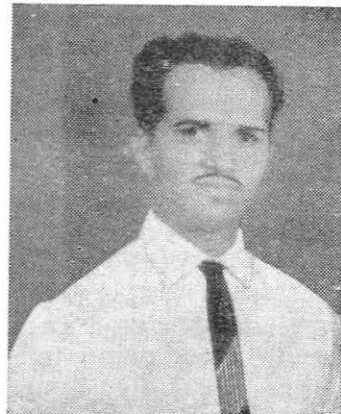


## TRAINING OF FISHERIES OPERATIVES PERSONNEL IN INDIA

V. Narayana Pillai & P. V. Samuel  
*Central Institute of Fisheries  
Operatives, Cochin*



### Introduction

The growth and development of any industry is dependent on the availability of trained technical skill. In the case of the fishing industry the technical skill is represented in the two broad categories of personnel viz. the operative personnel who are engaged in the process of catching fish and the supporting shore technicians who cater to the needs of the former by way of looking after the supply, maintenance and repair work of the necessary craft and gear and also the distribution of catches through appropriate channels. Among the first category itself there can be varied types of skill required depending on the size of the vessel, horse power of the engine and also the type of fishing method adopted. There will have to be specialised technical skill available to (1) Navigate the vessel safely and conduct fishing operations using the vessel as a base and also to bring the catch in good condition to the shore base and (2) to look after the running, maintenance and repair work of the ship's engines and other accessories while out at sea including deck equipment and

fittings utilised for conducting fishing operations. As has been mentioned earlier, the type of skill required to operate a small, medium sized and large fishing vessel both on deck as well as engine side are quite varied.

In order to meet the above requirements and to safeguard the interests with regard to safe navigation and conduct of economic fishing operations, certain competency certificates came into existence for the different disciplines depending upon the job requirements and were made compulsory by different countries from time to time. Today a varied number of such certifications are available in different countries and were fixed as the basic minimum requirement for taking up the respective positions on board fishing vessels of different tonnage / horse power. There are training organisations all over the world which are engaged in imparting the required theoretical and practical knowledge and also aid the candidate to earn the prescribed qualifying sea service or workshop service by suitable postings on board fishing vessels of the prescribed tonnage/

B. H. P. or recognised engineering workshops. Among these a vast majority offer permanent training programmes to a selected number of candidates who fulfil the basic requirements with regard to age, educational qualifications and physique. A large number of these training institutions also offer ad hoc training programmes mostly in the form of refresher courses to inservice personnel employed both in artisanal as well as industrial fishery units. The latter is mainly aimed at making the inservice personnel qualify for suitable certifications and also to ensure that they are introduced to modern improved techniques in fishing and allied subjects from time to time.

#### Training programmes in India

The Committee on Fisheries Education appointed by the Government of India in 1958 observed that "In India, Fisheries Science is, unlike Agriculture, largely a new and unfamiliar discipline. In Japan, Norway, Great Britain and the United States, to mention only a few instances, fishing and fishery industries have been organised and developed by private enterprise in the course of several generations. In these countries governmental intervention followed in response to the needs of industry which have set a pattern for training in and assistance from the public sector. But even among the countries mentioned above, Japan may be cited as an example for "forthright governmental assistance in which establishment of training institutes played a major role in the modernisation of fishery industries..... One of the most fruitful forms of governmental assistance, on a national scale, is to provide facilities for training of personnel at various levels".

During 1958-59, the Committee observed that training in navigation and seamanship was provided in the Nautical and Engineering College, Bombay for Skippers and Second hands of fishing vessels. There were eight fishermen training centres organised jointly by the Union and State Governments which gave 6 months training courses in a uniform pattern. The Indo-Norwegian Project was also providing 6 months training in mechanised fishing to the fishermen of three villages near Quilon in Kerala State since 1953. Training in mechanised fishing was also provided on large boats of the Central Deep-sea Fishing Station, Bombay, Offshore Fishing Station at Cochin and Tuticorin and on the vessels of the Government of West Bengal (Calcutta) and Indo-Norwegian Project (Cochin).

The Committee concluded that a review of the existing facilities "discloses a most unsatisfactory situation with regard to provision in India of training of fishery workers of various categories. The training is largely ad hoc with an excessively academic bias and with inadequate facilities for giving practical experience. The existing arrangements are not capable of training personnel in the numbers required nor do they train to the required levels of proficiency". The Committee was of the view that there is need to extend the period of training in the light fishermen training centres to one year or at least 9 months and to increase the number of centres.

