The Cauvery Delta farmers have not had a normal monsoon for the fourth year in succession. The State had earlier suffered two years of continuous drought. The unprecedented rains this week have caused heavy flooding in the Cauvery system, particularly in the Coleroon River which has registered a flow of 3.35 lakh cusecs on 25.11.2005, which is the highest recorded since the year 1939.

The State Government has taken a number of measures to tackle this calamity. We have also requisitioned the services of the Army, Air Force, Navy and the Coast Guard for our

rescue and relief operations. The rains have claimed a number of lives in the last two days. Two buses, one in Ramanathapuram District and another in Thanjavur District with a total of about 150 passengers have been washed away in the flash floods, killing 76 persons. More than 5 lakh people had to be evacuated from low-lying areas to safer places. The process is still going on.

The damage to infrastructure in the latest floods has been the most extensive. As of now, more than 20,000 kms. of roads have been damaged. After last month's floods, temporary restoration works had been taken up and completed in most of these roads. More than 3,000 Irrigation Tanks and 1,500 River Banks and Channels have breached due to heavy floods all over the State. Bridges and culverts have also suffered heavy damage. Consequently, road transport was disrupted in the affected Districts. Rail traffic has also been suspended in most part of the State, since railway tracks have suffered inundation and damage.

The agricultural production of the State is mainly dependent on the long term Samba crop which comes up for harvest in December/January. Due to the recent rains and floods, the damage to the standing crops is likely to be very extensive. An exact assessment of the actual damage can be done only after the water drains off from the fields. As per preliminary estimates, it is apprehended that a minimum of 3.5 lakh hectares of agricultural crops are either fully or partially damaged.

The havoc caused by the floods was so grave that many of the affected areas were

inaccessible and completely cut off. The situation in some of the affected areas has slightly improved today (26.11.2005). I personally visited some of the worst affected areas in Cuddalore District today and reviewed the rescue and relief operations. I propose to visit the other affected Districts in the next two days. On my directions, the entire administration has been fully geared up to deal with the grim situation.

I wish to bring to your kind notice that what I have stated in this letter is only a preliminary assessment of the damages to crops and infrastructure. As the rescue and relief operations are still going on, and in view of the fact that the rains are still continuing, further detailed assessment will be undertaken once the situation stabilizes.

In view of the foregoing, I request you to kindly send another Central Team urgently in order to see and assess the extent of loss suffered by the State. A detailed Memorandum will be presented to the Central Team on their arrival.

Pending a detailed assessment by the Central Team, I request that an advance of Rs.3,000 crores may be released from the National Calamity Contingency Fund to attend to the immediate relief and restoration works.

I look forward to your positive response.

Text of the D.O. Letter dated 26.11.2005
addressed to Dr. Manmohan Singh,

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India by

SELVI J JAYALALITHAA,

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

STATE MACHINERY WAS GALVANIZED FOR IMMEDIATE RESCUE AND RELIEF OPERATIONS

Hon'ble Chief Minister **SELVI J JAYALALITHAA**

28.11.2005

Tamil Nadu has been reeling under the devastation caused by unprecedented floods in the last few weeks. The State experienced heavy rains in three distinct spells during the current season. Consequently, 22 districts have been badly affected by floods during these spells.

During the current spell, there has been extensive damage to infrastructure, especially roads, bridges, culverts and irrigation systems in the affected districts. Damage to crops has been widespread. Dwelling houses have also suffered severe damage. On my instructions, the State machinery was galvanized for immediate rescue and relief operations. Temporary restoration of damaged infrastructure has also been attended to promptly.

I had announced on 30.10.2005, a relief package consisting of cash relief of Rs.2000/-, 10 Kgs. of Rice, one Saree, one Dhoti and one litre of Kerosene to each family which had suffered with the hut being fully damaged. For a partly damaged hut, cash relief of Rs.1000/-, 10 Kgs. of Rice, one



Saree, one Dhoti and one litre of Kerosene was announced. This relief amount is being disbursed systematically by the District Collectors.

The latest spell of unprecedented rain has badly affected a wide cross section of the population. I personally visited some of the severely affected districts in the last two days. I could see the devastation caused by the floods in Cuddalore District when I undertook a tour of this District on 26.11.2005 which was the worst affected. Similarly on 27.11.2005, I saw the damage caused in the other Cauvery Delta Districts of Tiruchirappalli, Thanjavur and Nagapattinam. Today (28.11.2005) I am touring Madurai, Dindigul and Karur Districts. I interacted with thousands of people affected by floods in these Districts. I could see the distress caused to these people by marooning of villages, inundation of houses, temporary displacement from their houses due to flood threat, etc. I personally consoled them and assured them that my Government would provide promptly all assistance to enable them to get back to normalcy. On my

MESSAGE

World Thrift Day is celebrated every year on 30th October. I am happy to note that in Tamil Nadu this day is observed with a view to creating awareness of the importance of savings.

The adage that tiny drops make a mighty river, amply exemplifies the concept of thrift. Therefore, it is imperative that people set aside a portion of their income as savings for future needs. The Public



savings of a Nation help in implementing various welfare schemes and in improving basic amenities, thereby paving the way for the economic development of the country.

Hence, on this World Thrift Day, I request the people of Tamil Nadu to open a Savings Account in a nearby Post Office and deposit their savings in this account thereby bringing prosperity to their family and the Nation.

- Selvi J JAYALALITHAA
Hon'ble Chief Minister

instructions, the Collectors have opened a large number of relief centres and provided food and shelter to the affected families. The breadwinners of these affected families had also lost their wages for a few days and were put to a lot of hardship.

Taking into account the plight of a large number of people affected by this calamity of enormous magnitude, I have decided to announce a Special Package of assistance to those who have suffered due to marooning or inundation or temporary displacement from their houses. This package will comprise a cash relief of Rs. 1,000/-, 10 Kgs. of Rice, one Saree, one Dhoti and one litre of Kerosene. This package will cover the families in the following categories of affected villages / towns:-

1. Villages / Towns that had been marooned

or

2. Villages / Towns where people had to be displaced / evacuated because of flood threat

or

3. Villages / Towns where relief centres had to be opened or food packets had to be provided to the people

or

4. Villages / Towns where there was inundation for at least one day

I have already written to the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 26.11.2005 seeking an advance of Rs. 3,000 crores to meet the expenditure for immediate relief and restoration of infrastructure. However, without waiting for Government of India's response, I have announced this Special Package to provide immediate relief to the affected families.

I have instructed the District Collectors to make an immediate assessment of the crop damage and a separate relief package for the affected farmers will be announced expeditiously.

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MAKING AVAILABLE ADDITIONAL KEROSENE TO ALL THE AFFECTED PEOPLE BECOMES INEVITABLE UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES



You are aware of the unprecedented rains in Tamil Nadu during October and November this year and the flood situation which has arisen thrice in quick succession. The most recent floods have been severe and unprecedented. My Government has swung into flood relief operations on a war-footing and various measures have been taken to alleviate the distress of the flood affected people.

I wish to draw your attention to the need for an immediate additional allocation of kerosene for Tamil Nadu to assist those affected by floods. You may be aware that our requirement of kerosene to meet the requirement of card holders under the Public Distribution System is about 1 lakh Kilo Litres per month, whereas our monthly

allocation is only about 59,839 Kilo Litres per month. I have already requested you to increase our monthly allocation of Kerosene under the Public Distribution System in the Memorandum enclosed with my D.O. letter dated 16.9.2004. The Government of India has not yet responded to this request.

Kerosene remains the primary source for cooking and lighting in the rural areas. In the aftermath of the recent heavy spells of rains, the availability of dry fuel like firewood, cow dung etc, has sharply decreased. The non-availability of LPG has also become a cause for concern in recent times. Making available additional kerosene to all the affected people becomes inevitable under these circumstances.

To provide 3 litres of kerosene per card to all the card holders in the 22 districts affected by the recent floods, we require a quantity of 43,200 Kilo Litres. I request that this quantity may be allotted to Tamil Nadu as an additionally over and above the normal allotment for December, 2005, with permission to lift it up to 31-1-2006.

May I request your immediate intervention on this request?"

- A letter dated 30.11.2005 addressed to
Dr. MANMOHAN SINGH,
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India
by **SELVI J JAYALALITHAA,**
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

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I HAVE MADE OUT A STRONG CASE FOR A SPECIAL SUPPORT PACKAGE TO ENABLE FARMERS TO FACE THE FUTURE WITH CONFIDENCE

- STATEMENT OF **SELVI J JAYALALITHAA**,
HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER OF TAMIL NADU on 30.11.2005

I have been reviewing the flood situation in Tamil Nadu on a daily basis with the Ministers and officials of the State Government. On my instructions, the entire administrative machinery has undertaken the rescue and relief operations on a war footing. I have personally visited the worst affected districts of Cuddalore, Tiruchirappalli, Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Madurai, Dindigul, and Karur and supervised the relief operations. I have interacted with the flood-affected people who have been rendered homeless. I have been greatly moved by the plight of the affected persons in the flood-affected Districts. I have promised them that the Government would take all necessary action to provide them with adequate support to rebuild their lives.

Based on the extraordinary severity of the damages which I personally saw, I wrote to the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 26.11.2005 requesting him to extend an advance assistance of Rs. 3,000 crores and to depute a Central Team to assess the flood damage in the State. When the Hon'ble Prime Minister telephoned me on 27.11.2005, I reiterated this. In response to my request, the Government of India has deputed a Central Team to visit the flood-affected Districts and assess the damage while making recommendations on the assistance to be provided. The Central Team has visited the affected Districts on 29.11.2005 and 30.11.2005.

