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Title: Need to ensure safe return of fishermen from Tamil Nadu languishing in jails in Sri Lanka.

DR. J. JAYAVARDHAN (CHENNAI SOUTH): In November 2011, five innocent Tamil Nadu fishermen of Rameshwaram named Emerson, Augustin, Wilson, Prasad and Langlet were arrested by the Sri Lankan navy while fishing under the false charges of drug trafficking. Our Hon'ble Chief Minister Puratchithalaivi Amma on November 2011 had appointed advocate on behalf of the fishermen and Rs. 2 lakh was released and further to speed up the trial Rs 3 lakh was released in February 2013. Relief measure by way of monthly Rs 7500 per family and in 2012 Rs. 2 lakh per family was given and many letters addressed to Hon'ble PM were sent. On 30th October 2014, the Colombo High Court sentenced to death the five fishermen. Shocked by this news our Hon'ble Chief Minister Puratchithalaivi Amma, through Government of Tamil Nadu filed an appeal at the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka demanding cancellation of death sentence and Rs 20 lakh was released for the expenses and has also pressed the Centre in this regard. Because of the continuous and dedicated efforts made on war-footing by our leader, the innocent fishermen were released and upon their return relief measure of Rs.3 lakh per family was given.

In conclusion, the Government of India should take necessary steps to ensure immediate return of 38 fishermen lodged in Sri Lankan jail and release of 78 Tamil Nadu fishermen's boats and to retrieve Kachchatheevu Island a part of India and a firm, clear, unequivocal and unambiguous message be sent to the Sri Lankan side that these hostile acts against Indian fishermen would not be tolerated and should cease forthwith.