

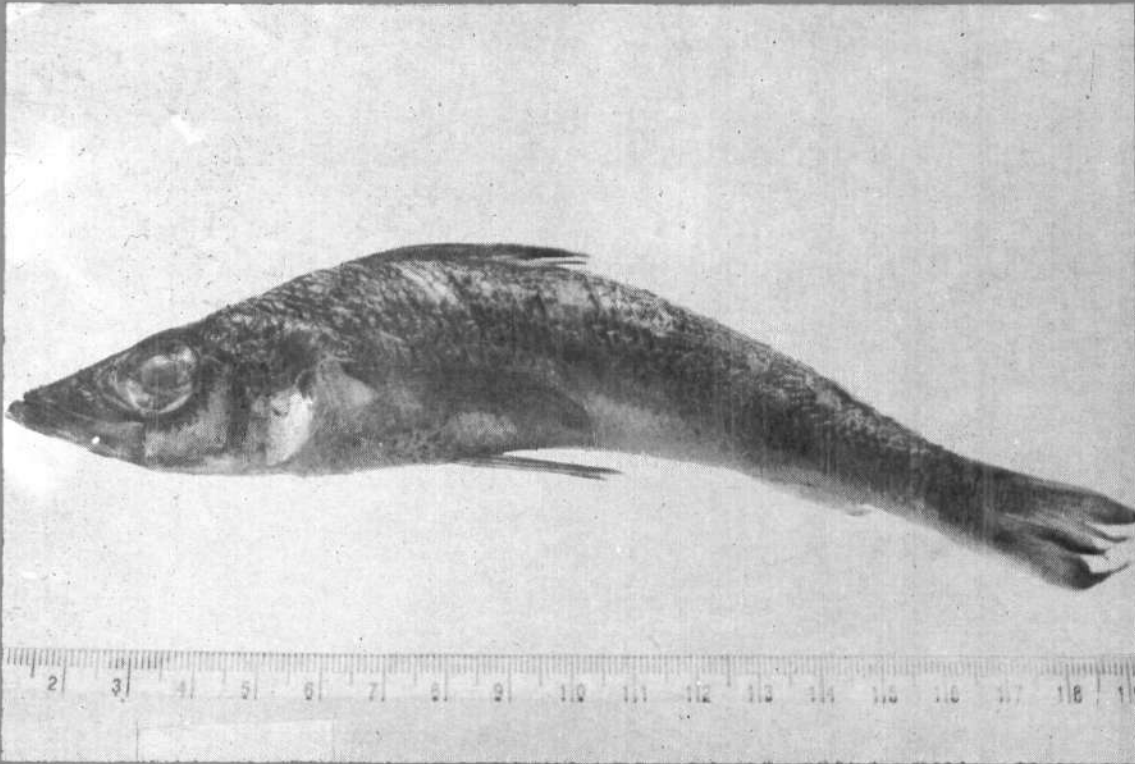


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केन्द्रीय समुद्री मात्स्यकी CENTRAL MARINE FISHERIES
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Heavy landings of Prawn (*Metapenaeus dobsoni*) at Paradeep along the Orissa coast *

Heavy landings of *M.dobsoni*, popularly called 'khopra' in Oriya were noticed at Paradeep centre during the off season in March and April 1995 in the trawl net. It was the largest catch ever landed in the last 10 years. It is also the most important species of prawn in the commercial fishery of Orissa coast. The unusual fishery occurred when the prawns migrated to the shallow waters and were caught by the trawlers.

During the peak season commencing from September to February about 300 mechanised trawlers operate at Paradeep and during the off season from March to August, only 30 to 50 trawlers used to operate. But this year on an average 140 trawlers operated daily at Paradeep during March and April 1995 due to large scale occurrence of the prawns. Most of the trawler



Fig. 1. *M. dobsoni* being unloaded from trawlers at Paradeep.

owners followed the P.F.Z forecasts given by the DOD/NRSA. Small trawlers (9 to 11 m) and large trawlers (13 to 14 m) were engaged in fishing.

Total production

During the two months, a total of 583 tonnes of prawns were caught by 7171 fishing units, out of which the *Metapenaeus dobsoni* contributed 261.16 tonnes (45%). Average prawn catch was 81.3 kg per unit. Details of estimated prawn catch are given in Table 1. A fabulous total revenue of Rs. 76,15,750/- was realised for the *M.dobsoni* catch.

ribbon fishes, rays, pomfrets eels etc. Length of *M. dobsoni* ranged from 58 to 99 mm in males and 68 to 112 mm in females. The dominant size group of males was 68 to 78 mm and of females 88 to 98mm. Females were slightly longer in size than males.

Price structure

During March 1995 the auction rate of *M.dobsoni* varied from Rs. 32 to 35 per kg depending on the quantity landed. The price came down to Rs. 22 to 25 per kg during April 1995, due to heavy landings. Sometimes price also came down, due to paucity of ice. Most of the quality fishes and prawns were sold to

TABLE 1. Estimated *M.dobsoni* catches by mechanised trawlers at Paradeep

Months 1995	No. of unit operated	Total prawn landings (t)	Catch per unit (kg)	Catch of <i>M.dobsoni</i> (t)	% of <i>M.dobsoni</i> to the total prawn landings	No. of fishing days	Total price of <i>M.dobsoni</i> (Rs.)
March	3,475	280	80.5	108.67	39	30	38,03,275
April	3,696	303	82	152.50	50	28	38,12,475
Total	7,171	583	81.3	261.17	45	58	76,15,750

Species and size composition

During the two month period, *M. dobsoni* catch ranked first (45%) in the total prawn landings. The other important species in the order of their abundance were *Parapenaeopsis hardwickii*, *Metapenaeus lysianassa*, *M. affinis*, *M. monoceros*, *Metapenaeopsis stredulan*, *Penaeus monodon* and *P. merguensis*. In addition to prawns, fairly large quantities of fish were also landed regularly by the smaller boats. These included anchovies, stomatopods, crabs, croakers,

merchants in fresh condition. Cheaper fishes and miscellaneous fishes were sold to local merchants.

General information about the centre

Paradeep has pukka roads, electricity and drinking water facilities. The centre lacks only Jetty facilities. Other amenities such as boat building yard, engine repair work shop, diesel bunk, ice factory and fish meal plant are available at this centre.

*Reported by Sukdev Brar, Puri Filed Centre of CMFRI, Puri - 752 002.