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ON THE UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE OF ACETES SPP. IN THE INSHORE WATERS OF PALK BAY*

The landings of sergestid shrimp *Acetes* spp. have been recorded from both west and east coasts. Among the total non-penaeid prawns landed in India, 75-80% is comprised of *Acetes* spp. (*Mar. Fish. Infor. Ser., T & E serv.*, No.110:1991). Their landings from Maharashtra coast alone have been estimated at more than 56,000 tonnes. Similarly information on the catches of *Acetes* spp. from some parts of Tamil Nadu coast are available (*Mar. Fish. Infor. Serv., T & E Ser. NO. 22:1979*). But it appears that there is no information on the occurrence of these non-penaeid prawns along Palk Bay coast.

During the visit in connection with the collection of fish landing data, an unusual fishing for *Acetes* spp. was noticed on 21.6.'94, at M.V. Pattinam (Solia Kudi) a mechanised landing

centre near Thondi along Palk Bay. The fishing for the species locally called as *Chella kooni* was conducted in the knee-deep water depth. The gears employed were mosquito nets and common sarees.

The fishing was of short duration extending for two days only. The catches were estimated at about 500 kg. Sun-dried *Acetes* spp. were sold @ Rs. 10/ per Madras measure in the market of Nambuthalai, a near-by fishing village. Here also this non-penaeid prawn is made use of in curry preparation along with vegetables as is the practice in the northern maritime states (*Mar. Fish. Infor. Serv., T & E Ser. No. 110:1991*).

Length measurements were taken for a sample of 25 specimens. The size of *Acetes* spp. ranged from 15 to 25 mm.

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