

**V. VIJAYASAI REDDY**

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Leader, YSR Congress Parliamentary Party  
Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce  
Floor Leader, Rajya Sabha



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Lr. No: 167/2022/MoP/MPOffice-ND

23 March 2022

To,

Shri Parshottam Rupala Ji,

The Hon'ble Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying,

Government of India,

New Delhi – 110 001.

**Subject:- Request for the speedy resolution of issues pertaining to fisheries in the State of Andhra Pradesh – reg.**

Respected Sir,

We write this letter to bring your attention to the various issues pertaining to fisheries that have been plaguing Andhra Pradesh and to seek your kind intervention in ensuring the speedy resolution of these issues for the welfare of the fishing communities in the State.

**1. Extending financial assistance for opening of sandbar mouth of Pulicat Lake near Rayadaruvu**

Sir, as you are aware, Pulicat Lake is the second-largest brackish water in the country, situated on the eastern coast with an extent of 461 sq. km, of which 400 sq. km falls in Andhra Pradesh and the rest in Tamil Nadu. It receives fresh water from Swarnamukhi, Royyala Kalava, Kalangi, Arani and Ennore rivers. However, the lack of inflows from these rivers due to the formation of roads across the lake to Sriharikota and other areas has caused heavy siltation on Andhra Pradesh side of the lake.

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While the southern part of the Pulicat Lake in Tamil Nadu is quite deep and has abundant water throughout the year, the northern part in Andhra Pradesh has become shallow with a depth below 0.5 metres. This has led to the formation of sandbars across the sea mouth, which in turn has caused the lake to dry up on its fringes for the major part of the year. Due to this, fish have been depleting year by year, thereby affecting the livelihood of about 20,000 fishermen living in nearly 20 habitations (*kuppams*) along the lake in Andhra Pradesh. As a result thereof, the fishermen in Andhra Pradesh are forced to cross over to the Tamil Nadu side of the lake, which leads to frequent quarrels between the fisherfolk of the two States.

A central committee was constituted by the Central Water Commission to conduct relevant studies and submit a detailed project report (DPR) and hence, in 2017, the Director of the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) submitted a DPR to the Government for the opening of sea mouth near Rayadaruvu in Nellore district at an estimated cost of Rs. 48 crore. However, no action in this regard has been taken by the Government to date, which is not only hurting the livelihood of thousands of traditional fisher families in Andhra Pradesh that depend on fishing in the Pulicat Lake but is also causing serious conflicts between the fishermen communities of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Hence, we urge you to resolve this long-pending issue by extending financial assistance of Rs. 48 crore for taking necessary steps for the opening of sea mouth of the lake near Rayadaruvu.

**2. Sanctioning funds for development of shore facilities for marine fisheries and setting up fish landing centres under Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana**

For the development of shore infrastructure facilities for marine fisheries under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), three fishing harbour projects have been proposed in Andhra Pradesh, namely, Budagatlapalem in Srikakulam district, Pudimadaka in Visakhapatnam district and Kothapatnam in Prakasam District. These projects have been recommended by the

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National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) with an outlay of Rs. 1,010.35 crores. Furthermore, three fish landing centres have been proposed in Andhra Pradesh under PMMSY, namely, Chintapalli in Vizianagaram district, Bhemili in Visakhapatnam district and Rajayyapeta in Visakhapatnam district, with a total outlay of Rs. 75 crores and a subsidy component of Rs. 45 crores.

The aforementioned projects for the development of shore infrastructure and establishment of fish landing centres are of utmost importance to the fishing community of Andhra Pradesh and will bring about propitious growth in the fishing region. Hence, we urge you to provide the requisite funding for these projects at the earliest to ensure their timely completion and operationalisation.

### **3. Establishing Regional Centre of Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture in Andhra Pradesh**

Sir, the Government of Andhra Pradesh vide D.O.Lr.No.2066/A2/2015 dated 01.06.2015 requested the Centre to establish a Regional Centre of the Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA) in Andhra Pradesh, which would promote dissemination of advanced technologies in brackishwater aquaculture in the region. To this end, on 17th January 2016, a team of scientists from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) inspected the proposed sites of Tallapalem in Visakhapatnam district and Machilipatnam in Krishna District.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh vide D.O.Lr.No.6752/Fish/A1/2017 dated 09.11.2017 requested the Centre to expedite the process for establishment of the Regional Centre of CIBA in the State. But the Centre is yet to take any action with respect to these requests. Hence, we urge you kindly take the necessary steps for establishing a Regional Centre of CIBA in Andhra Pradesh, which will be of much significance to the State as it produces more than 70% of shrimp in the country besides also leading in the production of other brackish water commercial species of sea bass and mud crab.

