

Fisheries Dept. deploys 32 rafts off Karaikal coast to promote seaweed cultivation

The Hindu Bureau
PUDUCHERRY

The Fisheries Department, on Saturday deployed 32 High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) seaweed rafts off the Pattinachery and Karukkalacherry coast in Karaikal to enhance the livelihood opportunities for coastal communities and promote seaweed cultivation.

According to an official, the project is supported by the Central Marine Fisheries Institute (CMFRI)-ICAR, Mandapam. The project cost is ₹50 lakh.

The Puducherry government has inked a Memorandum of Understanding with Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute to undertake a pilot study for commercially important marine finfish farming in sea cages, integrated with seaweed cultivation. The MoU was signed during the visit of Union Minister of State for Fisheries George Kurian to Puducherry in April.

Scientists attached to the (CMFRI)-ICAR, Manda-



Fisheries Secretary D. Manikandan launching the deployment of HDPE seaweed rafts off the Pattinacheri coast in Karaikal.

pam, identified 23 potential sites for seaweed cultivation in Puducherry and Karaikal. Of them, cultivation of seaweed at four sites – Pudukuppam and Pannithittu in Puducherry; Karukkalacherry and Pattinachery in Karaikal – have been taken up on a pilot basis, with the first harvest planned by October.

Secretary to Fisheries D. Manikandan launched the deployment of the rafts off the Pattinacheri coast.

According to Mr. Manikandan, CMFRI has already provided training to the beneficiaries on the technique; orientation on sea cage farming; preparation

of HDPE cages; net exchange and cleaning; feed; disease management; harvest and overall maintenance. The selected seaweed variety would be cultivated a few metres from the coast.

Each raft was filled with 50 kg of seaweed and an average of five to seven tonnes of harvest is expected from each site (Pattinacheri and Karukkalacherry) per cycle.

Director of Fisheries A. Mohammed Ismail, Deputy Director (Brackish Water) G. Rajendiran, and senior officials were present when the rafts were deployed.