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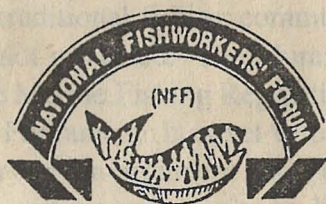
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NFF

**CHARTER
OF
DEMANDS**

2002



NATIONAL FISHWORKERS FORUM (NFF)

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CHARTER OF DEMANDS

(Prepared by the General Body of the NFF)

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INTRODUCTION

Since 1978 onwards the National Fishworkers Forum (NFF) has always been on the forefront in organizing the fisher people and struggling to protect the resources and the fishing community in India. The struggle for Marine Fishing Regulation Act and its implementation has been a long-standing one. It is yet to be fully realized. Though the Majumadar Committee recommended that the Parliament should enact the MFRA in 1978, because of some constitutional reasons, it has not been done even till this day. Instead of Parliament enacting such an act, the Marine Fishing Regulation model bill was sent to the states to enact the same. Most of the coastal states responded positively but it did not serve the purpose fully.

As a result the traditional fishing community and the Marine resources are not protected. The Murari Committee recommended that the Marine Fishing Regulation in EEZ should be enacted by the Parliament. It is yet to be done. In such a context the Ministry of Environment and Forest has declared 60 items of fish as endangered species by having recourse to Wild Life Protection Act. On 27th September 1997 the Cabinet decided to accept 21 recommendations of Murari Committee, but the Central Government has not shown any interest in implementing them. Afterwards many agitations, took place one after the other, to obtain Diesel, and Kerosene, in a subsidized

rate, for implementing the Supreme Court judgment on Aquaculture, for Cancellation of all the licenses given to Joint Venture Fishing vessels. Number of times many written agreements were signed between the Ministries concerned and the NFF, but the Government failed to implement them. All these led to the depletion of fish resources, leading the fishing communities to a state of more poverty. The whole fisheries development policy is faulty

Justice Jeevan Reddy of the Supreme Court, while upholding MONSOON TRAWL BAN explained the meaning of Development:

"It is perfectly justified in adopting an attitude that the public interest cannot be determined only by looking at the quantum of fish caught in a year. In other words, production alone cannot be the basis for determining public interest. The government is perfectly justified in saying that it is under obligation to protect the economic interest of the traditional fisher People and to ensure that they are not deprived of their slender means of livelihood. Whether one calls it distributive justice or development with a human face, the ultimate truth is that the object of all development is the human being. There can be no development for the sake of development. Priorities ought not be inverted nor true perspective lost in the quest for more production."

Against this background, the General Body of the NFF met in Arjappally, Ganjam DT. Orissa and drew up the following Charter of Demands to bring about a true development of the fishing communities in India.

We realize that unless the fishing community as a whole and those responsible for the 10th five Year Plan address all these Demands together, there cannot be a true DEVELOPMENT.

Let us now deal with them one by one. They are not listed in the order of priority. Each and every demand has to be taken seriously. And all of them need to be considered cumulatively.

1. Implement 21 recommendations of Murari Committee. ✓

The Murari High Power Committee was composed of 41 members. Out of them 17 were Members of Parliament belonging to all the political parties, Secretaries of Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Ministry of Defense, Director of Department of Ocean Development, Director general of Shipping, Chairman of MPEDA, Dy. Director General of ICAR, Senior Scientists of CMFRI, Fisheries Directors of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal, 6 persons representing Fishing Industries and Director General of FSI (Secretary) Murari as Chairperson.

When all 41 members representing different cross sections of India, agreed on the 21 recommendations, they did express the voice of India. The Cabinet accepted the recommendations of Murari High Power Committee on 27th September 1997.

The deep-sea fishing was under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI). A small committee selected by the MFPI assisted this ministry. We were working in close collaboration. Our first decision was to bring the Deep Sea Fishing

under the Ministry of Animal Husbandry. Once it was transferred, the bureaucrats of the Ministry of Agriculture stopped calling the Small Committee in spite of Mr. Chaturman Misra's ordered to call the small committee. Again we raised the issue during the NFF agitation in January 2001. Mr. Nitish Kumar agreed to call the small committee to assist at the implementation of Murari Committee recommendations, as per the agreement dated 13-1-2001. But again the bureaucrats did not implement the agreement. Cancellation of licenses issued to Joint/lease/test fishing vessels by going through the legal process is the first demand. Already there were many breaches of conditions and no action was taken in spite of repeated requests by the NFF. The breaches relate to payment by way of deferred payment by the Indian companies towards the cost of the vessels, replacement of the vessels, submission of voyage reports by the Joint Ventures to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery Survey of India. These breaches are enough for the cancellation of the licenses, but the government was not willing to take such decisions.

