

Fishermen seek practical solutions

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: Traditional fishermen community has asked the state government to address their issues while amending the Kerala Marine Fisheries Regulation Act (KMFRA). Speaking at a meeting of fisheries department officials, scientists, researchers and a large number of traditional fishermen to discuss the proposed amendments of the KMFRA, they sought for practical and meaningful changes that could help their livelihood. The meeting was held at the Central marine fisheries research institute (CMFRI) in Kochi on Tuesday.

Speaking at the meeting, PV Janardhanan, state president of the traditional fishermen association expressed concerns over the move to stretch the annual trawling ban period to two phases. "We are ready to accept the positive changes which would help improve the fisheries sector. However, the authorities should find out other options to remove the hurdles caused to the community owing to new proposals."

He said that inland fishing practices also should be regulated to curb over exploi-

tation and juvenile fishing. "Measures should be taken to stop illegal practices in fishing sector."

CMFRI director A Gopalakrishnan emphasised the need for notifying the Minimum Legal Size (MLS) of other 44 fishes out of 58 recommended by the CMFRI. "CMFRI had prepared MLS in order to curb practice of juvenile fishing. Karnataka state government has also approached the CMFRI to prepare the MLS for the state," he said. "We will examine the demands raised by the fishermen community in connection with the amendment of KMFRA," he added.

Ernakulam MLA Hibi Eden said the authorities should consult with the fishermen community before amending the Act.

"The fisheries sector in the state is moving towards a chaotic situation due to many reasons. The state government should be ready to hold dialogues with Tamil Nadu and Karnataka to make the regulations meaningful," he said. At the technical session, scientists presented their views on marine fish landing data, stock depletion of sardines, and impact of climate change.