I have today, (30.11.2005) finalised a detailed Memorandum covering all aspects of the assistance sought to enable the



Government of Tamil Nadu to undertake relief, restoration and rehabilitation measures. When the members of the Central Team called on me today (30.11.2005) at the Secretariat, I have stressed the magnitude and the severity of the damage suffered by the State. I have brought it to the specific notice of the Central Team that in no other State have districts been affected thrice in a row within a short period of one month by severe floods. This makes it a calamity of extreme and rare severity. I have strongly emphasized the need to extend full assistance to the Government of Tamil Nadu, as demanded in this critical hour. I have insisted on a total support package of Rs. 13,685 crores together with 2.58 lakh tonnes of Rice and 43,200 Kilo Litres of Kerosene.

I have pointed out to the Central Team that the Memoranda already presented to the Government of India to cover the requirements of the first and second spells of heavy rainfall and floods indicated a total assistance package of Rs. 1,742 crores sought from the Government of India. Now, the Memorandum furnished covering the recent floods last week makes out a strong case for an additional support of Rs. 11,943 crores. The total request for assistance is thus Rs. 13,685 crores. In addition, I have requested an allotment of Rice of 2.58 lakh tonnes and a special allotment of 43,200 Kilo Litres of Kerosene.

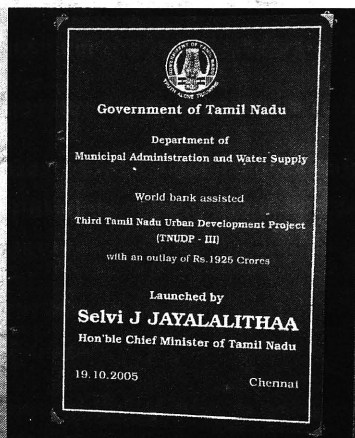
Farmers of Tamil Nadu have suffered from continuous drought in the past three years. This year, just as they were looking forward to a bountiful crop, the floods have wreaked havoc. Considering the continued suffering of the farmers due to successive years of drought and floods, including the torrential rains in three successive spells in the current North East Monsoon, I have made out a strong case for a special support package to enable farmers to face the future with confidence. The scales of assistance adopted by the Government of India have to be comprehensively modified to provide adequate support for farmers. I have demanded that the scale of assistance for raising a fresh paddy crop in lands where the paddy crop has been destroyed should be Rs.8,000 per acre or Rs.20,000 per hectare. Likewise, for other crops, I have proposed different scales of relief adequate to enable farmers to be able to revive their farming operations. I have also insisted that full assistance should be provided to replace agricultural pumpsets which have been washed away or fully damaged and adequate assistance for repair of other damaged pumpsets.

I have carefully reviewed the situation of indebtedness of farmers and the need to provide genuine relief to enable them to

recover and lead a decent life. This cannot be accomplished without a proper approach to the question of farmers' debt. In view of the extraordinary situation created by continuous drought and now by severe floods, I have insisted that the principal and interest of the loans outstanding from farmers amounting to Rs.4,626.65 crores to Co-operative Institutions should be totally written-off and the Government of India should provide this amount to the Government of Tamil Nadu to recoup the same to the Co-operative Institutions. Similar relief should be provided for loans extended by Commercial Banks.

The Memorandum that has been furnished to the Central Team sets out in detail the large number of houses permanently destroyed and the huge number of houses which have been affected by inundation. I have insisted that there is a need for a major programme of building pucca houses for those who have lost their houses. In addition, temporary houses have also to be provided. The housing programme that I have proposed is for Rs. 2,558.24 crores.

Infrastructure has suffered colossal damage. The task of even simple restoration is enormous. Bridges have been washed away. Roads have been obliterated. I have brought home to the notice of the Central Team the enormity of the task and the need for full assistance to restore the infrastructure consisting of roads, bridges, irrigation works, minor irrigation tanks, ooranies and ponds, power supply, public buildings, health infrastructure, drinking water supply systems, community assets, etc. In particular, I have drawn attention to the fact that the roads maintained by the Highways Department and the roads maintained by the Local Bodies have to be re-laid besides reconstructing several bridges. Nearly 32,000 Kms. of roads have to be re-laid. The total cost of the roads restoration programme is Rs.2,523 crores. I have



The Hon'ble Chief Minister **Selvi J Jayalalithaa**, launched the Rs.1,925 crore Tamil Nadu Urban Development Project - III at the Secretariat on 19.10.2005.

stressed that this programme has to be given top priority and full assistance should be provided.

The Kollidam has seen the highest ever floods. This has resulted in several breaches along the banks. Srirangam Town has been severely threatened by the flood waters. The Veeranam Lake has been in severe danger due to the floods. The Vellar and Vadavar ayacuts have been submerged. The river banks have also breached. Both the Cauvery system and the Vennar system have suffered extensive damages. The irrigation restoration programme has to cover all these systems. In addition, thousands of tanks maintained by the Public Works Department and Panchayat Unions as also thousands of ooranies and ponds have suffered extensive breaches. All these have to be restored. The Memorandum includes a request for assistance of Rs.773.99 crores for the restoration of irrigation sources and a separate provision of Rs.60 crores for restoration of ooranies and ponds.

Another important aspect which I have highlighted is the need to provide employment in the form of manual labour to agricultural labour and small and medium farmers in the

context of the loss of work following the damage to agriculture crops. The Memorandum includes the request for a cash support of Rs.77.33 crores and rice of 2.58 lakh tonnes for distribution as wages in providing such employment.

I have comprehensively and elaborately set out the detailed requirement of assistance from the Government of India to enable the Government of Tamil Nadu to undertake relief, restoration and rehabilitation works. I have again and again stressed that this is an unprecedented situation of a calamity of rare and extraordinary severity, compounded by the fact that within a short space of a month the fury and frenzy of the floods had to be faced thrice. This calls for a special dispensation and the ordinary rules and norms cannot apply. I have demanded a special support package for the farmers of Tamil Nadu to enable them to recover and face the future with confidence. I have insisted on a support package for the lakhs and lakhs of the poor who have been devastated in these floods. I have strained every nerve to bring to the specific notice of the Government of India all the details of the assistance required. I do hope that full assistance as demanded by my Government will be forthcoming.

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ENTIRE ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY IS WORKING ON A WAR-FOOTING TO PROVIDE RELIEF TO THE AFFECTED PEOPLE AND TO RESTORE NORMALCY

I have visited the flood affected districts for three days from 26.11.2005 to 28.11.2005 and supervised the rescue and relief measures. On my directions, the entire administrative machinery is working on a war-footing to provide relief to the affected people and to restore normalcy. During my interaction with the flood affected people, I have personally seen their suffering and the hardships which they are going through. I have already announced a special package of relief for the people who have suffered due to marooning or inundation or temporary displacement from their houses. This package consists of Rs.1000/- per family plus 10 Kgs. Rice, one litre Kerosene, one Saree and one Dhoti.

I am aware that in many villages and towns the people have lost their ration cards which were either washed away or destroyed in the floods. I have directed the District Collectors to disburse the relief assistance to all eligible families expeditiously with reference to the list of ration cardholders available with the Collectors. I have also directed the District Collectors to take steps to issue fresh ration cards free of cost to all such families which have lost their ration cards.

There are also a few cases of persons who have applied for ration cards but where the field enquiry process has not been completed. In all such cases the field enquiry will be completed immediately for issue of ration cards to those eligible and simultaneously the flood relief assistance package will also be provided to those affected.

- Statement of
SELVI J JAYALALITHAA,
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
3.12.2005

I have also reviewed the position regarding the distribution of the relief package. Presently those holding rice ration cards alone are eligible for the assistance package. I have now decided that all ration card holders irrespective of the type of the card in the affected areas shall be eligible for the relief package.

I have ordered that immediate priority should be given to the restoration of Drinking Water Supply. In some villages, pump sets have been damaged due to the floods. I have given instructions to the Collectors and the Managing Director, Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board, to attend to immediate restoration of drinking water supply in all these areas. Mobile water supply will also be provided wherever necessary.

Mobile Medical teams have been organised in each District to visit the village affected by floods. Preventive inoculation will be taken up.





Public sanitation and hygiene will be given utmost priority with a major effort launched to clean the villages affected by floods.

A detailed assessment of the crop damage will be undertaken by the Department of Agriculture. With the floods receding, it is now possible to estimate the extent of damage wrought by the recent floods. A suitable package to enable the farmers to undertake fresh planting is being evolved and as soon as the field estimation of the damaged crop is ready, my Government will ensure that farmers are provided assistance to take up a fresh crop. Assistance for Cattle, Sheep and Goat, lost will also be provided after detailed enumeration.

Immediate rescue and relief operations have been undertaken in all districts. Now that the flood waters have started receding, it is necessary to undertake further relief measures and restoration of infrastructure. In order to oversee the relief and restoration work due to floods in the North East monsoon season 2005, I have decided to constitute District Level Committees and Village Level Committees. This will cover all the 22 flood affected districts. In each district there will be a District Committee with the following composition :

1. District Collector
2. MPs representing the flood affected areas
3. MLAs representing the flood affected areas
4. District Panchayat Chairperson
5. District Panchayat Vice Chairperson
6. Panchayat Union Chair persons of the affected areas
7. Two NGOs representatives nominated by the District Collector
8. District Level Officers of the affected areas

At the Village level and at the Ward level in Corporations, Municipalities and Special Village Panchayats, a Committee will be constituted with the following members:-

1. Village Panchayat President / Ward Member
2. Revenue Inspector
3. Village Administrative Officer
4. Two NGOs representatives nominated by the District Collector

It is the endeavour of my Government to ensure that each and every family affected by the recent devastating floods gets relief assistance. The District Administration in the affected districts will take necessary measures to fulfill this objective.