✓ 2. **"Traditional and small mechanized sector should be assisted by adequate regular supply of fuel and by providing HSD and Kerosene and by providing subsidy taking into account the benefits given to deep sea fishing vessels."**

This is the 12th recommendation of the Murari Committee. During the NFF agitation in January 2001, Mr. Ram Naik, Minister for Petroleum and Mr. Nitish Kumar, minister for fisheries agreed, "The agriculture Minister has decided that the present diesel subsidy would be maintained. The Petroleum Minister has asked the NFF to give detailed proposals, to ensure effective distribution of kerosene to fishermen and to ensure that

their requirements are met.” The NFF submitted the representation twice. Since there was no response from the Government, again the NFF went on an agitation. During that time the Central Government again agreed, but no action was taken. Mr. Ram Naik was one of the members of Murari Committee and he played a very significant role in the Murari Committee. If he does not implement his own decision, who else would? In the light of steep hike of fuel price, reimbursement of excise duty by the central government should be done.

3. “In order to conserve fishery resources in our waters, to protect fishermen and to reduce conflicts in the sea, deep sea fishing regulations should be enacted by the Parliament after consulting the fishing community.”

This is the 9th recommendation of Murari Committee. This was the recommendation of Majumdar Committee also. But instead of Parliament enacting a Marine Fishing Regulation Act, the Central Government passed the buck to the State Governments. Quite often constitutional problems are created when State Government takes the legislation seriously. It is high time that the Ministry of Agriculture does something in this line. Lack of a comprehensive marine fishing regulation act in the entire EEZ has been creating endless problems. The type of mechanized, their areas of operations, type of gears, uniform monsoon trawl bans, overfishing gears, overcapacity, catching of Mother prawns, catching of seed lings by mosquito nets, all these problems have to be addressed through a comprehensive legislation, to be enacted by the Parliament.

4. Include women and inland fisher people in the Saving Cum Relief Scheme and implement the same in all the coastal states.

The traditional fisher people who are below poverty line get the benefit from the scheme. The original notification mentioned that this was meant for the sea going fishermen. But during the January 2001 agitation, it was agreed upon to include women and inland fisher people. As per the agreement with the Minister of Agriculture dated 13-1-2001, d) says "Agriculture Minister has informed the NFF that it has already formulated a scheme for inland fish workers and women in Saving-Cum Relief -Scheme." In spite of this written assurance, this has not yet been implemented anywhere except West Bengal.

✓ **5. Stop ship breaking yards in India, particularly Alang, Gujarat; Valinokkam, Tamilnadu; and Chirala in Andhra Pradesh.**

This is one of the most polluting industries in the World. Rust and paints destroy fishing grounds and pollute water. No country in the world wants this kind of pollution. MNCs make money at the expense of our waters, fishing grounds. The fisher people will be displaced.

✓ **6. Cancel all the licenses issued to the foreign fishing vessels by the Commerce Ministry.**

This is an open violation of Murari Committee recommendation. It is a violation of the Cabinet decision as well. The Commerce Ministry claims that this is done as per the WTO rules. This question was raised before the Trade Minister of European Union during the WTO meet in Doha. He publicly said that there is no such WTO rule. Each country is free to make such a choice or not. Commerce Ministry did this going

against the decision of the Ministry of Agriculture. Under the guise of WTO Commerce Ministry can violate the rule of subsidiary, and autonomy of each ministry. In fact one of the recommendations of Murari Committee is to bring different functions of Fisheries under one Ministry. While this process is going on, this act of Commerce Ministry taking a decision to give licenses to foreign trawlers is a violation of the Indian Constitution, Murari Committee Recommendations and the Cabinet decision on the same. We cannot allow this Domination of Commerce Ministry. Enough is enough. Please correct the situation as early as possible.

