However, by September 1994 the capture of prawn seed from surf zone expanded rapidly to the coastal belt of almost all the fishing villages of Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram districts.

The net used is fixed bagnet of 2.5 m length and 0.5 m width which is made of nylon mesh cloth (mosquito netting). The cost of the net is about Rs. 250-300. Two persons are required to operate the net effectively. A net can be operated 20 times in a day. Duration of each haul is about 30 minutes. The seed collected in each haul is transferred into a plastic tub filled with sea water. The seed is sold to the middle-man at the shore.

The price of the seed in July 1994 was Rs. 30/- for 100 numbers and it increased to Rs. 60/- by September 1994 due to heavy demand.

Collection of prawn seed has become a newly established endeavour of the fisherfolk particularly the aged, who have given up fishing and its idle. They have now enthusiastically entered this least risky, more profitable business of seed collection.

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. Serv., 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 (Solla Kudi) a mechanised landing centre near Thondi along Palk Bay. The fishing for the species locally called as Chella koont 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.

* Prepared by A. Ganapthy, Regional Centre of C.M.F.R.I., Mandapam Camp - 623 820.

ON THE FISH AUCTIONING SYSTEM IN THE
VADALAREVU FISH LANDING CENTRE, ANDHRA PRADESH*

In the Vadalarevu fish landing centre in Andhra Pradesh the catches are sold by auctioning. For the purpose there are five auctioners in the village. They are selected by the elders of the village for which each auctioner has to pay Rs. 30,000 annually towards celebrating the village festival which falls in January every year.

The fisherman sort out the catch into groups in the boat itself and bring to the shore in separate baskets. The fishermen are not allowed to sell the catch directly to the merchants. Immediately after landing the auctioners start auction. But before auction, one large fish will be taken out from each fish group towards auction charges. If there are no auctioners present at the time of landing, the fishermen will have to wait until they arrive.

The auction will start from a higher to a lower amount. As the auction progress a merchant may utter a word "cho" at the level he desires to purchase the fish and if there is no further
bidders the auctioners will set the price at that level. After all the fishes are auctioned the auctioner will sell those fishes which he collected as auction charges. On an average the auctioners together may get about Rs. 300 per day and about Rs. 75,000 per year from which they have to pay Rs. 30,000 towards the village festival. The balance amount will be shared equally among the auctioners at the end of the festival. In this way each auctioner may get Rs. 7,000 to 8,000 every year.

SHARK LANDINGS AT KAKDWIP IN WEST BENGAL*

From 1992 onwards 8 hooks and line units using master hooks only and 6 units using gillnet in combination with hooks and line started operation from Kakdwip base. The number of such units increased to 22 from 14 during 1993. The season for operation is from October to February. During the other months they operate only gillnets of 18 to 19 m length fitted with an inboard engine horse power varying from 72 to 120. The number of hooks per unit using hooks and lines alone varied from 70 - 100 and that using gill nets along with hooks and line varied from 30 - 50. These units are operated in regions 80 - 100 km from shore and at a depth of 40 - 45 m. Mainly dolphins and eels cut into pieces of about 250 to 400 gm are used as baits. The catch details, man power, number of trips, working days, hauls and actual fishing hours are given in Tables 1 and 2. It will be found from the Tables that the efficiency of the units has little relation with man power, length of boat and horse power and the actual working hours. The catch depend more on the efficiency of the crew than the material of the unit.

In the landing centre sharks and rays are sold to merchants from Kerala and other fishes to the local merchants. Size and weight and the price fetched for different species as well as rates for fins are given in Table 3. Sharks weighing less than 5 kg are not accepted by Kerala merchants. It will be found from the table that sharks fetch more prize than rays and bigger sharks fetch prize comparable to Hilsa which has a high local demand. This has made the fishermen to resort to shark fishing.

The master hooks are supplied by merchants from Kerala on payment. The price of one set of master hooks and lines with 100 hooks of 15.4 cm size and accessories is given below:-

1. Rate per 100 piece of master hooks and accessories Rs. 14,000.00
2. Garware rope of 0.8 cm thickness about 60 kg Rs. 6,600.00
3. 30 pieces of 5 litre jerican Rs. 180.00
4. Fitting charges Rs. 1,000.00
   Total cost Rs. 21,780.00

The hooks are of different sizes with numbers 0/0, 0/1, 0/2 and 0/3 and measure 6, 5, 4 and 3 inches respectively. The cost of individual hook varies from Rs. 60 to 80 depending on size.

OPERATION OF HOOKS AND LINES

Note:-

Total cost of one hook assembly is given below:-
1. Cost of one hook of size 15.4 cm Rs. 80.00
2. Cost of 100 cm iron chain Rs. 30.00
3. Cost of plastic twine of 8m length and 0.4cm thickness (heavy monofilament twine) Rs. 30.00
   Total cost of hook assembly Rs. 140.00

* Prepared by Bijoy Krishna Burman, Contai Field Centre of C.M.F.R.I., Contai - 721401