

## Minister inaugurates India's Centre of Excellence for seaweeds

*The Mandapam Regional Centre of ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has been designated as a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for India's seaweed research and cultivation.*



*India's Union Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Mr George Kurian (dressed in white) at the inauguration*

**Kochi:** The centre was officially inaugurated recently by India's Union Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Mr George Kurian. Emphasising the crucial role of ICAR-CMFRI in advancing marine fisheries and mariculture in the nation, the minister said that this new development will further contribute to the comprehensive growth of the fisheries sector. The minister also inaugurated the plantlet production unit for seaweed, followed by visit to the marine hatchery complex, national marine fish brood bank, recirculation aquaculture system (RAS), sea cage farm, and the green tiger shrimp hatchery. While there Minister Kurian highlighted the remarkable increase in India's fish production over the past

decade, from 95.79 lakh tonnes to 175.45 lakh tonnes. He also mentioned the government's efforts to improve the sector through various schemes.

"Under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), the Union Department of Fisheries, Govt of India distributed 22 Insulated vehicles in Ramanathapuram district alone to maintain cold chain facilities for quality maintenance of fishes up to marketing with a subsidy of Rs 147.94 lakh", the Minister said.

"To enhance income and promote sustainable aquaculture, the government has introduced open sea cage farming for high-value fish species like seabass and cobia in the district. A subsidy of 9.91 lakh is provided under this scheme. To improve the efficiency and safety of traditional fishermen, the government is replacing

wooden catamarans with FRP boats. 29 beneficiaries have already received these boats with a subsidy of Rs 58.18 lakh," Minister Kurian added.

CMFRI Director Dr Grinson George presided over the function and described the future plans for a strong collaboration with the ICAR-National Research Centre for Banana, Thiruchirapalli in seaweed tissue culture programmes. More than 150 fishers, fish farmers and seaweed farmers from Ramanathapuram and Pudukottai districts of Tamil Nadu attended the interactive meeting. They shared their experiences in seaweed farming and sea cage farming and also thanked the government of India, ICAR-CMFRI and Tamil Nadu State Fisheries Department for the various schemes and development initiatives being implemented for the sector.