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Title: Regarding demand for fishing vessels below on OAL of 20 meters should be given free access to Indian Exclusive Economic Zones .

DR. J. JAYAVARDHAN (CHENNAI SOUTH): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, as per the new guidelines issued on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2014 by the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, the definition of deep sea fishing vessels has been changed to reduce the Over All Length (OAL) to 15 metres. Also, the definition of 'operator' has been expanded to include joint ventures with up to 49 per cent foreign equity and the requirement for prior clearance from the Centre for reducing foreign crew has been removed. The system of issuing Letter of Permission (LOP) has been expanded for deep sea vessels to conduct fishing in the EEZ.

The new guidelines have led to strong protests from the fisherman community across India, including Tamil Nadu. The Government of Tamil Nadu under the able guidance of our hon. Makkal Muthulvar Puratchi Thalaivi Amma has reiterated that the rights of Indian citizens and fishermen to fish in India's Exclusive Economic Zone should not be unnecessarily restricted and all fishing vessels below an OAL of 20 metres owned by fishermen should be given free access to Indian EEZ and not to issue any fresh guidelines for fishing operation in India till a new fisheries Act is enacted.

The Union Government should reject the recommendation of the Expert Committee on Comprehensive Review of Deep Sea Fishing Policy and Guidelines under the Chairmanships of Dr. B. Meena Kumari.

Thank you, Sir.