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Title: Issue regarding pathetic condition of fisherman living in the coastal area of Tamil Nadu.

SHRI A. ANWHAR RAAJHAA (RAMANATHAPURAM): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to raise the matter regarding the pathetic situation and the burning issue of our fishermen living in the coastal area of Tamil Nadu.

Our Indian fishermen from Tamil Nadu face death and threat to their livelihood every time they go for fishing. Last Sunday, five fishermen were arrested at Rameswaram, three country boats with 23 fishermen were also arrested on 12<sup>th</sup> March at Pamban and totally 28 fishermen and four boats have been taken away by the Sri Lankan Navy.

Our Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, hon. Amma has been writing repeatedly to the hon. Prime Minister to take immediate steps to release the poor fishermen through dialogue with the Sri Lankan Government.

So far, 82 fishing boats and 96 fishermen have been taken away by the Sri Lankan Armed Forces. The main reason for this harassment is the ignorance of the traditional fishing rights enjoyed by our Indian fishermen around Katchatheevu.

According to the 1974 and 1976 agreements, Katchatheevu was ceded to Sri Lanka without our Parliament's approval. The harassment started against our Tamil fishermen only after the Katchatheevu agreement. So, retrieval of Katchatheevu alone can be a lasting solution. For this, our Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, hon. Amma has approached the Supreme Court.

Our Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Amma is of the view that minimizing fishing activities on the Palk Strait and retrieval of Katchatheevu can be the permanent solution. In order to facilitate the deep sea fishing with the infrastructure development at a cost of Rs. 1520 crore, the permission and the funds have to come from the Centre.

Sir, Sri Lankan Navy often attacks brutally and violently our innocent Indian fishermen. Even though our Indian Navy and Coast Guards are stationed near Rameswaram, they have not protected our fishermen even once.

Hence, I urge upon the Centre to take immediate steps to protect our fishermen and their traditional fishing rights.

Thank you, Sir.

HON. CHAIRPERSON:

Shrimati V. Sathyabama is permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri A. Anwhar Raajhaa.