

Matsya Mela concludes with a call for integrated fisheries hub in Lakshadweep



Kochi: Matsya Mela concluded on a high note at Kavaratti with a call for establishing an integrated fisheries hub in Lakshadweep. The hub is aimed as a single-window platform to streamline marketing, strengthen the fisheries value chain, and enhance the income and livelihood security of island fishing communities.

Experts and stakeholders highlighted that the proposed fisheries hub would focus on organised fish marketing, common landing and handling facilities, cold storage and cold-chain infrastructure, value addition units, and export facilitation, enabling Lakshadweep to unlock the full potential of its tuna-based fisheries and emerging mariculture sector.

Stakeholders emphasised the need for regular and scientific fish catch data

estimation for the Archipelago as the foundation for sustainable fisheries management.

Another major recommendation was the identification of suitable sites for cage fish farming in Lakshadweep waters, considering environmental carrying capacity, ecosystem health, and climate resilience.

Scientists underlined the scope of cage farming, seaweed cultivation, and ornamental fisheries as diversified livelihood options that can complement capture fisheries and reduce pressure on natural stocks. The mela also stressed the importance of citizen science initiatives, enabling closer linkages between fishing communities and for data scientific collection, institutions stock assessment, and ecosystem monitoring.

Speakers noted that coordinated efforts among fishers, researchers, cooperatives, entrepreneurs, and the administration are essential for translating scientific knowledge into community-driven management practices. Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Lakshadweep of the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) took the lead to organise the mega event in association with the Fisheries Department of Lakshadweep. Lakshadweep Fisheries Director K Buzar Jamhar, CMFRI Director Dr Grinson George and Lakshadweep KVK Head Dr P N e Ananth spoke at the valedictory session.

