FISHERIES OF
THE WEST COAST OF INDIA

Published on the occasion of the opening of the new building
of the Central Marine Fisheries Research Sub-Station at
Calicut by Shri. M. V. Krishnappa, Union Deputy
Minister for Agriculture, on 1st October 1958

Edited by
Dr. S. JONES
Chief Research Officer, Central Marine Fisheries Research Station
Mandapam Camp
DEEP SEA FISHING

BY K. CHIDAMBARAM, M.A., F.Z.S.

Assistant Fisheries Development Adviser to the Government of India
Ministry of Food and Agriculture, New Delhi

Fishing in the seas bordering India is at present largely confined to a coastal belt of about 7–10 miles in width. Though fishing is carried on to a small extent in distant parts of the sea, bulk of the marine fish landings are from inshore waters. The indigenous crafts and gear employed by Indian fishermen, though well suited for fishing in these areas, do not meet the needs of fishing in distant and deeper waters. It was, no doubt, realised that though production of fish could be increased to some extent by developing inland fishing, large proportion of increased landings should come only from the seas.

Deep sea fishing, fishing in offshore and distant parts of the high seas for surface, midwater and bottom forms, is to be carried on along two main lines:—

(i) by increasing the range and duration of the existing operations by installing engines in fishing boats, suitable for mechanisation; and

(ii) by undertaking exploratory fishing with the object of introducing new methods.

Since 1902, occasional attempts have been made at offshore and deep sea fishing in Indian seas for conducting surveys and commercial fishing by large-sized trawlers. These resulted in the location of some important fishing grounds off the coasts of India and Ceylon, but did not prove commercially successful because of the high cost of maintenance of the vessels, lack of adequate knowledge of the fishing grounds, lack of trained personnel, lack of information on the suitability of different types of vessels for Indian conditions, lack of harbour facilities, etc.

Since the end of last war, considerable emphasis has been laid on the development of deep sea fishing to augment the fish supplies of the country. The Government of India established a Pilot Deep Sea Fishing Station at Bombay in 1946 with the object of charting fishing grounds, determining fishing seasons and fishing intensities, assessing suitability of different kinds of fishing craft, gear and methods under Indian conditions, carrying out

112
attention. Safe anchorage for mechanised boats and large vessels, ice and

The development of deep sea fishing does not end with increasing the

transferring some of the power of fishing vessels from the west coast.

The offshore fishing unit at Tuticorin has been functioning in June

work of the fishing schooners of the Indo-Norwegian Project.

Recently this fleet has been strengthened. The programme of exploratory

by moving the two cities, Adyar and Pamban and the shippingtoolbar, Dinaga.

The Offshore Fishing Station at Cochin was established in February 1957.

T.C.M. programme are being pooled for operation from the four centres.

T.C.M. programme were produced for the start under the T.C.M. Programme.

pull trawlers were produced and brought into the existing fleet since 1950 by two other trawlers. These

one trawler. The West Bengal Government established a Deep Sea Fishing

Stations on the east coast. The Government of India has not so far undertaken

and have proved successful.

Indian trawler domestic commercial fishing with two pairs of pull trawlers

cconcern is commercial commercial fishing with two pairs of pull trawlers

been achieved by this type of fishing, as a result of which an Indian-Japanese

converted to pull trawling operation. Very encouraging results have

1953, the two other trawlers belonging to the Government of India were

for trawling is the necessity of fishing grounds in certain regions and also

have indicated the richness of fishing grounds in certain regions and also

Exploratory offshore fishing was conducted from 1949 onwards with

led to the development of commercial offshore fishing in India.

in power and methods, and in general for undertaking work that would

experiments on methods of preservation of fish, training of Indian personnel
cold storage facilities, transport from landing centres to centres of consumption, organisation of marketing, training of personnel, etc., are some of the most important factors to be considered in developing deep sea fishing. Facilities are provided for the training of personnel on board the offshore fishing vessels of the Government of India, Government of West Bengal, and of the Indo-Norwegian Project. The Central Fisheries Technological Research Station, recently established, is undertaking investigations relating to the improvement of fishing gear. Ice and cold storage plants exist now in some of the important fish-landing centres. Two harbour specialists have completed the survey in the States of Bombay, Mysore, Kerala and Madras for recommending suitable centres to develop small-scale fishing harbours. Facilities provided under the foreign aid programmes are being taken advantage of to train fishermen for shore management, distribution and marketing of fish.

The importance of survey and exploration of fishing grounds, provision of facilities for handling and storage, quick turn around of the vessels, training of local personnel, marketing facilities, etc., has been clearly indicated during the trawling operations of the vessels in different periods since the war. The Indo-Japanese fishing company, New India Fisheries, Ltd., has successfully demonstrated during the last two years the potentiality of the fishing grounds off the Bombay coasts. Certain proposals for the establishment of fishing companies by Indian enterprise in collaboration with foreign interests are also under consideration by the Government of India. The integrated programmes of development on hand for offshore and deep sea fishing, offshore fishery research and investigations on fishing gear, fish processing and handling would lead to increasing the range of fishing operations to the distant and deeper waters off the Indian coasts and contribute towards increasing the fish production of our country.