I also reviewed the position in Chennai City, Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram Districts following the torrential downpour in the last 24 hours. In Chennai City, because of heavy inflows into the Virugambakkam Canal from Maduravoyal Lake, the Canal is overflowing flooding the 100 Feet Road, MMDA Colony, Ayyappan Nagar and Sai Nagar areas.

I have instructed the Public Works Department to divert the water from Maduravoyal Lake into the Cooum river and take simultaneous action to pump out water from the inundated areas. The Chembarambakkam Lake has been receiving heavy inflows following unprecedented rains in the catchment area. Action has been taken to regulate the outflow through the Adyar river in such a way that flooding is avoided. People in low lying areas along the Adyar river have also been evacuated to safer places by the Corporation authorities and the Police. Despite a heavy rainfall of 28 cms. as recorded at Meenambakkam Station in the last 24 hours, most of the subways are functional and traffic is flowing normally. Arrangements are being made to restore traffic in Ganesapuram, Erukkanchery, Madley and Aranganathan Subways after pumping out the water. Some areas like West Mambalam and Velacherry in Chennai are still inundated. However, water is receding fast and it is expected that these areas also will become normal in the course of the day today. I have directed the Corporation to open relief centres wherever necessary. So far, 8,000 people have been evacuated and accommodated in community buildings. Arrangements have been made to provide



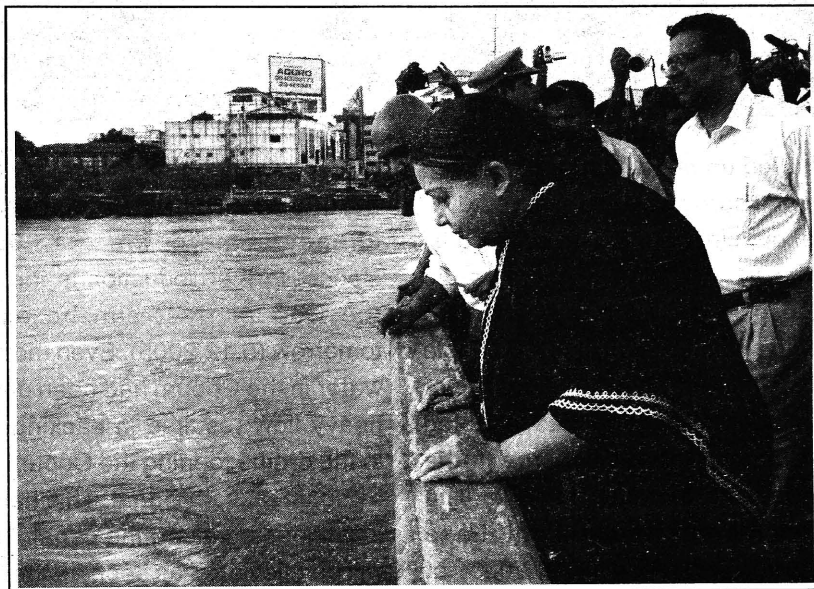
1.5 lakh food packets to those who have been affected.

I have received reports that Madipakkam near Tambaram and Manapakkam in Kancheepuram District are marooned. All the boats available with the Fisheries Department and the Fire and Rescue Services Department have been pressed into service. On my directions, boats have also been requisitioned from the Navy to supplement the rescue and relief efforts. 20 relief centres have been opened in Kancheepuram District and about 5,000 people are being provided food.

In Tiruvallur District, on my directions, the District Administration had taken preventive action to evacuate people from 10 villages in Pulicat area and they have been accommodated in Ponneri for the last two days. Due to heavy rains last night, Ambattur, Maduravoyal and Tiruvallur areas are affected. However, water is receding and I have directed the District authorities to provide food and shelter to all the people who need assistance. More than 10,000 people have been evacuated till now and the process is going on. Arrangements are being made to provide food to about 20,000 persons. ★

FLOOD RELIEF WORK IS IN FULL SWING

- Statement of **SELVI J JAYALALITHAA**,
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
4.12.2005

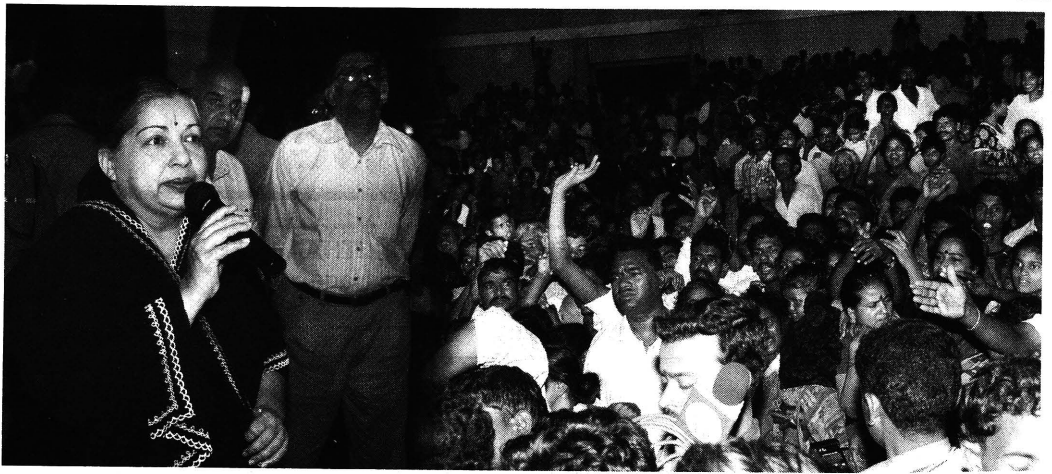


I have reviewed the flood situation in Chennai, Tiruvallur, and Kancheepuram Districts today (4.12.2005) in the context of the huge downpour on 2.12.2005 and the intermittent rains on 3.12.2005, constituting a fourth and unprecedented spell of heavy rainfall this season.

Chennai City and the adjoining areas have been battered by this new spell of heavy rainfall. As all the lakes and reservoirs adjoining the City were already full from the earlier spells of rain, the heavy rainfall on 2.12.2005 with a record rainfall of 28 Cms. at Meenambakkam Station resulted in a

complex situation with the entire precipitation in the huge catchment area having no place to go. This has resulted in heavy flooding of the entire Chennai City.

The river systems and the major drains draining the flood waters in the City have overall functioned extremely well enabling quick drainage of most parts of the City. The Adyar river which has a major catchment adjoining the City and also receives the City's drainage has been flowing full. The Chembarambakkam Lake has been receiving a continuous inflow of more than 10,000 cusecs with a peak of 15,000 cusecs.



As the lake filled up rapidly, advance action to discharge the surplus water into the Adyar river was taken, simultaneously warning all the residents in low lying areas through public address system and mass media including radio and television. 45,000 people have been evacuated from the Adyar river banks. This advance action has enabled preventing a much higher discharge in the Adyar river causing extreme damage. The inflow into Chembambakkam Lake continues to be high today (4.12.2005) at 12,000 cusecs due to heavy rainfall in the Sriperumpudur area. If there is no further rainfall in the catchment area today (4.12.2005), the water in the Adyar will come down by tomorrow (5.12.2005). The situation is being monitored closely.

The Poondi Reservoir has also received massive inflows going upto 35,000 cusecs on 3.12.2005. As the reservoir was already full, this entire quantity had to be discharged. Judicious action to save Chennai City was taken preventing this flow from getting fully into the Cooum river. Thus the flow in the Cooum river was controlled to a maximum of less than 14,000 cusecs. This prevented flooding all along the banks

of the Cooum. Fortunately today (4.12.2005), the inflow into the Poondi reservoir has already come down to 13,000 cusecs. Hence, further reduction in the high flow in the Cooum river can be expected by tomorrow (5.12.2005). Even though the flood water in the Cooum had been controlled, the heavy flow resulted in backing up of water in the drains feeding the Cooum such as the Virugambakkam Canal. This has resulted in local flooding along the canal. This position will be alleviated as soon as the Cooum flow reduces this evening and it takes the water from the feeder canals such as the Virugambakkam Canal.

The heavy rainfall as recorded at the Meenambakkam Station on 2.12.2005 and continuing rainfall on 3.12.2005 has resulted in the water entering the Velachery area which is at the tail end of a large catchment in South Chennai. The entire water from the upper catchment flows towards Velachery and from there on to the sea. While in the earlier spells of rain, the water from the catchment could be stored in the lakes including Velachery Lake, this time with no storage possible, the entire water has collected in the Velachery area waiting to be



absorbed by the sea. With no further heavy rainfall in the catchment area, the water level is beginning to recede rapidly and normalcy will return quickly. I have deputed Special Teams to the Velachery area to ensure quick drainage and relief.

In Chennai City, so far 75,000 persons have been evacuated and accommodated in relief centres. Yesterday (3.12.2005), 3.80 lakh food packets have been given to people who have been affected. 140 relief centres are functioning. Today also about 5 lakh food packets will be distributed. Thus, all those affected persons needing shelter and food have been provided for.

As per the established safety drill to prevent death by electrocution, the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board had disconnected the supply in vulnerable areas as a preventive measure as soon as the flooding commenced. Initially, 83 out of the

total 808 - 11 KV feeders were disconnected. Today (4.12.2005), all the 83 feeders have been reconnected. However, a few distribution transformers below each feeder are still in waterlogged areas and the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board is trying to reconnect them at the earliest.

