



Nothing fishy about it

Have you noticed that though our country has a massive coastline of 7,516.6 km, there is not enough news that emerges from its shores concerning the thousands of fisherfolk and their livelihood.

But here's one news from Kerala that spells a ray of hope at a time when the State has declared drought in all its districts. The news desk of The Fish Site website reports that the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has identified a new species of mackerel in the waters off the 600-km Kerala coastline.

Scientists have named the black-spotted fish variety the 'Indian Chub Mackerel'. Reported to be "round and more fuller in shape than regular mackerel" and with soft flesh, it is expected to add to the marine wealth of the State and bring in a whole new business potential.

The report on the phenomenon that has been published in the Indian Journal of Fisheries says "the new species is distinctly different from other members of the mackerel family, both taxonomically and genetically." And though it is only visible in the Kerala waters, the species is being monitored closely.

However, news on the regular mackerel is not that sweet. Apparently it is changing its habitat in the Indian peninsula — from being found largely in the southwest coast, scientists say it has moved to the northwestern coast. "Though the movement of the Indian mackerel is being closely monitored, officials insist it could lead to loss of some species, as mackerels are likely to feed on native fish," says the report, pointing out that this could, in time to come, change the nature of our fisheries.