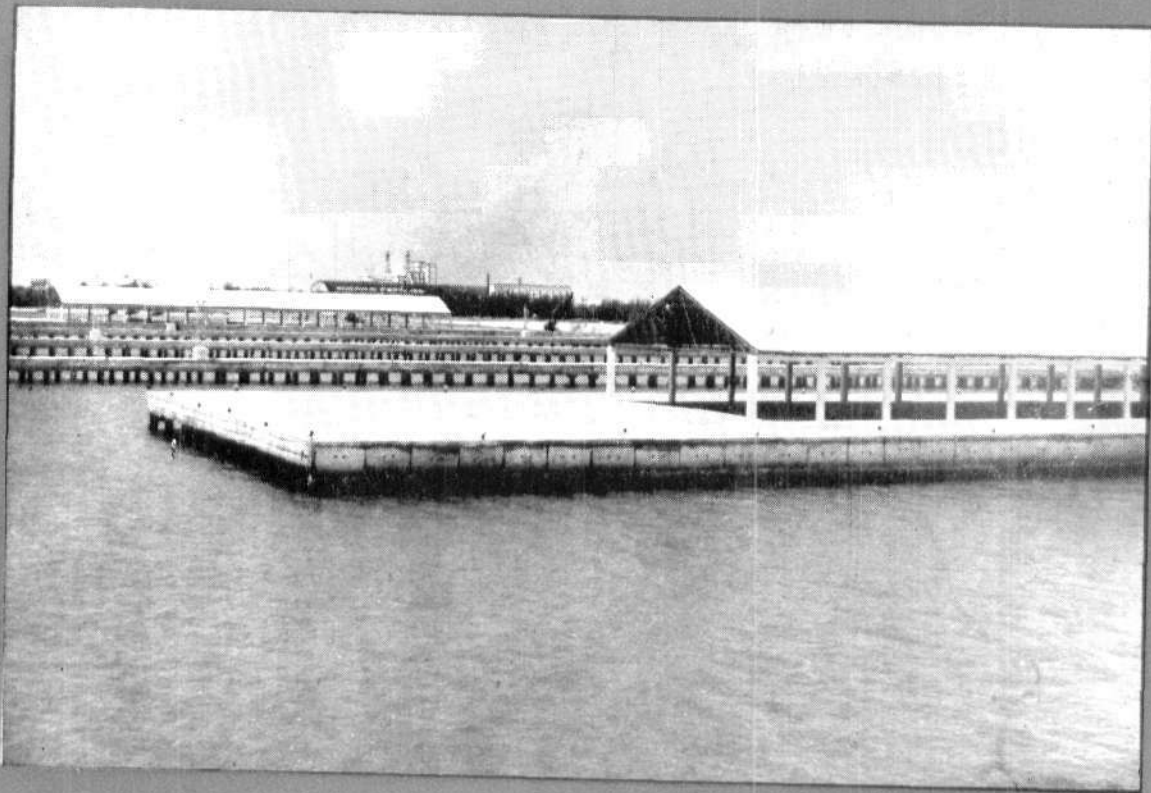




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ON A SEASONAL HOOKS AND LINE FISHERY WITH CATAMARANS ALONG CALICUT COAST*

Though information on catamarans and associated hooks and line fishery along the southern part of south-west coast and east coast is fairly adequate (Anon. 1981, *Mar. Fish. Infor. Serv., T & E Ser.*, 69: 23-28), we have practically no information on the same along the Malabar coast. The present report embodies a brief account on the catamaran fishery at Calicut during November and December, 1986.

The catamaran fishermen of Trivandrum and Kanyakumari coasts migrate along the Malabar coast for fishing during October to January. During this period the weather becomes unfavourable for fishing in their traditional fishing grounds due to northeast wind. They even go upto Karwar braving the sea in their catamarans driven by sail, and catch quality fishes using hooks and line. During this season, as fish landing by local fishing gears along the Calicut coast is poor, their catches fetch good price.

At Calicut each catamaran is operated by two fishermen (Fig. 1). They use two sets of hooks and lines (Fig. 2). The hooks are about 8 cm long made of iron rod of 1.5 mm thickness. The baitfish is attached to the hook and is covered with a metallic cap (Fig. 3).