Despite the paralyzing nature of the huge and intense downpour, the traffic flow has largely been maintained. The Metropolitan Transport Corporation has been maintaining normal bus services. Today (4.12.2005), full normal services are being operated. Milk Supply is completely normal.

Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board has taken advance action to maintain drinking water supply by delivering water services through lorries to areas where water supply has been affected. Immediate action to ensure safe water supply has been taken. The Corporation of



Dr. Vinod Agarwal, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, M/s. SemIndia Inc. along with senior officials met Selvi **J Jayalalithaa**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, on 6.12.2005 at the Secretariat to discuss about setting up of "Sem Fab City" a unique project in the field of Semiconductor Technology.

Chennai has organized medical teams to go around and provide medical services to the affected persons.

Tiruvallur District also has had very heavy rainfall on 2.12.2005. All the lakes in the district have filled up. The heavy rainfall has resulted in breaches to about 35 tanks which are being attended to. 73 relief centres have been organized. Yesterday (3.12.2005), 30,700 persons have been given food. Today (4.12.2005) also more than 50,000 persons are being fed. Evacuation of persons from vulnerable areas has been completed and they are accommodated in relief centres. Flood relief work is in full swing. I have directed Tmt. B. Valarmathi, Minister for Rural Industries, to supervise the relief operations. I have also deputed a Senior IAS Officer to assist the Collector in the relief operations.

Kancheepuram District has also been receiving very heavy rainfall. More than 50,000

people have been evacuated from vulnerable areas. 52 relief centres have been established. 22,279 people have been fed at the relief centres. Thiru V. Somasundaram, Minister for Handlooms and Textiles, has been deputed to supervise the flood relief operations. Another Senior IAS Officer has also been deputed to Kancheepuram District to assist the Collector in relief operations.

The unprecedented downpour on 2.12.2005 coming at the back of three heavy spells of rain within a month has caused enormous flooding of a complex nature. I have geared up the entire administrative machinery to tackle this massive challenge and provide relief to the affected persons forthwith. I am ensuring that the relief operations are proceeding on a war-footing. With the abatement of rain, full normalcy will return immediately.

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A LONG - TERM SOLUTION HAS TO BE FOUND TO TACKLE THE ISSUE OF FLOODING OF SEVERAL HABITATIONS AFFECTING PEOPLE

Statement of **SELVI J JAYALALITHAA**,
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, 6.12.2005



Chennai City, Kancheepuram and Thiruvallur Districts have borne the brunt of the fourth spell of heavy rains that have battered Tamil Nadu for the fourth time this season leading to an unprecedented situation. The downpour from 2.12.2005 to 4.12.2005, with a record intensity on 2.12.2005, has been massive leading to flooding particularly as the lakes adjoining Chennai were already full following the earlier spells of rain. The State Administration has given advance warning in the Media including television about the flood threat in the Adyar, the Cooum, Buckingham Canal and other major drains. Evacuation has been undertaken on a major scale. Enough number of boats were

mobilised to ferry people from inundated areas and relief operations were organized on a war footing.

Today (6.12.2005), I visited some of the affected areas in Kancheepuram District and distributed the relief package to the affected persons. Today (6.12.2005), 30 relief centres are continuing to function in Kancheepuram District where 12,925 persons are being provided food and shelter. From 2.12.2005, 2.04 lakh food packets have been supplied in the affected areas of Kancheepuram District, 12 Mobile Health teams are providing medical assistance in Kancheepuram District.

79 tanks have been breached in the floods in Kancheepuram District and the District Administration has attended to these breaches and all of them have been restored.

I inspected the flood affected areas in Palavakkam and personally interacted with the public. I inspected the inundated areas of Vettuvankani where I could see for myself the inundation caused by the flood waters. I distributed the relief package consisting of Rs.2,000/- in Cash, 10 Kgs. of Rice, 1 Litre of



flooding portions of the villages alongside namely, Kottivakkam, Neelankarai, Palavakkam, Injambakkam, Okkiyam Thoraipakkam, Sholinganallur and Karapakkam. These areas which are located on the banks of the Buckingham Canal have been flooded since the Buckingham Canal has been originally designed only as a navigational canal with a flat bed. The flooding is mainly between the Buckingham Canal and the East Coast Road. I found that the

Kerosene, 1 Saree and 1 Dhoti. I also distributed the same relief package at the relief centre located in the Cylone Shelter at Injambakkam.

At Sholinganallur, I distributed the relief package consisting of Rs.2,000/- in Cash, 10 Kgs. of Rice, 1 Litre of Kerosene, 1 Saree and 1 Dhoti to the affected persons.

At Sholinganallur, I saw the Buckingham Canal overflowing its banks and

entire water draining from South Chennai through the Pallikaranai swamp had collected on both sides of the Buckingham Canal and the canal was unable to handle the huge volume of water which is normally to be discharged into the Muttukadu backwaters and then into the sea. Further, the localities West of the Pallikaranai swamp, such as Velachery, Madipakkam, Ullagaram, Puzhuthivakkam, Pallikaranai, Kovilampakkam, Nanmangalam and Perungudi also



have been flooded due to the same problem namely, the inability of the Buckingham Canal to clear out quickly the flood water following heavy rains.

A long-term solution has to be found to tackle this issue of flooding of several habitations affecting people, while at the same time protecting the natural wet lands such as the Pallikaranai swamp with its unique bio-diversity. These wet lands serve an important function of holding the surplus water particularly in the North-East Monsoon season and preventing sea water ingress as a fresh water barrier.

I have taken note of all these requirements with the objective of providing a permanent solution to the problems faced by the people in these habitations due to flooding every North-East Monsoon season and particularly in times when the rainfall is heavy as in the current season. I have ordered immediately a detailed investigation to have a regulated canal (straight cut) direct to the sea from the Buckingham Canal area adjoining the Okkiyam Maduvu. This straight

cut will relieve the stagnation and backing up experienced by all the habitations in the area. The Public Works Department will immediately survey the area and determine the alignment for the straight cut. Such a regulated straight cut allowing a certain amount of fresh water to remain in the wet lands while at the same time, ensuring faster discharge of the surplus water would be the best long-term solution.

The flow in Cooum and Adyar has drastically come down. The flow in Cooum has come down from 15,000 cusecs on 4.12.2005 to 7,000 cusecs today (6.12.2005). The flow in the Adyar has come down from 31,000 cusecs on 4.12.2005 to 15,000 cusecs today (6.12.2005). The water level in Adyar river has come down by over 5 feet. Drinking water supply, milk supply and bus transport services are maintained normally. But for a few pockets in localities like Velachery, which are under inundation, power supply has been restored in all areas.

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THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE TAMIL NADU POLICE



I am glad that the Times Group is bringing out a special booklet to highlight the achievements of the Tamil Nadu Police. The vision of my Government is to bring about all round social and economic development in Tamil Nadu, achieving growth with equity and making Tamil Nadu the Numero Uno State in every sphere. If this vision is to be realised, the perfect maintenance of law and order is imperative. The effective and firm measures taken by my Government have made Tamil Nadu a haven of peace and tranquillity and this has been made possible by the devotion to duty, hard work and commitment of the Tamil Nadu Police.

My Government is committed to making the Tamil Nadu Police a thoroughly modern, efficient, honest and people-friendly Force, yet ruthlessly tough on law breakers to ensure peace and stability, which are the sine qua non of growth and rapid development in the State. I have, therefore, taken a number of innovative measures to professionalise and enhance the efficiency of the Tamil Nadu Police Force. Apart from strengthening infrastructure, arms, mobility and communications and housing for the Police, the emphasis is on enhancing their capabilities to counter terrorism, cyber crimes, video-piracy and white-collar crimes. The establishment of a Coastal Security Group has beefed up Coastal security. We have also given top priority to

training and sensitising the Police towards their changing role in Society.

To combat crimes against women, All Women Police Stations have been established and the creation of Mobile Counselling Centres is a measure intended to instill a sense of confidence in women seeking justice and redressal of their grievances. The establishment of a Women Commando Force and an All Women Police Battalion are firsts for any State Police Force at the national level.

Tamil Nadu's Community Policing initiative has been acclaimed as a role model in developing nations and has given a new dimension to policing in the State, making it a people-centred Force. Similarly, Tamil Nadu's programme of gender sensitization, setting up of an institutionalised mechanism for Grievance Redressal within the Police Force, and the programme of getting ISO certification for Police Stations and Police Units are innovations that have enhanced the morale of the Force and its image in the public eye.

With the continued support of my Government, I have no doubt that the Tamil Nadu Police will maintain its premier position as the most professional Police Force in India.

I commend this positive initiative of the Times Group, Chennai, in highlighting the achievements of the Tamil Nadu Government and the Tamil Nadu Police.

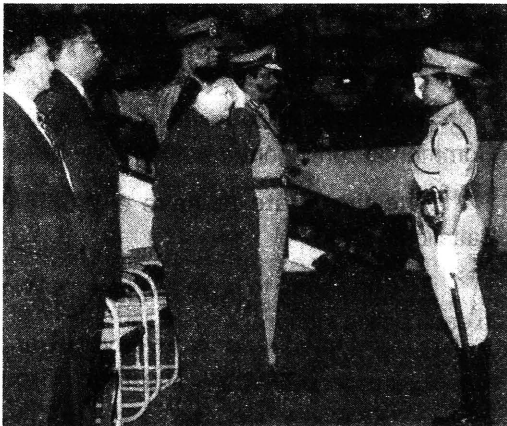
- SELVI J JAYALALITHAA
Hon'ble Chief Minister

WOMEN POWER



Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalithaa envisioned setting up of exclusive AWPS to address the problems of women. The first AWPS were introduced in Chennai in 1992; today there are 195 AWPS across the state. Each AWP has been sanctioned one Inspector, one Sub-Inspector, three Head Constables and ten Constables. All the AWPS have been provided with Jeeps and 35 Eicher vans have been provided exclusively for mobile counselling.

