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Research vessels join search operations for missing fishermen

Boats owned by CMFRI and CIFT leave Kochi shore

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI**

A vessel each from research institutions Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) and Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT) have joined the search operations for fishermen who are reported missing after Cyclone Ockhi.

The research vessels joined the operations on the request of the Fisheries Department, sources said. The vessels left the Kochi shore on Sunday morning. According to CMFRI sourc-

es, *Silver Pompano* has two fishermen from Pozhiyoor on board along with personnel from the Fisheries Department as well as crew from CMFRI.

Matsyakumari II of CIFT also left Kochi on Sunday morning. There are 10 CIFT crew members as well as two sea guards and fishermen each on board the vessel. The vessels are reportedly in waters off the Alappuzha coast.

According to CMFRI sources, *Silver Pompano* has moved away between

30 and 50 nautical miles. The CIFT vessel too has moved into deep waters.

Views on safety

A senior marine scientist said the official agencies appeared to have failed during the cyclone, but it was crucial to learn lessons from the catastrophe. Among other things, installing satellite-based automatic identification system on all boats will help in locating them, and it should be utilised as a key fisheries management tool, he added.