7. Stop Aquaculture Authority Bill and Stop the review petition by MPEDA.

Both these are going against the Judgments by Justice Kuldeep Singh to demolish all the aquaculture farms except the traditional and the improved traditional. During the January 2001 agitation as per the first agreement, "It was decided that the NFF would through Fr. Kocherry, submit views on the Aquaculture Bill to ensure that the Supreme Court Judgment on this subject is adhered to." The review petition has become the biggest farce. The Review Petitioner MPEDA has submitted the new Environment Impact study. The violator and petitioner evaluating one's own action and the court are entertaining the same. Further the Aquaculture Authority in its report to the Supreme Court states that there is no opposition to the existing farms. It is interesting to note that after the submission of the report to the SC, thousands of protest letters went to the Chief Justice of India, President of India, and Justice Kirpal, who is entertaining such biased reports.

✓ **8. Implement Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notifications of 1991 after removing all the impediments for the construction of houses by the fishing communities.**

The first decision of National Coastal Zone Management Authority was to remove all the impediments to the construction of houses by the fishing communities. This is not done until today. What is the use of such an authority? It is totally controlled by the Ministry of Environment and Forest. MOEF is trying to dilute the CRZ notification by removing 13 prohibitions one by one. Tourism lobby is creating havoc through out the coast. It has to be stopped. Traditional and habitual right over the coast for fishing communities should be established. Hence the privatizing of the coast for different reasons should be stopped. Stop sand mining and removal of sand for commercial purposes. The Environmental Protection Act of 1986 was meant to protect the environment. It was for this purpose that the CRZ notification was issued in 1991 to protect the coast, sea and the fishing communities that depend on them. It is our birthright to see that it is implemented.

✓ **9 The use of Islands particularly Jammu, Chur Saheb, Mausumi and Sagar in West Bengal should be protected as NON DEVELOPMENT ZONE for the exclusive use of the fishing communities for fishing and drying fish.**

This exclusive right comes under the CRZ notification as habitual and customary right. The Forest Department or any other Department should not go against this right of the fisher people. They should not be allowed to curb this right as long as the fisher people conduct transient operations and there is no permanent settlement. These islands and stretches should be

handed over to the Fisheries Department for the management of these islands by the fishing communities. The example of "KHOTI"(traditional fish landing centers) Management in Midnapur district in West Bengal may be followed as a model.

10. Ownership and management of water bodies and fish resources by the fishing communities that depend on them for their livelihood. ✓

The Globalization process is displacing the tribals, the fisher people and the Dalits. All these people can be displaced through privatization. In order to protect them there is an urgent need for a legislation that the people who are depending on these natural resources for their livelihood should own and manage the water bodies and the fish resources. The common property regime stops selling and buying of these natural resources. Granting a common property right to a community of co-owners must be accompanied by the norms, which are applicable to the individuals who will be given the rights of access to the resource. The most important of this should be that those who own fishing crafts should necessarily be at sea on them. It is only such a collective community of owner-workers who can exercise both precaution and responsibility with regard to managing the fishery resource.

11. Lift the ban on "2 Shark and Ray", IX items, "Part IV B-Mollusca 9 items and "19 Mollusca " XV items. ✓

It was made very clear that the MOEF has no idea about fishing in India. It is impossible to catch fish leaving any of these items. Once they are caught, we should throw out the banned variety, in order to escape the arrest by the police. Thus

the catching of the banned species will continue at the expense of a national waste, pollution and loss. Total potential yield of elasmobranchs as per Govt. of India is 168000 t per year in India's EEZ and current catches are only around 70000 t per year, i.e. less than 50% of the potential. How can species that are landed in such a large quantities and which have not shown any declining trend so far, be considered "ENDANGERED OR THREATENED"? As far as MOLLUSCS are concerned, a large quantity is landed as by catch of other fishing activities. Good quantities of the seashells are also obtained when they reach the beaches of Tamilnadu and the living matter in them is dead. A ban, which effectively disallows the collection and use of such material that reaches the shore, makes no sense. It is absurd that quite often the Central Government takes recourse to Wild Life Protection Act, instead of having a MARINE FISHING REGULATION IN THE WHOLE OF EEZ. Let the Wild Life Protection Act be used to protect the forest and the MARINE FISHING REGULATION IN THE WHOLE OF EEZ protects life in the waters of the sea.

✓ **12. Stop construction of International Commercial Port in Ummegam, Colachal and Vizhinjam and punish the murderers of Col. Pratap Save.**

Our ruling class is selling out our waterbeds to the MNCs at the expense of thousands of fisher people, farmers and other workers. Fishing grounds are destroyed. Valsad District Panchayat Committee passed a resolution saying that they do not want a port. 19 grama Panchyats passed resolution that they do not want a port. Vizhinjam port is going to be created by dredging 700 acres by reclaiming 700 acres in the sea. In the case of Vellore Citizens' Welfare Forum Vs Union of India

(1996, 5 SCC 647), the SC has agreed that the concept of 'sustainable development' has come to be accepted as a viable means by which to eradicate poverty and improve the quality of human life, while living within the carrying capacity of the supporting ecosystems. 'Sustainable Development' as defined by the Brundtland Report means 'Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs.'