The AWPS scheme has proved to be a resounding success and is a real feather in the cap of the TN Police - it more than anything else illustrates how the force is changing and



adapting to the times. Statistics reveal that after several AWPS were opened in 2002, there was a steep rise in reported crimes against women, which indicates that till then, these crimes went unreported. A year after the AWPS have started functioning in all the districts, the number of dowry deaths and instances of sexual harassment have shown a significant decrease, attesting to the power and effectiveness of the AWPS.

Women to the fore

Among its series of firsts, Tamil Nadu is also the first state to have an elite Women Commando contingent whose members have been trained in the most modern and rigorous techniques of commando operations. At the behest of the Chief Minister, a training programme was conducted for women commandos in January 2003. A total of 130 women completed the training successfully.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalithaa, commissioned a women police battalion, stated to be the first in any State police force, in January 2004. The battalion, headquartered in Avadi, consists exclusively of women personnel from the rank of constables to commandants. Currently, the "Women Battalion has a strength of 1078.

Operation Success

It was the manhunt to cap all manhunts - the hunt for notorious criminal Veerappan. So in October 2004, when the Tamil Nadu STF, under the leadership of Thiru. K Vijay Kumar, successfully put an end to the brigand's reign of terror, it made media headlines across the country. Veerappan was a ruthless killer, a smuggler and a poacher and during his reign of terror, he killed 44 policemen and scores of innocent people.



Nabbing Veerappan was top priority for the Hon'ble Chief Minister. To fulfill this aim, the Tamil Nadu STF had worked out a comprehensive strategy to secure Veerappan. Meticulous and painstaking planning went into the operation. When the Hon'ble Chief Minister assumed office in 2001, the Tamil Nadu STF was reactivated with renewed energy. The STF was provided with sophisticated weapons, modern equipment and vehicles and the Intelligence Collection Teams were strengthened. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also gave the STF the freedom to perform their duties freely and fairly with the single objective of nabbing Veerappan.

The STF personnel toiled day and night for the past 20 years in their mission against forest brigand Veerappan. Finally, thanks to shrewd and intelligent planning on their part, they brought an end to the Veerappan menace in their 20-minute operation. The Hon'ble Chief Minister says, "By their brave and courageous act, Tamil Nadu STF men, asserted my faith reposed on them and made it a reality. This is a victory to my

unshakable confidence reposed on Tamil Nadu Police.

The Tamil Nadu Police has many active achievements to its credit

It is the fifth largest State Police Force in India.

The largest strength of Women Police Personnel in the Country

The highest number of Women Police Stations in the Country



The greatest number of computers in the Country

The first state in India to form a separate cell to control and curb video piracy

The first to initiate a state-of-the art integrated Control Room

The first in India to use dogs in the prevention and detection of crime

The first state to have an elite Women Commando contingent

The first state to have a Women's Battalion.

The first state to have a Women's Wing in each police station.

Courtesy : The Times Group

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TAMIL NADU TOPS THE LIST OF TWENTY STATES ON THE COMPOSITE ECONOMIC FREEDOM INDEX

- SELVI J JAYALALITHAA, Hon'ble Chief Minister

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Government of Tamil Nadu and the BMW Group, Germany, a leading automobile manufacturer in the presence of Selvi J Jayalalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 8.12.2005 at the Secretariat, Chennai.

The MoU was signed by Mr. Ronald Gentsch and Mr. Peter Kronschnabl, General Managers, BMW Group on behalf of BMW and Thiru D. Rajendran, Secretary, Industries Department on behalf of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

BMW, a leading automobile manufacturer in the global market, with an annual turnover of about Euro 40.6 billion (Rs.2,19,240 crores) has been focusing on the premium segment in the international

automobile market. BMW has now proposed to establish its Car Assembly Plant in Tamil Nadu. BMW Group held discussions with many State Governments including the Government of Tamil Nadu. After a detailed evaluation of the infrastructural facilities and support package, BMW Group has now decided that Chennai is the best location for establishing its Car Assembly Plant with an investment of US \$ 40 Million (about Rs.180 crores) in five years. BMW has selected a site in Mahindra World City in Maraimalai Nagar near Chennai.

Mr. Klaus Berning, Senior Vice President, BMW Group indicated to the Hon'ble Chief Minister that the BMW Group has decided to establish its Car Assembly Unit at Chennai due to the favourable investment climate in Tamil Nadu. He thanked the Hon'ble

Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa for the best infrastructural facilities and the support package provided by the Government of Tamil Nadu to the BMW Group. He also thanked the Hon'ble Chief Minister for the fastest response ever seen by Messrs BMW and Speed of the Government of Tamil Nadu in facilitating the BMW Group to invest.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa expressed happiness that the Management of BMW Group has finally chosen Chennai to establish its car assembly plant after an elaborate evaluation of various sites in different States in India and congratulated the BMW Group for establishing its Car Assembly Plant in Chennai. The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that this bears ample testimony to the favourable and conducive investment climate prevalent in Tamil Nadu and the pro - active approach of the Government of Tamil Nadu under her leadership.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that it is a perfect match of BMW's Brand Equity and Chennai's Position as the Destination of Choice and that this will be the harbinger for a flood of new investment proposals from Germany to Tamil Nadu.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that today, Tamil Nadu has emerged as the Destination of Choice for investors and that several independent studies have rated the investment climate in the State highly. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also pointed out that a recent study conducted on "Economic Freedom for States of India, 2005", declared

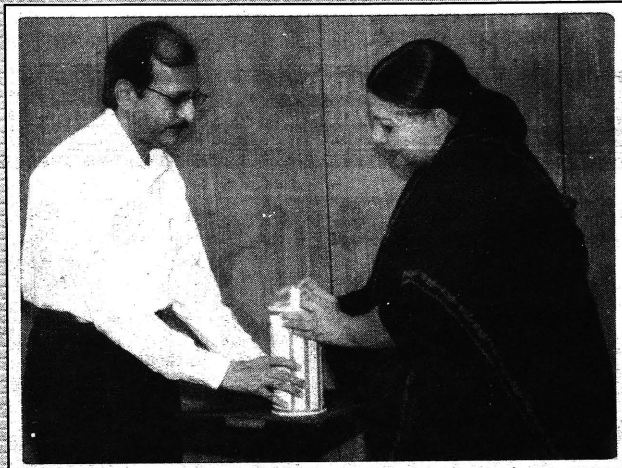
that Tamil Nadu tops the list of 20 States on the Composite Economic Freedom Index and that another study also has pointed out that Tamil Nadu has climbed from the fifth spot to the country's top State this year in terms of ease of doing business and therefore, there is no surprise that Tamil Nadu has become a major recipient of foreign investments.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister expressed the hope that the incentive package and facilitation provided by the Government of Tamil Nadu will significantly enable BMW to scale new heights. The Hon'ble Chief Minister exhorted the BMW Group to bring a cluster of German auto components manufacturers to Chennai and make the Chennai facility, the hub for South East Asia.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister assured the BMW Group that the Government of Tamil Nadu will extend continued support and co-operation to enable BMW Group to grow from strength to strength and wished the BMW Group all success in its endeavour.

The BMW Group was represented by Mr.Klaus Berning, Senior Vice President, Mr. Ronald Gentsch and Mr. Peter Kronschnabl, General Managers. Thiru C. Ponnaiyan, Hon'ble Minister for Finance, Thiru Nainar Nagenthiran, Hon'ble Minister for Industries, Thiru N. Narayanan, Chief Secretary to the Government of Tamil Nadu, Secretary, Finance Department and Secretary, Industries Department were also present.

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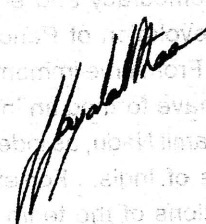
The Hon'ble Chief Minister **Selvi J JAYALALITHAA** contributing Rs.10,500 towards Flag Day Fund at the Secretariat on 7.12.2005.

FLAG DAY MESSAGE

Armed Forces Flag Day is observed every year on 7th December. This day gives us an opportunity to recall the invaluable and immeasurable service rendered by the Armed Forces in diligently guarding the frontiers of our Nation. The Armed Forces, not only defend the country in times of war, but also render yeoman service during natural calamities, often discharging their duties in extreme climatic conditions and difficult terrains.

It is our social responsibility to extend all possible assistance to the families of those who dedicate their lives to the service of the Nation. The Government of Tamil Nadu is in the forefront in looking after the welfare of ex-servicemen by providing health care, employment, training and motivation for self-employment, education for their children, etc.

On this occasion of Armed Forces Flag Day, I extend my greetings and felicitations to the serving and retired personnel of the Armed Forces and I appeal to all citizens to make generous contributions to the Flag Day Fund.



SELVI J JAYALALITHAA

Hon'ble Chief Minister



TAMIL NADU STATE IS A PIONEER IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A VIBRANT TWO TIER SYSTEM OF PANCHAYATS AT THE VILLAGE AND BLOCK LEVELS

- SELVI J JAYALALITHAA,
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

It gives me great pleasure to inaugurate the 4th All India State Election Commissioners Conference in Chennai.

