FISHING CHIMES

GLASS SHRIMPS - A POTENTIAL FISHERY RESOURCE IN MAHARASHTRA

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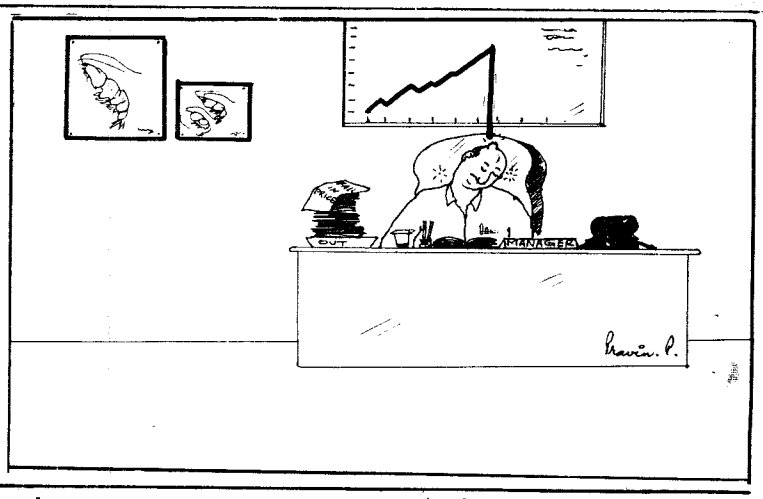
Glass shrimps belonging to the family **Pasiphaeidae** are small non- penaeid decapod crustaceans. Though small, some of the species belonging to this family have good resource value. Omori (1976) has reported heavy landings of **Pasiphaea japonica Omori** from Japanese waters from depths ranging from 500-600m.

In Indian waters no significant fishery has been reported for **Pasiphaeid** crustaceans, though there are records of them from inshore and off-shore regions. Three species that are on record from Indian waters are **Leptochela robusta** Stimpson, **L.pugmax** deMan and **L.aculeocaudata** Paulson of the genus **Leptochela.** The first two species are from deeper waters and the last from coastal areas. **L.robusta** Stimpson has been reported recently to form food of tunas in Lakshadweep waters recently. In Maharashtra the authors have found a close relationship between intensity of availability of glass shrimps and bumper catches of threadfin breams, **Nemipterus japonicus** and **N.mesoprion** and **L.pugmax** deMan. It is seen that glass shrimps form the favourite food of these species, as noticed from 80-90% of the stomach contents of Nemipterids.



L.pugmax deMan is reported for the first time from Maharashtra region. The resource potential of this shrimp can be estimated only after a deeper study.

Another species that has been noticed in bag net catches ('Dol' and 'Bokshi') is the small sized **L.aculeocaudata** Paulson. This is a shallow water species as 'Dol' nets and 'Bokshi' nets are seldom operated beyond 40 m depth. However, it has been noticed to be constantly present in bag net catches and is estimated to contribute 2% of the non-panaeid prawn landings of the state. This gives an annual landing figure of 2.3 tonnes (Maharashtra fishing season report 1985-86). Earlier reports on this species are from the confined waters of Panvel creek of Bombay.

L.aculeocaudata plays a part in the coastal ecosystem similar to the role of mysids (**Mesopodopsis orientalis** and **M.zeylanica**) and **Acetes shrimps** which form intermediary links in the food chain. This species are also utilisable as food for large penaeid prawns cultured in farms.

REFERENCES

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