

Indigenous trawl operations during fishing ban period in Chennai

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North Chennai is a major centre for mechanised fishing with approximately 1200 fishing units. Generally during the fishing ban period, the fishermen from these units either sit idle or enroll as labourers for fishing in permitted traditional fishing units. But during the mechanised fishing ban period in 2017, some of the fishers in North Chennai started mini trawl operations to tide over their lean period. The size of the trawl net was 15 m in length and cod end mesh size of 24 mm. These were operated from fibre boats of 10 m overall length (OAL) fitted with 10 hp outboard Yamaha engines and having otter boards of 2 feet length and 1.5

feet width. Their fishing grounds in the coastal waters stretching from Ennore to Pazhaverkadu within 20 m depth sometimes extends to a distance of 20-25 km from shore at a maximum depth of 30 m. The duration of a haul ranges from 2 to 3 hours and with hauls per day. Average catch per day ranged from 60 to 400 kg. 40 units operated in 2017. Crustaceans, mostly prawns accounted for 82% of the catch. Juveniles of *Scomberomorus* sp., *Rastrelliger* sp., *Caranx* sp., *Gerres* sp., sciaenids sp., *Thryssa* sp., silver bellies and crustaceans *Metapenaeopsis* sp., *Penaeus* sp., *Parapenaeopsis* sp. and *Portunus* sp. were also observed.