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**4. Declaring Visakhapatnam Airport as Port of Entry to import *L.vannamei* broodstock for the proposed Aquatic Quarantine Facility (AQF) and establishing an Aquatic Quarantine Certification Service (AQCS) unit office in Visakhapatnam**

Sir, as you may remember, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare vide Lr.No.35029/30/2015-Fy dated 20.03.2018 have conveyed the approval for the construction of the facility of the proposed Aquatic Quarantine Facility (AQF) for *L.vannamei* at Bangarammapeta (V), H/o Gunupudi, Nakkapalli (M), Visakhapatnam district, for quarantining the imported brood stock as 389 out of the 550 shrimp hatcheries in the country are located in Andhra Pradesh alone and the State is producing more than 70% of cultured *L. vannamei* produced in the country.

The Coastal Aquaculture Authority, during its 60<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 04.09.2018, recommended declaring Visakhapatnam Airport as the Port of Entry to import brood stock of *L.vannamei* shrimp and to establish Aquatic Quarantine Certification Service (AQCS) unit office at Visakhapatnam. The Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying vide Commissioner of Fisheries Lr.No.1207/P1/2015 dated 20.09.2018, 19.10.2018 and 08.11.2019 was addressed to consider the recommendation for declaring the Visakhapatnam Airport as Port of Entry for importing *L.vannamei* broodstock and to establish AQCS unit office at Visakhapatnam to fulfil the primary requirements of the proposed AQF centre at Bangarammapeta.

The Government will shortly commence the civil works for the AQF project at Visakhapatnam and before completion of the works, the primary requirement of declaration of Visakhapatnam Airport as Port of Entry and establishment of AQCS unit office is mandatory for import of *L.vannamei* brood stock for quarantining at proposed AQF Project. Hence, we urge you to direct the concerned authorities to do the needful in this regard.

*K.C.J.*

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## 5. Formulating and implementing an aquaculture insurance policy

Sir, as you would recall, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh vide Lr.No.0363/2020 dated 13.04.2020 had addressed the Hon'ble Prime Minister to consider directing the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) to take up the matter of aquaculture crop insurance at the national level and come out with a suitable insurance policy to safeguard the interests of aqua farmers, especially considering that the aquaculture sector is contributing significantly to our foreign exchange. The National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) under the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying has also conducted a series of meetings with insurance companies, small farmers and various other stakeholders to evolve guidelines for providing aquaculture insurance policy.

For this, it selected Andhra Pradesh to implement the aquaculture insurance policy on a pilot basis. But the policy and the relevant guidelines have not yet been finalized by NFDB. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, during the departmental review meeting held on 14.07.2021, issued directions that aquaculture crop insurance coverage for enrolled farms in e-crop booking shall be explored by tying up with the Centre. Hence, we urge you to issue necessary instructions to NFDB to formulate an aquaculture insurance policy for the benefit of aquaculture farmers to help mitigate their crop losses during disease outbreaks and natural calamities.

## 6. Providing compensation to fishermen for loss of work during naval events

Sir, as you know, coastal states, including Andhra Pradesh, take great pride in being hosts of naval events and naval exercises throughout the year, which are necessary tools for improving Indian naval capabilities. However, it is also necessary to acknowledge that the restrictions imposed on

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fishing and fish trading during these events have a deep and adverse effect on the livelihood of small and traditional fishermen, who depend on daily fishing activity for their sustenance. Furthermore, the limitations imposed on the sale of fish at the harbor and other areas in proximity to the naval events also have a negative impact on the financial condition of the small and traditional fish traders.

It is unfortunate that the plight of these fishing and fish trading communities has remained ignored to date. Therefore, we request you to devise a nation-wide scheme for providing due compensation to the fishermen and fish traders for the losses incurred due to the imposition of restrictions by the government on fishing-related activities during naval events and naval exercises.