13. Introduce pension for all fish workers who are 60 and above. Introduce lump sum grant to all the students of fisher people.

90% Of fisher people live below poverty line. In order to bring about a change we have to have these welfare measures to protect the community. These are introduced in KERALA. It has been proved to be of great help.

14. Implement Marine Fishing Regulation Act in all the coastal states. Uniform Monsoon Trawl Ban, mesh size regulation, zonal regulations, restriction and regulation on destructive gears and over fishing gears like purseines.

Though we have MFRA in all the coastal states, there is no effective infra structures to implement them. Though the secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture wrote to all the coastal states asking them to have UNIFORM MONSOON TRAWL BAN, it is not yet a reality. Also there is a need for stringent law to punish the violators. Night trawling ban should be implemented in all the coastal states strictly. Stop collection of seedlings with mosquito nets and collection of Mother prawns should be banned all over India. Gujarat has not yet enacted the

legislation. The MFRA can be effectively implemented only if there is an effective infrastructure and political will.

✓ **15. Create Coastal Development Authority and Inland Coastal Development Authority in all the states.**

It is very important to create Development Authority for the coast to bring about total development. We have to protect the coast if at all to develop the coast. It is through protecting the water bodies that we be able to develop the people. Both coast and inland are under threat of pollution, reclamation, and constructions. Implementation of CRZ notification, enactment and implementation of MFRA in the entire EEZ of India are very important. The members to this Authority should be elected from the Panchayat, Municipalities and the coastal population through proportionate representation. There should not be any ruling class and opposition. Everybody should be part of the decision making process.

✓ **16. Bring about Umbrella Legislation to create at least minimum economic and social security to all the unorganized workers in India.**

Compulsory registration and issuing of identity card to 30 crores workers in the unorganized sector. By creating Tripartite Union Boards, State Boards, Regional Boards, District Boards, Workers Facilitation Centers, they raise funds through Governments. The members of the Board will consist of 75% elected from the unorganized workers coming from Registered Trade Unions and Co-operatives, 15% coming from Employers and 10% representation from the Governments. In all these we have to guarantee 50% seats for women.

17. Hand over all the reservoirs particularly TAWA and BURGI RESERVOIRS to the Cooperatives of the displaced fisher people. ✓

In the name of DEVELOPMENT the tribals, the fisher people and the Dalits are displaced and about 50 million of such people are not rehabilitated. We are in the slums of India. Those who came to India later on become the settlers of this land and they get all the legal protection from the Indian Constitution and yet we are pushed into the slums of India, where we have become a nuisance to the ruling class, administrators!!!! Enough is enough. Even after the construction of Dams, Ports, Airports, can't we be given some benefit from such DEVELOPMENT? Tawa and Burgi were such examples, where MP govt. gave the reservoirs to the cooperatives of the displaced fisher people. This has angered the bureaucrats and contractors. Now the government is not renewing the lease to the Displaced Fisher Peoples Co-operatives. It is a must that this pioneering action of the MP continues.

18. Liquidate all the cooperatives of fisher people that are controlled by the Merchants, Money Lenders and Politicians and create new ones including 100% fisher people both men and women in every fishing village of India. ✓

The moneylenders, merchants and politicians exploit the fishing community. Even the very cooperatives created for the benefit of the fishing community are being taken away. How long this will go on. Let us put an end to this. We are not going to allow this anymore. We have to rise up. All our credit facilities should be handled by the cooperatives. Every fishing family

should be a member in a cooperative. All should actively participate in a cooperative. There should not be any majority and minority rule. The cooperative should be managed by proportionate representation. Cooperative should not be made a stooge in the hands of political parties.

✓ **19. Overcapacity of fishing vessels should be addressed by bringing about a change through legislation that worker-operators own and manage fishing vessels.**

Everybody agrees that catch per vessel is going down in an alarming manner. There are more fishing vessels than what we require. How are we going to bring down the number of vessels? Here we have to take into account those who have more than one vessel, those who are not owner operator and so on. Here we have to give importance to those who are owner operators. We have to keep the profiteers out. This should be implemented through the above cooperatives of the fisher people. The deep sea going fishing vessels should be owned by the cooperatives.

