

Katchatheevu & Palk Strait — MP Evidence Pack

Fisher livelihoods, the 1974 & 1976 treaties, and how the file is mis-framed in current political debate. Pairs with the Maritime Desk.

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Audience

- UK MPs with Tamil and Sri Lankan diaspora constituents
- FCDO
- Foreign Affairs Committee

Best used for

- Cross-Strait fisher livelihood letters
- Trade & humanitarian PQs on bottom-trawling and arrest practice
- Engagement with the Indian High Commission and Sri Lankan High Commission
- Briefings to constituents who hear only one side of the file

Tier-A evidence anchors

- India–Sri Lanka Maritime Agreement 1974
- India–Sri Lanka Supplementary Agreement 1976 (Wadge Bank / Gulf of Mannar)
- Ministry of External Affairs (India) — official briefings on Katchatheevu
- Northern Province Fisheries Cooperative statements on bottom-trawling damage
- Adayaalam / PEARL — northern fisher livelihood studies
- ICG / Crisis Group — Indo-Lankan relations and fisheries

Policy asks

- UK MPs: Always cite BOTH the 1974 and 1976 treaties when speaking on Katchatheevu — they are inseparable in law.
- UK Government (FCDO): Encourage bilateral India–Sri Lanka dialogue on sustainable fisheries and arrest practice, with northern Sri Lankan Tamil fisher representation at the table.
- UK MPs: When citing Tamil Nadu fisher arrest figures, pair them with northern Sri Lankan Tamil livelihood evidence — never one without the other.

Draft parliamentary questions

- [FCDO] What discussions has the Government had with India and Sri Lanka on sustainable fisheries management in the Palk Strait?
- [FCDO] What representations has the Government made on the welfare of fishers arrested by either India or Sri Lanka in the Palk Strait?
- [FCDO] What assessment has the Government made of the impact of bottom-trawling on northern Sri Lankan Tamil fisher livelihoods?

Civic remembrance

Katchatheevu is not a sovereignty grievance for TLTE. It is a fisher livelihood file — and both Tamil Nadu fishers and northern Sri Lankan Tamil fishers carry the cost of how it is currently managed.

Pack rules

- Never claim that TLTE seeks Katchatheevu's return to India. TLTE takes no sovereignty position on the island.
- Never aggregate fisher arrest counts. Cite Tamil Nadu and northern Sri Lankan figures separately, with sources.
- Always cite both the 1974 and 1976 agreements — citing only 1974 is the most common political distortion of this file.
- Always pair Tamil Nadu fisher harm with northern Sri Lankan Tamil fisher harm. The two sides are not opponents.

Transparency

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