Accepting the recommendations made by this Committee, the Government of India established two training institutions viz. the Central Institute of Fisheries Education, in Bombay during the

year 1961, to impart post-graduate instruction in the composite discipline of fisheries science to district level fisheries officers in service, deputed by various State Governments, for implementing development programmes and the Central Institute of Fisheries Operatives established at Cochin in the year 1963 along with its unit at Madras which was established during the year 1969 to train the required number of specialised technicians like skippers, fishing second hands, engineers and engine drivers of medium and large fishing vessels which come under the purview of the Merchant Shipping Act (1958) and also the related Shore Technicians like Fisheries Electronics Technicians, Fishing Gear Technicians, Shore Mechanics, Boat Building Foremen and Teachers required for the various fishermen training centres.

The required number of trained technicians needed for the small mechanised fishing vessels which do not come within the purview of the Merchant Shipping Act (1958) are being trained by a total of about 27 fishermen training centres distributed in the states of Gujarat (2), Maharashtra (4), Mysore (4), Kerala (5), Tamil Nadu (7), Andhra Pradesh (3) and the Union Territory of Laccadives (1) and Goa (1). As in January 1972, a total of 6500 Nos. of Fishermen have been trained by all these Training Centres together and made available to the Industry both in the public and private sectors for the operation of the smaller mechanised fishing vessels. The details of instructions at these training centres include basic lessons in (1) Navigation (2) Motoring (3) Gear Construction and maintenance (4) Different aspects of fishing etc. The duration of training is fixed as 12 months in A. P., 10 months in Gujarat and Tamil

Nadu, 6 months in Maharashtra, Goa, Mysore, Orissa and Laccadives and in Kerala the duration of the course is fixed as 38 weeks.

The Central Institute of Fisheries Operatives Imparts training for a selected number of candidates who fulfil the basic requirements with regard to Age, educational qualifications, aptitude and physique so as to enable them to appear for the following Competency Certificate Examinations.

- (1) Skipper — Fishing
- (2) Secondhand — Fishing
- (3) Engineer — (Fishing vessel)
- (4) Engine Driver — (Fishing Vessel)

Apart from the above, the Institute also trains the required number of supporting technicians such as shore mechanics, fishing gear technicians, fisheries electronics technicians, boat building foremen, and teachers required for the fishermen training centres. In order to fulfil this requirement, the Institute conducts 7 different courses with duration varying from 6 to 15 months. The qualifying sea service/workshop service (Post-institutional training programmes), prescribed under the existing regulations is also arranged by the Institute for the trainees who successfully complete the respective training courses so as to enable them to appear for the respective competency certificate examinations on successful completion of the total prescribed sea/workshop service requirements.

The training given at this Institute in all the above disciplines is practical biased and aims at making candidates capable of carrying out the practical jobs of their respective specialisations satisfactorily. During the last 10 years

the Institute has made steady progress and today it is counted among the leading institutions in the South-East Asia engaged in training of operative personnel for the fishing industry. The progress achieved since inception of the training programme upto April, 1973 is given below.

Course	No. of candidates trained	
	Cochin	Madras Unit
1. Fishing Second hands Course	241	100
2. Engine Drivers Course	206	98
3. Boat Building Foremens Course	53	Nil
4. Gear Technicians Course	77	5
5. Shore Mechanics Course	45	Nil
6. Radio Telephone Operators Course	46	28
7. Teacher Training Course	20	Nil
	688	+ 231
Total trained : 919		

Among the above, 43 have obtained the Secondhand Fishing Competency Certificate and 18 have taken the Skipper fishing Competency Certificate. A large number of engine driver candidates who have obtained the required qualifying sea service are eligible to appear for the Engineer/Engine Driver (fishing vessels) Examinations, rules for which have been finalised and implemented in February 1973. Among these, 10 candidates have obtained the Competency Certificate as Engine Driver Fishing Vessel recently.

Facilities for practical training at sea include two 93' and two 57' vessels one each attached to the Institute at Cochin and Madras. One more 43' vessel constructed at this Institute as a part of the training programme will be added to the existing fleet in the near future. With the addition of another 200' OAL multipurpose training vessel with about 30 days cruising range and with a capacity for 40 trainees at a time, a proposal for which is under the active consideration of the Ministry, the Institute will enter a new phase in fisheries Operatives training by way of imparting specialised training in different methods of fishing like purse seining, long lining, pole and line fishing, gill netting, mid-water trawling etc. for which the existing facilities in the form of training vessels would not be sufficient to train the required number of technicians within the prescribed period. Especially with the implementation of the V Year Plan when the country is expected to go into the exploitation of the pelagic waters in a bigger way, let us hope that this Institution will cater to the needs of the industry with regard to the availability of specialised skill in the different disciplines at the appropriate time, and contribute immensely to the economic development of the nation.

"Investment in men" is one of the essential factors in developing any industry. This being a costly and long range programme, this investment has to be done with careful assessment of requirements and utilisation. On this will rest the harvest of the resources for decades to come.