✓ **20. In order to improve the credit facilities Grameen Banks should be introduced in all the cooperatives.**

Every need of a fishing family must be handled by the cooperatives. When the cooperatives fail to meet the need, then the middle people come and take over that particular function. Credit is always a need. Grameen Banks can meet this.

✓ **21. Introduce the Central Self Employment Scheme to help the fisher women.**

This also should be introduced in all the coastal states through cooperatives to improve the situation of women.

22. Fix the floor price for fish. ✓

It is vital that the cooperatives should introduce auction hole and every fisherman should bring his catch to the auction hole. Here it is important that the floor price for fish is fixed.

23. National cooperative policy has to be thoroughly revised particularly in fisheries sector. ✓

NCDC primarily should help the traditional fishing communities through cooperatives. The help should reach the fishing families without any kind of political manipulation.

24. Every fishing family should have a house and every fishing village should have a proper drinking water supply, electricity and road connection. ✓

This can be achieved through Development Authorities and Cooperatives.

25. Education for all in the fishing village should be guaranteed. ✓

Every fishing village must have a primary school. And at least one fisheries school should be established in every coastal block/mandal/taluka of the country within the 10th Plan Period. Fisheries should be a compulsory subject in all the coastal schools. All existing schools established, run or managed by the fishing community, particularly SINDHU SAIKAT BANI

NIKETAN at Dadanpatrabar, Midnapur (East), West Bengal and the likes, must be recognized and aided by the government.

✓ **26. Provide rest place, toilets and comfort stations in all the fish market in India particularly in the line of the Fish Markets in MADGOA.**

Women are the main section of workers that are handling fish vending. The fish markets have become a place where people are forced to come because of there liking to fish protein. Why can't we all get together and keep the fish markets keens clean and beautiful? All of us, cooperatives, Trade Unions and the Governments should come together to build up such beautiful places, where people love to come. There can be rest rooms, canteens, and toilets. The women should manage all these.

✓ **27. The workers particularly women in all the Fish Processing Plants should be protected with labor legislations concerning time, place, and permanency of work, as well as social and economic security.**

MPEDA claims that we are earning foreign exchange worth 5000 Crores Rupees. But MPEDA is not concerned about the workers in the processing plants. MPEDA should know that this foreign exchange is earned at the expense of 100 000 women workers of India. We are exploited at different contexts, by not paying proper salary; the contractors exploit us often. We are brought to the processing plants packed up like sardines, in some railway compartments. We have no proper place to stay. Our salary is not given to us fully. We have no guarantee in our work. We have to stop this exploitation once and for all.

28. Declare all the coastal states having fish shortage particularly Maharashtra and Karnataka as fish famine states. ✓

We are going through fish shortage in all the states. The catch per vessel is going down in an alarming manner. The cost of production is going up while the return is not going up. In such a context 90% of fisher people are facing a very big crisis. Our debt is going up. Here is a context of fish famine. Once the states are declared famine- states we get the benefit debt redemption, loan facilities etc. It is a context of struggle. It is in our Indian Constitution to make debt redemption legislation. Immediate action should be taken for legislating total debt relief for the fisher people in India.

29. Stop import of Fish. ✓

Already import of rubber, palm oil, tea, fruits, etc has destroyed Indian Agriculture. Let this not happen in Indian Fisheries. The claim of the Commerce ministry is that only a small quantity is imported for re-export. The beginning is always like this and afterwards the quantity will go up and then we will not be able to handle the situation. So please stop this when it is in the beginning stage.

30. Continue our campaign against Globalization together with National Alliance of Peoples Movements (NAPM) that India should quit WTO. ✓

It is a fact that the Globalization and WTO is taking over all our natural resources and displacing the fisher people, the tribals, the Dalits and others through construction of International Ports, Airports, Dams, and Polluting Industries like,

ENRON, METASTRIPS, STERILITE etc. We must continue our campaign of protest. WTO benefits only the developed countries. The developing countries get no benefit.

31. Construct and regenerate mangroves all over the coast to help the breeding and feeding of fishing grounds and to protect the coast from cyclones and floods.

What we see all around is the destruction of mangroves. Recently the Maharashtra High Court has ordered to take away 600 acres of mangrove area given to ESSEL WORLD by the Maharashtra Government. Instead of regenerating mangroves, we find destruction of mangroves and construction of sea walls. We have to start a major peoples campaign against destruction of mangroves and the regeneration of mangroves all over the country.