#### **7. Implementing a national DBT scheme for fishermen during annual fishing ban period**

Sir, as you are aware, a fishing ban is imposed on marine fishing for 61 days (from April 15 to June 14 in eastern coastal states and from June 1 to July 31 in western coastal states) with an objective of conserving the fishery wealth and to sustain the fish production from marine waters. However, during this period, the economic situation of the fishermen community is put at great risk and uncertainty. The loss of 61 days of earning capacity has a huge toll on their financial well-being.

In this regard, the Andhra Pradesh government is implementing the Y.S.R. Matsyakara Bharosa scheme whereby relief is provided to marine fishermen families during the fishing ban period. The Government provides a monetary relief of Rs. 10,000 to marine fishermen families during fishing ban period from. Up till 31st December 2021, an amount of Rs.94.272 crores has been spent to benefit 94,272 fishermen families.

However, a similar scheme is needed at the national level to provide greater support to the fishermen community and to supplement the efforts of the state governments in ensuring welfare of

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their fishermen communities. Hence, we urge your good self to kindly formulate and implement a direct benefit transfer (DBT) scheme that will protect the economic interests of the fishermen families during the annual 61-day fishing ban period by compensating them for the temporary albeit substantial loss of livelihood.

## 8. Providing greater funding assistance for development of fisheries harbours under phase-II in Andhra Pradesh

Sir, the Andhra Pradesh government has remained dedicated to the goal of improving the fisheries infrastructure in the state and to this end, it has developed fisheries harbours at five locations i.e. Visakhapatnam, Kakinada, Nizampatnam, Machilipatnam and Bhavanapadu, which cater to the requirements of about 1545 mechanized fishing vessels.

However, a large number of motor fishing vessels (MFVs) are operating without any landing, berthing and outfitting facilities. Hence, the State Government has proposed to construct nine fishing Harbours at Juvvaladinne in Nellore District, Kothapatnam and Vodarevu in Prakasam District, Nizampatnam in Guntur District, Machilipatnam in Krishna District, Biyyaputippain West Godavari District, Uppada in East Godavari District, Pudimadaka in Visakhapatnam district and Budagatlapalem in Srikakulam district in the State of Andhra Pradesh in two phases.

While the work is in progress for four harbours under phase-I, construction of five Fishing harbours under phase-II is estimated at a project cost of Rs. 1997.77 crore. Given the importance of these harbour projects for the development of the fisheries sector in the State, we seek greater funding assistance from the Centre under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana and the Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund for faster and smoother completion of the projects under phase-II. We hope you will extend the necessary funding to the State in this regard.

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### 9. Devising a mechanism for repatriation of fishermen abroad

Sir, as you would know, from time to time, Indian fishermen are attacked, apprehended and even arrested by neighbouring countries on allegations of fishing in their territorial waters without following any due legal procedure. They suffer from denial of bail and parole, curbs on communication with family and lawyers, suspension of hearings in courts, delayed consular access, among others. Hundreds of fishermen from the country, including Andhra Pradesh, have faced this ordeal in the past and have been subject to great injustices at the hands of foreign authorities.

There is an urgent need to develop a robust repatriation mechanism through which these Indian fishermen can be provided necessary assistance to defend their cases in foreign jurisdictions and be ensured of their safe return to India in a speedy manner. We urge you to kindly look into this sensitive matters and do the needful to protect the interests of Indian fishermen. It is also requested that institutionalising a bilateral Joint Working Group mechanism with nations like Pakistan, Iran and Bangladesh be considered given that a similar mechanism with Sri Lanka has yielded positive results in guaranteeing the safety and security of Indian fishermen.

Having drawn your attention to the aforementioned issues that are hindering the development of the fisheries sector in the State of Andhra Pradesh, we humbly urge you to take the necessary steps to ensure the speedy resolution of these issues. Your intervention in this regard will prove to be most supportive to the people of the State.

Thanking You,

Yours Sincerely,

(V. VIJAYASAI REDDY)

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## LIST OF HON'BLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE DEMANDS

| SI No              | Name of MP                            | Signature |
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- 15 SMT DR B V SATYAVATHI
- 16 SMT G MADHAVI
- 17 SHRI N REDDEPPA
- 18 SHRI KOTAGIRI SRIDHAR
- 19 SHRI TALARI RANGAIAH
- 20 SHRI M V V SATYANARAYANA
- 21 DR M GURUMOORTHY

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