

CMFRI to felicitate country's first 'fisher couple'

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THE Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) will felicitate the country's first 'fisher couple' on Saturday as part of its platinum jubilee celebrations. K V Karthikeyan and his wife K C Rekha will be felicitated by the institute. They have been venturing into the sea together to fish for the last 13 years since their marriage.

Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Sudarshan Bhagat will present a memento to Karthikeyan and Rekha at the fishermen meet at CMFRI. Bhagat will also hand over fish seeds to the couple which is planning to start sea-cage fish farming. The CMFRI has offered them financial and technical support for the same, too. Karthikeyan and Rekha hail from Kundazhiyoor near Chettuva in Thrissur. Rekha is the first woman in India to go fishing in the sea on a boat, said the CMFRI.

"Though women fishermen are engaged in fishing in backwaters, there is no record of women



Karthikeyan and Rekha

fishing along the Indian coasts," said CMFRI Director A Gopalakrishnan. "CMFRI decided to felicitate the couple to encourage their zeal and for breaking conventional norms of society. Superstitions that women are not supposed to go into the sea for fishing still exist in society. Rekha has broken the unreasonable customs and conventions and made a living out of fishing. Her brave move is a sign of women empowerment mushrooming in the coastal community," he said.