Tamil Nadu has an ancient and glorious tradition of democracy and enjoys pride of place in the evolution of Panchayati Raj in the country. From time immemorial, Village Panchayats have formed an integral part of social life in Tamil Nadu, as indeed they have in other parts of India. For example, the stone inscriptions of the tenth century AD found in the Vaikuntha Perumal Temple in Uthiramerur, Kancheepuram District, describe a system of Village Government;

that is, administration by assemblies and functional committees. It is interesting to note that even in that ancient period, villages were divided into wards with the residents of each ward electing their representatives through what was known as the "Kudavolai" system. There were well established codes for the conduct of elections and the election of representatives of the people at the grass-roots level. There were also rigid qualifications and disqualifications prescribed for the contesting candidates.

Tamil Nadu State is a pioneer in the establishment of a vibrant two tier system of

Panchayats at the Village and Block levels, under the Statutory Structure of the Madras Panchayats Act in 1958. Urban Local Bodies also flourished in Tamil Nadu. You may be aware that the Chennai Municipal Corporation which was established in 1688, is the oldest Municipal Institution in the country. It is, therefore, most appropriate that the 4th Conference of State Election Commissioners is being held in Tamil Nadu.

Based on the recommendations of the "Balwant Rai Mehta Committee", Panchayat Unions were formed in Tamil Nadu as federations of the Village Panchayats in each and every Community Development Block. The Madras Panchayats Act, 1958, was enacted for this purpose. These two tier executive bodies formed under this Act, namely, Village Panchayats and the Panchayat Union Councils, functioned smoothly and satisfactorily upto the mid sixties. The recommendations made in the 'Ashok Mehta Committee Report', which came after the Emergency, did not receive due attention.

Thereafter, a process of development was ushered in whereby local bodies were pushed to the background. The view emerged that these institutions had not been able to acquire the status and dignity of viable and responsible bodies of people, for a variety of reasons, including absence of regular elections, insufficient representation of weaker sections like Scheduled Castes / Scheduled Tribes and Women, inadequate devolution of powers, etc. In the light of the experience of the last forty years and in view of the shortcomings that had been observed, it was considered that there was an imperative need to enshrine in the Constitution certain basic and essential

features of Panchayati Raj Institutions, to impart unity, certainty, continuity and strength to enable them to bloom as institutions of Self Government.

This is the background to the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution. The attempt was clearly to consolidate and mandate the precepts and practices for functional Panchayati Raj Institutions in a uniform and standardised format throughout the country. This has led to a debate as to whether, in an attempt to reform the Panchayati Raj System and put it on a sound Constitutional platform, we have unwittingly strait jacketed the whole ethos of locally evolved practices and perceptions. A uniform and standardised system may be welcome in some contexts, but, given the variety and diversity of our polity, there is need for sufficient flexibility in the design to allow locally relevant and suitable Panchayati Raj Institutions to evolve and grow.

We, in Tamil Nadu, have always felt that a two tier system, which had already been well established and accepted in our State, is more relevant to our grass-roots Institutions. It has been our argument that such variations in the general scheme should be accommodated. At the same time, certain reforms such as the mandated imperative to hold elections periodically are steps taken in the right direction. It is for this reason that even though some features of the Constitutional Amendments were alien to the already well established ethos of Tamil Nadu, I ensured in 1994, when I was the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, that the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act of 1958 was replaced by the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act of 1994, embodying the letter and spirit of the Constitutional Amendments. Amendments

were also made to all Legislations covering Urban Local Bodies.

The Tamil Nadu State Election Commission was duly established to organise elections to Local Bodies according to the Constitutional mandate. In Tamil Nadu, we have an impeccable record of orderly and timely conduct of elections to Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies. My Government has constituted the Third State Finance Commission which is presently deliberating on issues like resource base of Local Bodies, cost of services, and the devolution and sharing of resources between the State and Local Bodies. This Commission is expected to submit its report by 31st May, 2006.

There can be no two opinions on the need for greater people's participation in the design and execution of plans and programmes meant to improve their quality of life. While this is a common objective the moot point is whether historically we have enabled such development in mind. Local Bodies can lead the development process only if they are so oriented. This cannot be brought about by laws and enactments alone. It is a question of attitude. The clarion call for transfer of funds, functions and functionaries to Local Bodies will seem empty unless we take steps to ensure that these bodies are truly representative and do reflect the common good. Capacity building at the Village Panchayat level to understand common good, which will serve the village better and the community as a whole to prosper, is the compelling necessity. It is for this reason that I launched in August, 2004, a unique new programme called "NAMADHU GRAMAM", which strives to create an awareness and understanding of the tools of governance at the grass-roots level, not only

among elected functionaries but also amongst the members of the Gram Sabhas. Village Level Planning exercises have been taken up, involving the entire community, bringing about a convergence of developmental efforts of all Sectors in a meaningful and "de-mystified" manner. Social goals have been given prominence in this movement.

I also visualize that, in due course, the Self Help Group Movement which I have launched in Tamil Nadu, will also transform the way our Local Bodies function. This empowerment of women through Self Help Groups which I initiated, is a new revolution in enabling the effective participation of people in the Gram Sabhas. It will not be long before these Groups are represented in a big way in the Local Bodies. This will bring considerable synergy in village development efforts.

Thus, my emphasis, has been, on programmes at the village level which would bring in the people, in a participatory development process. This will, no doubt, spearhead the ultimate reform of ensuring that the right people enter the Local Bodies without fear or favour. If we do believe in real grass-roots democracy, it is our bounden duty to create, the conditions for the right people with a commitment to social development goals to enter the Local Bodies. My entire effort has been to bring about this fundamental restructuring in the way our Local Bodies are constituted and function.

It goes without saying that the conduct of free and fair elections to Local Bodies is a critical issue in this whole evolving tapestry of grass-roots democracy. This brings to the fore the importance of State Election

Commissions in ensuring that the elections to Local Bodies carry conviction with the people. State Election Commissions are thus charged with a major responsibility of vital importance.

I would like to take this opportunity to place on record my appreciation of the State Election Commission of Tamil Nadu for the successful and smooth conduct of the second round, of elections to all Local Bodies in Tamil Nadu in October, 2001, soon after I assumed office as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for the second time. Over 73% of the Rural Population and nearly 54% of the Urban Population exercised their franchise! 1,31,681 representatives were elected. Out of a total of 1,31,681 seats, 44,272 seats were reserved for women representatives which works out to 33.62%; 26,030 seats were reserved for Scheduled Castes (SC) and 932 seats were reserved for Scheduled Tribes (ST). This indicates the massive nature of the election process and the attendant issues.

I would like to congratulate all the State Election Commissioners present here from all over the country for their spectacular achievement of successfully conducting Panchayat Raj elections to elect nearly 30 lakh representatives of the people to various Local Bodies. This is a magnificent achievement, which in size and scale, even dwarfs the conduct of elections to 4120 Assembly Constituencies and 543 Parliamentary Constituencies all over the country.

I am aware of the complex nature of your task. You have to keep abreast of the latest changes being brought about by the Election Commission of India. You have to note the changes being made by various State Election Commissions. You have to devise systems and

procedures to ensure the sanctity of elections, taking note of the fact that these have to be conducted on a much more widespread basis than the elections by the Election Commission of India. It is obvious that the State Election Commissions and the Election Commission of India have to work together closely to achieve the larger common goal of strengthening democracy in our country, and ensuring the conduct of free and fair election at all levels.

I have gone through the Agenda before you and I note that you have to deliberate on some major issues including the preparation of proper electoral rolls in conjunction with the rolls being brought out by the Election Commission of India, the cost of holding elections, Delimitation, reservation and rotation of reserved seats, budget support for elections and the State Election Commission. Many of these issues have been discussed in your earlier conferences also. This time at Chennai, I am sure you will be able to find mutually acceptable solutions which will go a long way in ensuring free and fair elections to Local Bodies.

I would strongly recommend a joint conference between the Election Commission of India and the State Election Commissions to focus on many of these issues, so that the wealth of experience and knowledge can be shared. This will also greatly contribute to creating standards of procedures and practices in conducting elections to the Local Bodies.

In keeping with the importance of the Office of the State Election Commission as a Constitutional body mandated to ensure free and fair elections to Local Bodies, the State Election Commissioner of Tamil Nadu has been accorded the status equivalent to that of a sitting High Court Judge and takes

his position immediately after the Judges of the High Court in the Warrant of Precedence.

It is not easy to acquire the knowledge and skills required to hold free and fair elections to Local Bodies. We have to preserve the wealth of experience gained. It is for this reason that my Government brought in an Amendment to remove the age restriction for the post of State Election Commissioner. This will enable the State Election Commissioner to utilize his / her experience and skill for the better conduct of regular elections to the Local Bodies. We have to bear in mind the fact that the regular ordinary elections do occur only once in five years. There is need for continuity and proper utilization of the knowledge gained, I am sure most States would have had the same experience.

Employees of the State Election Commission have to be encouraged to be impartial and fair. It is necessary to ensure that their working conditions are made attractive. There cannot be uncertainty in their tenure. The Service Rules for the employees of the Tamil Nadu State Election Commission have been framed. After the issue of these Service Rules, the services of the employees of the State Election Commission have been regularized and the employees appointed from various Government Departments on deputation basis are being absorbed permanently, based on their willingness to work as permanent employees of the State Election Commission.

