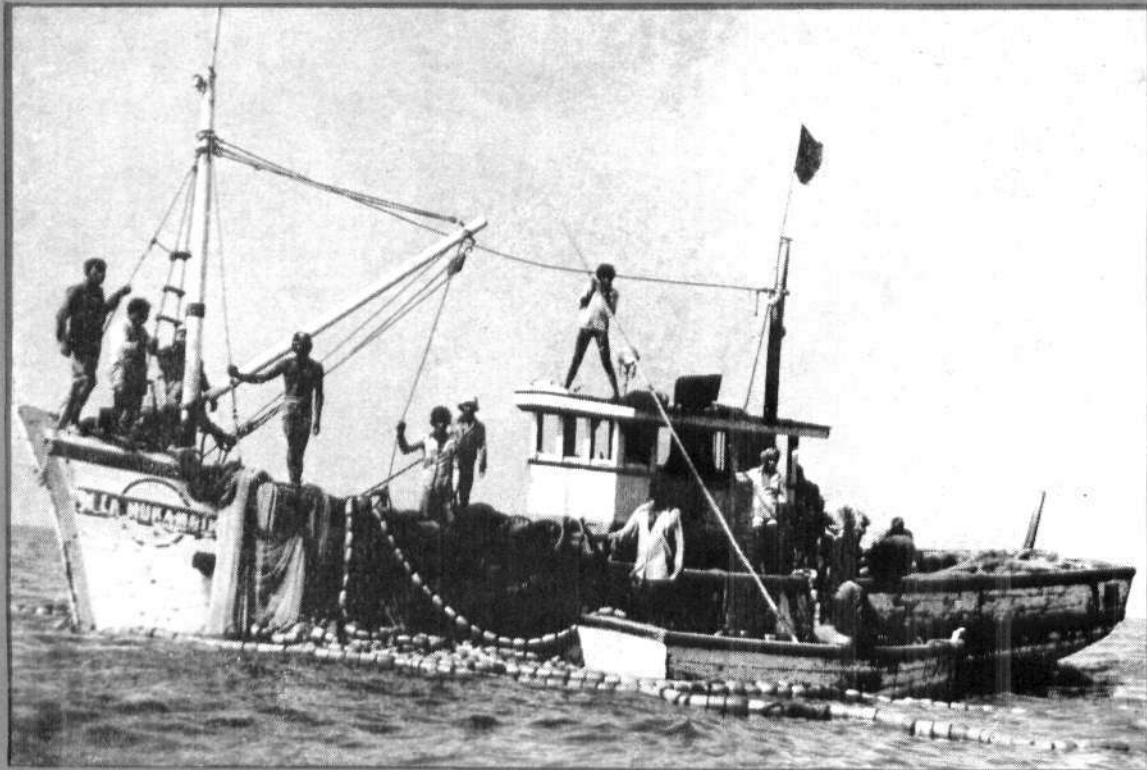




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**A RECORD CATCH OF 'GHOL' *PROTONIBEA DIACANTHUS* (LACEPEDE)  
OFF SATPATI, BOMBAY COAST\***

*Protonibea diacanthus* (Lacepede), called 'ghol' in Bombay, is a commercially very important sciaenid

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forming 5 to 8 per cent of the trawler landings from the Bombay and Saurashtra waters. Being demersal in habitat 'ghol' is usually landed by trawlers, bagnetters and gillnetters. The 'ghol' fishery was considered to

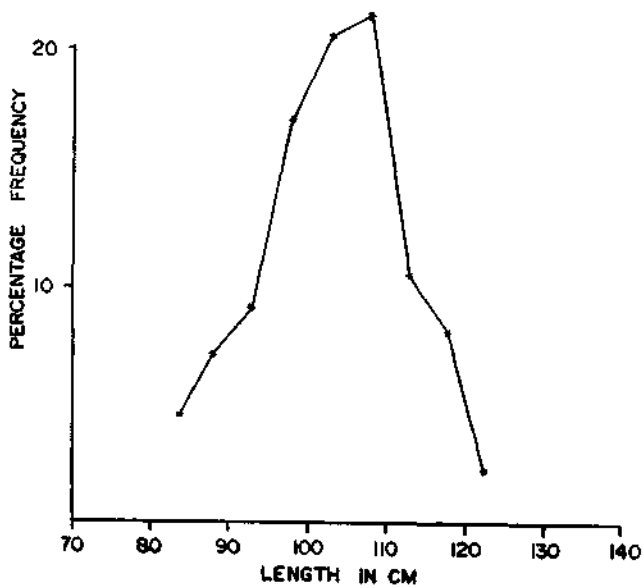


Fig. 1. Length frequency polygon of *P. diacanthus*.

be highly lucrative in the Bombay region until early Seventies. The fishery has been found sharply declining from mid-seventies in the area. In the present note the details of a record catch of 'ghol' consisting of 3,218 specimens, weighing approximately 39.52 tonnes, caught in a single haul of 'dol' net laid in 30 m depth off Satpati (Bombay coast) are presented.

In the early morning on 14th November, 1986 a 32-footer mechanised 'dolnetter' (locally called 'dolkar') steamed out for fishing. On locating its 'Sus' or 'Kav' ('dol' net operating stand) two 'dol' nets were laid at about 1300 hrs in 30 m depth off Satpati. On encountering great difficulties by twelve crew members of the boat in hauling in the nets at about 1730 hrs, assistance of two other boats, fishing nearby, was sought and the prized catch of 'ghol' was brought ashore in two boats. The entire catch was then transported to the wholesale fish market (Shivaji Market) at Bombay, where it was auctioned for a lucrative price of Rs. 2.5 lakhs. The fish was filleted and processed for local and export markets.

A sample of 88 specimens was measured at the Shivaji Market and the size was found to range from 85 to 121 cm. The average length of the fish was found



Fig. 2. A view of the bulk of 'Ghol' catch auctioned at fish market at Bombay.



Fig. 3. 'Ghol' being filleted at fish market at Bombay.

to be 99.80 cm and the average weight 12.28 kg. The dominant mode was at 108 cm. The length-frequency distribution of the various size groups in the catch is presented graphically (Fig. 1).

An analysis of the stomach contents of 35 specimens at the market revealed semi-digested remnants of Horse mackerel (*Megalaspis cordyla*), Golden anchovy (*Coilia dussumieri*), Malabar sole (*Cynoglossus macrostomus*) and croakers (*Sciaena* spp.). Most of the specimens had extroverted stomachs (70%) a characteristic feature of 'ghol'.