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Fig. 2. Hooks and line used by the catamaran fishermen.

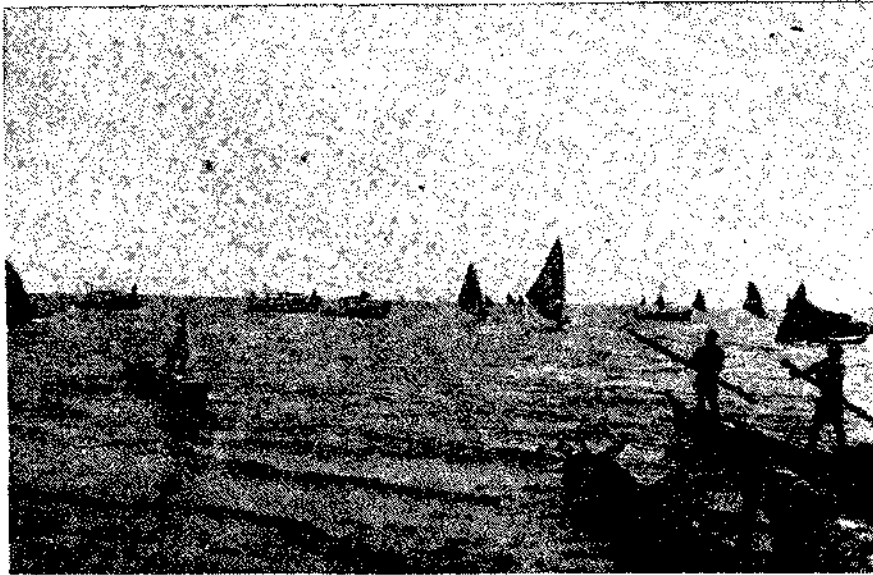


Fig. 1. Catamarans with sails off Calicut coast (Puthhiappa).



Fig. 4. Part of the landings - *Scomberomorus commerson* and *Sphyraena barracuda*.



Fig. 5. A part of the catch of *Sepia pharaonis* by hooks and line.



Fig. 6. *Sphyraena* spp. bound for the market.

Table 1. Estimated catch of fishes by catamarans with hooks and line at Calicut during 1986

| Species | Catch (kg) | | Length range (cm) | Average catch per trip (kg) | Species composition % |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| | November 1986 | December 1986 | | | |
| <i>Scomberomorus commerson</i> | 15,540 | 27,668 | 72-152 | 11.09 | 45.3 |
| <i>Sphyraena</i> spp. | 11,000 | 33,596 | 51-92 | 10.41 | 46.8 |
| <i>Rachycentron canadus</i> | 1,835 | 2,899 | 132-150 | 1.25 | 5.0 |
| <i>Sepia pharaonis</i> | 1,125 | 1,712 | 19-26 | 0.75 | 2.9 |
| Total | 29,600 | 65,875 | | | |

The hooks along with the bait are tied to a monofilament of 1 mm thickness and released as the catamaran sails. The commonly occurring fishes such as oil sardine, mackerel, and *Stolephorus* sp. are used as baits. Usually fishes with bright colouration are preferred.

The catamarans are launched in the morning and they return at about 1600 hrs. They take about three hours to reach the fishing grounds and almost the same time for the return journey. The actual fishing period will be about 4-5 hours. The northeast wind is utilised for sailing.

At Calicut during the present observations the catamaran fishermen landed their catches from the last week of October to December, 1986. The fishing was mainly done along the rocky beds about 12 to 15 km away from the shore at a depth of 20-30 m. These areas proved to be a rich fishing ground for quality fishes like *Scomberomorus commerson*, *Sphyraena* spp., *Rachycentron canadus* and *Sepia pharaonis*. The average catch per trip was 23.5 kg for the period.

It may be pointed out that though the local gill net fishermen do not get good catches during this season, the hooks and line fishermen obtain fairly good catch (Table 1, Figs. 4, 5 & 6). This indicates scope for diversification of craft and gear in the area during this season. But, the catamaran fishermen had to leave the place before the end of the season as the local gill net fishermen objected to their fishing.



Fig. 3. Hook with bait fish.