The Tamil Nadu State Election Commission has requested the Government of Tamil Nadu for allotment of land, for construction of a permanent office building

for the exclusive use of the Tamil Nadu State Election Commission. On the happy occasion of this important Conference of All India State Election Commissioners, hosted by the Tamil Nadu State Election Commission, I am glad to announce that the Government of Tamil Nadu has decided to allot land in Koyambedu, Chennai City, for the construction of a permanent office building for the Tamil Nadu State Election Commission. My Government will provide the necessary funds for the construction of a permanent office building befitting the stature of this august body.

Tamil Nadu is the first State Election Commission that has taken action against those defaulters who have failed to submit their election expenses account during the ordinary elections held in October, 2001. In respect of Rural Local Bodies, 6,268 candidates have been so identified and disqualification orders have been issued. In respect of Urban Local Bodies, 3,884 candidates have been identified and disqualified.

Creating voter awareness of elections to Local Bodies is extremely important. Tamil Nadu has done well in ensuring good participation through such awareness programmes. The Tamil Nadu State Election Commissioner has conducted Voters Awareness Campaigns to create awareness among the voters through college students, particularly, students from women's colleges. You may like to deliberate on how voter awareness and interest can be created in a concerted manner. The timing of such campaigns, as also the content, could be deliberated upon.

The entire process of elections to Local Bodies in multiple tiers is, undoubtedly, quite

complex. Eventually, we have to move in the direction of keeping large databases and building in features of electronic verification. All these aspects, which are part of the reform process in holding elections to the Assemblies and Parliament, will have to be incorporated willy-nilly in the elections to Local Bodies. Preparation of computerized databases will have to be an ongoing process. I am glad that for the first time in the whole country, the Tamil Nadu State Election Commission has compiled all the statistical reports received from the District Election Officers/District Collectors and released a Compendium (Compact Disc) entitled "Local Body Elections, 2001", which contains all the information on the Ordinary Elections, 2001. Glancing through this Compendium shows that it is very useful not only to political parties, but also to political analysts, academicians and research scholars, as well as to the general public.

I am happy to note that most of the State Election Commissions, have introduced a system of Voters Right to Information about the candidates. This is to know about the antecedents, assets and liabilities and educational qualifications of the candidates contesting elections to the Local Bodies. The Tamil Nadu State Election Commission has proposed to introduce this system in the ordinary elections to the Local Bodies due to be held in October, 2006. I am sure your Conference can deliberate on how this can be designed.

Ultimately, Local Bodies will be the ideal forum for young leaders to gain experience in the service of the people and emerge as experienced politicians. It is essential that the right practices are engendered at this level.

It will also be very competitive. The capacity to have healthy competition nurtured through free and fair elections is very much in your hands. This will mean that elections to the Local Bodies will, increasingly, be keenly contested. This, in turn, enjoins upon the State Election Commissioners, a greater responsibility to ensure full transparency in the election process. State Election Commissioners will, no doubt, have greater challenges before them in the years to come, particularly in safeguarding the purity of the election process at the very roots of democracy.

State Election Commissioners are highly respected persons bringing in vast administrative experience, great knowledge and learning. I have immense confidence that you will discharge the Constitutional functions entrusted to you with eminence and distinction.

I wish this Conference all success. I have no doubt that the sharing of experience and the deliberations at this Conference will lead to fruitful, meaningful and purposeful conclusions which can serve as an Action Plan for the future.

Thank you.

- Speech delivered by
SELVI J JAYALALITHAA,
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu at the
All India State Election Commissioners
Conference held at Chennai
on 8.11.2005

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AN ENORMOUS TALENT POOL AVAILABLE IN TAMIL NADU WHICH IS TRULY AMAZING

Selvi J JAYALALITHAA, Hon'ble Chief Minister



A Six Member High Level Delegation led by Mr. Mike Rann, Premier of South Australia called on the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Selvi J Jayalalithaa on 29.9.2005 at the Secretariat.

Mr. Mike Rann had earlier called on the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Selvi J Jayalalithaa on 18th October, 2004 and the present visit is in continuation of the earlier visit to strengthen co-operation between Tamil Nadu and South Australia.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa, while welcoming the South Australian delegation led by Mr. Mike Rann, Hon'ble Premier of South Australia, mentioned that she is delighted that the South Australian Premier has visited Chennai again to carry forward the several initiatives that have been planned jointly. The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa also mentioned that she is glad that a cricket

match and a South Australian Film Festival have been planned today at Chennai on the occasion of the visit of the South Australian Team to Chennai. The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa pointed out that South Australia and Tamil Nadu have a lot in common.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa pointed out that Tamil Nadu is forging ahead in every field and is today rated among the top States in the Country. It has become an investment Destination of Choice. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also pointed out that there is an enormous talent pool available in Tamil Nadu which is truly amazing. The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa pointed out that considering the strengths Tamil Nadu has developed in several fields and the great initiatives South Australia has shown in certain areas, a partnership between the State of Tamil Nadu and the State of South Australia will be of great mutual benefit.



The Hon'ble Chief Minister **SELVI J JAYALALITHAA** launched the Annadhanam Scheme at SISWA Prayer Church at Anna Nagar on 25.12.2005.

Hon'ble Chief Minister mentioned that Tamil Nadu has identified several areas of co-operation such as water conservation, automobile industry, solar energy, tourism, agri-business, education, sports and the film industry. Hon'ble Chief Minister also pointed out that both Tamil Nadu and South Australia can work together in the above areas within the framework of a new understanding which is being developed.

Mr. Mike Rann, Hon'ble Premier, South Australia mentioned that he is very much impressed with the developments in Chennai and Tamil Nadu and that an Office of the Government of South Australia has been opened in India for the first time at Chennai. Mr. Mike Rann pointed out that mining, bio-tech, education, Film industry and solar energy are major areas where South Australia would like to partner with the Government of Tamil Nadu. The meeting lasted for 30 minutes.

On behalf of the Government of Tamil Nadu Thiru N. Narayanan, Chief Secretary, Thiru K.S. Sripathi, Secretary, Higher Education, Thiru Rameshram Mishra, Secretary, Industries, Thiru V. Varaprasada Rao, Secretary, Information and Tourism, Thiru R. Rajagopal, Secretary, Planning, Development and Special Initiatives and Thiru C. Chandramouli, Secretary, Information Technology, participated in the meeting.

On behalf of the Government of South Australia Mr. Paul Holloway, Minister for Industry and Trade, Mr. A.K. Tareen, Director, Trade and Investment, India, Ms. Jill Bottrall, Media Adviser, Office of the Premier, Mr. Raymond Garrand, Chief Executive, Department of Trade and Economic Development and Mr. Kevin Gent, Chief of Staff to the Minister for Industries and Trade, participated in the meeting. ★

TAMIL NADU IS THE TRADITIONAL HOME FOR MANUFACTURING IN INDIA

- SELVI J JAYALALITHAA
Hon'ble Chief Minister

A nine member High level team from Western Australia led by Dr. Geoff Gallop, Hon'ble Premier of Western Australia called on Selvi J Jayalalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 10.10.2005 at the Secretariat.



The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa while extending a warm welcome to the Western Australian delegation, expressed happiness that Tamil Nadu and Australia are getting closer with frequent interactions between Tamil Nadu and the Australian States. The Hon'ble Chief Minister mentioned that she is very glad that the two-way trade between India and Australia is increasing at a rate of over 20% in the last few years.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa pointed out that Tamil Nadu, which is the traditional home for manufacturing in India, has a lion's share in India's industrial output and has carved for itself, a pride of place in the industrial map of India. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also pointed out that Chennai which is located on the

South - East axis of Asia's growth Corridor, is strategically placed as India's Eastern Gateway to the world and has emerged as the Destination of Choice for investors.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa also pointed out that Tamil Nadu, which has become a major magnet for Foreign Direct Investments (FDI), has become one of the top three destinations in attracting Foreign Direct Investments in India. More than 2,700 foreign companies have so far chosen to invest in Tamil Nadu either through the Joint Venture Route or as 100% foreign subsidiaries.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa also pointed out that Tamil Nadu, which ranks first in the country in human resources with a highly efficient human

resources pool, low wage levels, industrial peace and tranquillity, provides the winning formula for investors.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa pointed out to the delegation that several independent studies have rated the investment climate in Tamil Nadu as the best and also the various advantages like - peaceful living conditions, harmonious and strike-free industrial relations, excellent infrastructure etc. offered by Chennai. All these advantages make Chennai the ideal destination for investments.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalalithaa also pointed out that Tamil Nadu has emerged very strong as a global leader in IT Enabled Services Sector (ITES), with Software exports from Tamil Nadu reaching 107 billion rupees in 2004-2005.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa, mentioned to the Western Australian Delegation that Western Australia, which has more rich mineral sources like LNG and a well developed mining industry can collaborate with Tamil Nadu to develop the LNG Terminal proposed at Ennore Port to supply gas for electricity generation and industrial use and also collaborate in the exploitation of underground lignite to produce gas. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also mentioned to the delegation that management of water resources can be another area of collaboration for mutual benefit.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister highlighted the various achievements made by the Government of Tamil Nadu in tapping wind energy for power generation, empowerment of women by forming Women Self Help Groups, rain water harvesting, wasteland development, New Anna Marumalarchi Thittam, establishment of desalination plant, etc.

The Western Australian Premier mentioned that the Western Australian Delegation is very much impressed by the history and culture of Tamil Nadu, the economic growth achieved by Tamil Nadu and the best infrastructure created in Tamil Nadu. He also mentioned that there is a great potential for mutual co-operation between the Government of Western Australia and the Government of Tamil Nadu in the field of agriculture, education, tourism, mining and minerals, information technology, bio-technology and management of water resources.

