

## Centre urges T.N. fishermen to take to deep sea fishing



Union Secretary for Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Devendra Chaudhry (centre) inspecting cage farming at Mandapam in Ramanathapuram district on Thursday.

### Advised to try cage farming and seaweed cultivation

In the interest of finding a lasting solution to the fishermen issue, the Centre would give an impetus to deep sea fishing and mariculture, said Union Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries secretary Devendra Chaudhry.

On a two-day visit to the district on Thursday, he made it clear to fishermen during an interaction that the problem could be sorted out only if they took to deep sea fishing and went in for alternative livelihood such as cage farming and seaweed cultivation in a big way.

Pointing out that sea cage farming was being done only by few fishermen in the Gulf of Mannar, he suggested that mariculture could be taken up on a large scale both in Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay with assistance from State and Central governments.

Mr. Chaudhry offered to establish a hatchery in Mandapam under the purview of the Central Marine Fisheries Research Centre (CMFRI) to produce seeds when fishermen explained difficulties in getting fingerlings for sea cage farming.

Making it clear that fishermen had to switch over to deep sea fishing to avoid fishing in the Palk Bay, which often results in their getting arrested by the Sri Lankan navy, he said the Centre would even send fishermen abroad to get trained in tuna long liner.

He inspected sea cage farming at Thangachimadam and seaweed cultivation using raft technology, developed by Marine Algal Research Station at Mandapam on Wednesday evening.

On Thursday, he inspected the progress of work at Mookaiyur, where a fishing harbour was being reconstructed at a total outlay of Rs. 113.90 crore.

He also inspected the site at Kunthukal, where a 'T' shaped fish landing centre is coming up at an estimated cost of Rs. 60 crore. Impressed with the progress of work at Mookaiyur, Mr. Chaudhry suggested that the authorities commence the work at Kunthukal and put the 'T' in the first phase so that vessels could be berthed.