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## **"Database on fishing activities to help Navy bolster security"**

A CMFRI-developed data base providing information on fish landing centres and fishing activities along the country's coast will help the Indian Navy bolster the coastal security, scientists said here today.

The scientists at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) here said the development of database, described the Geographic Information System (GIS) location of all fish landing centres, fishing activities and seasonality of fishing. It would ensure the safety of fishermen at the sea and the security of the country.

CMFRI Director A Gopalakrishnan handed over the document to Vice Admiral A R Karve, Flag officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Southern Naval Command for implementing the security measures across the coastal waters of the country on basis of these data.

Principal Scientist A P Dineshbabu of CMFRI's Mangalore Research Centre said, "The database will help in efficient marine spatial planning of various activities in the sea by protecting the security and livelihood concerns of the fisherfolk along the Indian coast."

He also said the sea route of fishermen and the expanse of fishing along the Indian coast could easily be identified with the help of the database, which would help the Navy or other security agencies to pass on the information regarding presence of the fishermen to foreign ships or other navigators.

The information relating to the landing centres and the operational area of fishing would be useful in easily identifying the regions where fishing activities are taking place and protecting the fishermen's lives, Babu added.

The scientists said the team collected information on 1,278 landing centres along the Indian coast spanning all maritime states (Gujarat- 129, Maharashtra- 149, Goa-34, Karnataka- 93, Kerala- 201, Tamil Nadu- 359, Andhra Pradesh- 204, Odisha-54 and West Bengal-55).

Gopalakrishnan said the CMFRI has a special interest in GIS-based documentation of the marine fish landing centres as they are the reference points for mapping marine fisheries resources along the coast and such mapping would serve as the basic data for the fisheries conservation and management.

"The fishermen can be considered soldiers in the sea because they are constantly moving in and out of it scouting for fish and observing at the same time some unscrupulous activities, if any," he said adding the document would help the Navy, Coast Guard and other security agencies in disaster management as well.

The CMFRI director expressed his happiness over providing a solid support to the Indian Navy by handing over valuable information towards ensuring the safety at sea.