

Fish don't feed on corpse, clarifies CMFRI scientist

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KOCHI, DEC. 26

Fish eaters need not harbour any moral compunction in consuming marine fish following the death of fishermen in the Arabian Sea in the wake of the Ockhi Cyclone.

The popular varieties of sea fish caught from coastal waters of Arabian Sea close to Kerala are not known for feeding on dead bodies, an expert in the matter clarified.

"The popular fishes often consumed in the state such as sardine, mackerel and others are mainly feeding on plankton and small living organisms. They belong to the category called small pelagic vari-

ety and they are not known to eat flesh of dead persons or animals, says Dr Sunil Mohammad, principal scientist, Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute of India (CMFRI).

According to Dr, Mohammad a deliberate propaganda was unleashed by certain vested interests advising against eating fish following the loss of lives. "There is no basis for such propaganda," he said. The pelagic variety in the Arabian Sea has been classified into two; small and big pelagic varieties.

Seer fish, king fish, tuna and many others belong to the category of the big pelagic varieties and they

are known as active predators, which mean they eat moving fish or organisms. Big pelagic fish are also not known to feed on dead bodies, Dr Mohammad said. The man eater sharks are not known for their presence in our area of the sea, he said.

According to Dr. Mohammad he received reports about people advising against eating fish in the wake of the Ockhi Cyclone on the ground that the fishes could have eaten the flesh of the dead fishermen in the cyclone. "Such propaganda is not new. Even during the 2004 tsunami there was widespread propaganda and we have clarified this matter then," he said.