On behalf of Western Australia, Mr. Sean Walsh, Chief of Staff, Office of the Premier of Western Australia, Dr. John Langoulant, CEO, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Western Australia, Prof. Dr. John Wood, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students Advancement and International, Edith Cowan University, Western Australia, Mr. Guy Houston, Media Adviser, Office of the Premier of Western Australia and others participated.

On behalf of the Government of Tamil Nadu, Thiru C. Ponnaiyan, Hon'ble Minister for Finance, Thiru R. Viswanathan, Hon'ble Minister for Transport and Electricity, Thiru Nainar Nagenthiran, Hon'ble Minister for Industries, Thiru N. Narayanan, Chief Secretary to Government and other officers of the Government of Tamil Nadu participated. The meeting lasted for 1 hour. *

**Burgeoning flood of
new investment
proposals flowing into
Tamil Nadu and that
industry and business
worldwide are making
a beeline for
Tamil Nadu is a
proof that Tamil Nadu
is emerging as the
Destination of Choice**

Japan met the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa at Secretariat on 7.11.2005 and discussed various opportunities for trade and investment in Tamil Nadu.

On the direction of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa an industrial delegation, including the Finance Secretary and the Secretary (Information Technology), Government of Tamil Nadu visited various cities of Japan between 17th and 21st October, 2005. The delegation met the representatives of the Chambers of Commerce of Osaka, Hiroshima, Kyoto, Kobe, Fukuoka, Nagoya, Yokohama and Tokyo, held wide-ranging discussions with them and also conducted seminars at Osaka, Fukuoka and Tokyo on the investment opportunities in Tamil Nadu. On behalf of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Selvi J Jayalalithaa, the delegation extended an



A 38 member Japanese delegation led by Mr. Hirotaro Yamasaki, His Excellency the Mayor of Fukuoka City,

invitation to the Japanese Captains of Commerce and Industry to visit Tamil Nadu. Responding to this invitation, a large and powerful delegation



The Hon'ble Chief Minister expressed the hope that the visit of this large and powerful delegation from Japan marks the first step in a long and mutually beneficial journey. The Hon'ble Chief Minister mentioned that a strong, prosperous and dynamic India is in the interest of Japan; likewise, a strong, prosperous and dynamic Japan is in the interest of India.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalithaa, pointed out to the delegation that the State of Tamil Nadu under her Leadership has emerged in recent times as the preferred Destination for Foreign Direct Investments. The Hon'ble Chief Minister further pointed out that independent surveys have held that Tamil Nadu stands tall,

comprising of Industrialists, University authorities and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, led by the Mayor of Fukuoka City, Japan, visited Chennai on 7.11.2005 and called on the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

While welcoming the Members of the Delegation, the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalithaa expressed happiness that one of the premier Cities of Japan, Fukuoka, is seeking to engage with Tamil Nadu, one of the most progressive States of India. The Hon'ble Chief Minister mentioned that while India and Japan share many things in common, they complement each other in several spheres and that this could be the basis of a win-win relationship in the long run.

top of the class — truly reaching the *Numero Uno* position in Leadership, in the maintenance of law and order, in infrastructure, in public systems, in its talent pool and in labour relations. The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that the fact that burgeoning flood of new investment proposals flowing into Tamil Nadu and that industry and business worldwide are making a beeline for Tamil Nadu is a proof that Tamil Nadu is emerging as the Destination of Choice.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out to the delegation that the Information Technology Sector is also growing at a phenomenal pace with Software, IT Enabled Services, Product Development and Business Process Outsourcing showing

soaring rates of growth. The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out that the fact that some of the largest and most technologically sophisticated IT campuses in the world are being established in Chennai, is an indication of the fact that Investment here is a value proposition, which goes much beyond labour arbitrage. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also pointed out to the delegation that the competitive edge in terms of costs is no doubt the initial attraction but once established, investors find the quality of inputs - human as well as physical - so good that they not only grow and expand but also add value.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister acknowledged with thanks the assistance received from Japan Bank for International Co-operation (JBIC), which has committed 15,675 million Yen (Rs.643 crores) for the Tamil Nadu Afforestation Project Phase-I, that has been successfully completed and also the further assistance of 13,618 million Yen (Rs.567.42 crores) that has been committed for the Tamil Nadu Afforestation Project Phase-II, which is to be implemented for 8 years commencing from 2005-2006 to 2012-2013.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa mentioned that her Government is firmly committed to creating an entire ecosystem wherein investors feel welcome, wanted and wholly satisfied. The Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out to the delegation that the Government of Tamil Nadu under her leadership shall look into the possibility of creating a Township - a veritable "little Japan" at Chennai that would address the housing, cultural, educational, entertainment, social and culinary needs of the expatriate community.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister mentioned that this visit of the Japanese delegation augurs well for a long term commitment between India and Japan and that she looks forward to this relationship growing from strength to strength.

Mr. Hirotaro Yamasaki, the Mayor of Fukuoka City thanked the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa for the warm welcome extended to the delegation by the Government of Tamil Nadu. The Mayor stated that the delegation recognised that Tamil Nadu is the most attractive State in India for investments and that Tamil Nadu will attract investments not only from Japan but also from other countries. The Mayor assured that the delegation which consists of Members representing mostly IT& IT related industries will take advantage of the immense potential of IT talent in Tamil Nadu, promote relations between Fukuoka City and Chennai and thereby achieving the objectives of the mission.

The Hon'ble Minister of Public Works, P&E and Revenue, Thiru O.Panneerselvam, Hon'ble Minister for Finance, Thiru C.Ponnaiyan, Hon'ble Minister for Law and Information Technology, Thiru D. Jayakumar, Hon'ble Minister for Transport, Thiru R.Viswanathan, Hon'ble Minister for Industries, Thiru Nainar Nagenthiran, Hon'ble Minister for Education and Commercial Taxes, Thiru.C.Ve.Shanmugam, Thiru N.Narayanan, Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu, Secretaries to Government, other Government officials and Members of the Indo-Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry were present during the meeting. The meeting lasted for one hour.

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CHENNAI IS BECOMING A GLOBAL SOURCING HUB

- SELVI J JAYALALITHAA

Hon'ble Chief Minister



Mr. William Clay Ford Jr., Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Ford Motor Company, accompanied by Mr. Mark Schulz, Executive Vice-President, Asia-Pacific Operations, Mr. Peter Daniel, Chief Operating Officer, Asia-Pacific and Africa, Mr. Jim Vella, Chief of Staff, Ford Motor Company, USA and Mr. Arvind Mathew, Managing Director, Ford India Private Limited met the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa on 26.10.2005 at the Secretariat. During the meeting they apprised the Hon'ble Chief Minister regarding the achievements and progress made by Ford India Limited at Chennai and their future plans.

Ford India manufacturers and distributes automobiles made at its modern integrated manufacturing facility, at Maraimalai Nagar, near Chennai. Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa laid the foundation stone for this plant on 23rd February, 1996. Ford has so far invested about Rs.1,700 crores in its manufacturing facility at Maraimalai Nagar. Ford currently employs around 1,800 employees. On 4th April 2005, Ford Chennai Plant rolled out its 1,00,000th car. Ford has at present 115 dealer outlets in 79 locations in India.

Welcoming Mr. William Clay Ford Jr. to Chennai, the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa recalled how she was instrumental in getting Ford to locate its plant at Chennai in 1995 during her first tenure as Chief Minister. Mr. Ford Jr. thanked the Hon'ble Chief Minister for the excellent support extended by the Government of Tamil Nadu under the leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa. He emphasized that he was very happy with the Chennai Plant and was glad to see the excellent work force which had contributed greatly to the success of the Ford Plant at Chennai. He complimented the Hon'ble Chief Minister for the emphasis placed on building world-class infrastructure in Tamil Nadu and requested her good offices to see that infrastructure in the rest of the country is also improved. This will take the automobile market in India to new levels and contribute to growth. The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa indicated that she would take up with the Prime Minister, the issue of making Railway transportation to any destination in India more attractive so that it can be relied upon by automobile manufacturers.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa enquired as to what Mr. Ford Jr. perceived would be the changes in automobile manufacture in the context of the soaring prices of crude oil and therefore, automobile fuels. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also enquired about Ford's plans on producing hybrid cars as also the utilisation of bio-fuels in its automobiles. Mr. Ford Jr. indicated that

Ford had introduced a hybrid car in the US market and was seriously evaluating expanded production taking note of the Petroleum crisis.

He also expressed the view that bio-fuels were here to stay and would be increasingly used in all markets and it was necessary for automobile manufacturers to incorporate this development in their plans. Hon'ble Chief Minister informed him that the Government of Tamil Nadu had placed great emphasis on the encouragement of bio-fuel production and had launched specific support programmes. Mr. Ford Jr. complimented the Hon'ble Chief Minister for taking such interest in the bio-fuel programme. Mr. Ford Jr. also informed the Hon'ble Chief Minister that he visualised Hydrogen as the fuel of the future and predicted increased research to make this feasible.

Mr. Ford Jr. thanked the Hon'ble Chief Minister for the excellent support which has enabled the Chennai Plant for Ford Motors to be a very successful plant. The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J Jayalalithaa requested Mr. Ford Jr. to immediately think of expansion at the Chennai Plant keeping in mind the fact that this can be a global sourcing hub. Mr. Ford Jr. agreed with the Hon'ble Chief Minister that Chennai is becoming a global sourcing hub and he would draw up specific expansion plans at Chennai.

The Chief Secretary, Thiru N. Narayanan was present during the meeting. The meeting lasted for 30 minutes.

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