✓ **32. Stop constructing sanctuaries particularly at Malwan in Sindhudurg that displace fisher people and affect fishing.**

Malwan Taluka Shramik Machimar Sangh has been opposing the sanctuary project of the government of Maharashtra since 1985. The project, if implemented, would cover 29 sq. kms. The project would be implemented taking recourse to the Wild Life Protection Act, with the result that the fishing activity would come to a halt. Nearly 12000 active fishermen would be thrown out of their means of livelihood.

✓ **33. Stop winding up of Dahanu Taluka Environment Protection Authority.**

This authority was set up in 1996 as directed by the Supreme Court to protect Dahanu Taluka, a coastal and agrarian green belt. The Authority is headed by the former Mumbai High Court Judge, Justice Chandra Shekhar Dharmadhikari and is composed of scientific experts. The Authority is vested with the power of regulating development in the eco-fragile zone of Dahanu Taluka. The Authority has passed orders on a series of issues including the setting up of a multi berth high-tech port at Wardawan in Dahanu Taluka. It is in this context the Government of India is planning to discontinue the Authority. Once the Authority is wound up, it would pave the way for the Government of Maharashtra to revive the project of port at Wardwan. Therefore we oppose this move and we demand retention of Dahanu Tauka Environment Protection Authority.

34. Introduce sea-safety for artisanal and small-scale fishermen.

The massive risks involved in the sea going fishermen are increasing due to cyclones and otherwise. A regional workshop on sea safety of artisanal and small scale fishermen was held at Chennai from 8th to 12th October 2001 under the auspices of the Bay of Bengal (BOBP) program of FAO, UN, member countries, viz., India, Bangladesh, Maldives, participated in the Workshop. The NFF was the only non-govt. mass based organization that participated in it. At the end of the workshop, a statement was adopted to bring about sea-safety for the traditional and small-scale fisher people in this region. In the context of depletion of fish, decreasing catch, and return, there is a need for collaboration of Governments and UN bodies.

✓ **35. Supply of Icebox to all the fishing vessels in India.**

It is a must that the fish is to be fresh when there is a big demand. This has to be guaranteed by the Government. In a context of shortage of fish and increasing demand, it is important to keep fish fresh.

✓ **36. Release innocent fishermen in different jails of Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives and India.**

After the partition, fisher people have suffered a major set back to continue fishing in the same fishing grounds they used to be. As a result, many innocent fishermen are caught for one reason or another and they land up in different jails. This has to come to an end. All the concerned governments of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India and Maldives should sit together and bring about a permanent settlement to this issue.

✓ **37. Stop dumping Chemical, toxic waste into the water bodies.**

Dumping all waste into the water bodies is on the increase. This has to be stopped by stringent measures. Oil exploration is giving us enough damage to the sea and the fishing grounds.

✓ **38. Implement Mandal Commission Recommendation to make the fisher people into SC/ST category and bring about separate constituency for fisher people in Parliament, Assembly and Panchayat elections.**

In order to empower the fishing community at all levels this

is very important. We have been demanding this for a long time.

39. Pay compensation to the fishermen when they are asked to stop fishing for defense purposes by Navy and Military. ✓

90% of fisher people are living below poverty line. Even after working continuously for 365 days, we find it difficult to survive. When we are asked to stop working due to missile test, firing practices etc we have every right to get the compensation.

40. Every state should enact INLAND FISHING REGULATION ACT. ✓

Pollution and reclamation of water bodies, and construction are on the increase. Unless there's a stringent legislation, the water bodies and the fisher people will not survive. There is a need for such legislation to protect the water bodies and the fishing communities all over India. Both the Center and the States should take interest in creating this legislation. Indian Fisheries Act of 1894 should be part of this legislation. It should be implemented particularly stopping the usage of Dynamite Fishing.

41. Stop constructing atomic energy plants particularly KOODAMKULAM. ✓

Basically atomic energy is destructive. It is meant for defense purposes. Chernobyl is closed down in Russia. And they are selling the same technology to us. It is a very risky and dangerous proposal.

42. Stop privatizing Chilka Lake

The fishing communities and their cooperatives should manage Chilka. Every body knows long-standing struggles of fisher people to protect the Chilika. We sacrificed our lives for the same. Chilika belongs to us and that right should be protected.

Harekrishna Debnath
(Chairperson)

N.D.Koli
(General Secretary)

