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PRAWN CULTURE AT MOOLAKODDU IN VISAKHAPATNAM DISTRICT ANDHRA PRADESH*

Prawn is a valuable resource because of the demand in export trade. The centre and state governments are coming forward to extend their help to the prawn culture.

The Andhra Pradesh Rellikula Sankshema Seva Sangham is working hard for the upliftment of Relli community (Scheduled caste) in eleven districts of Andhra Pradesh. On the basis of its recommendations and effort, the State Scheduled

Caste Corporation encouraged the Relli community youth of Moolakoddu for prawn culture.

Moolakoddu is 3 km away from Bhimilipatnam in Visakhapatnam District. It is between Nagamayyapalem and Bhimilipatnam fish landing centres. There are only two communities of people living here, the Reddys and Rellis. The Relli community people use to do labour work in the agriculture and salt fields of Reddys. Eighteen

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Relli community families are benefitted with the introduction of the prawn culture at Moolakoddu. The educational qualification of the 18 beneficiaries range from I to X class only. About 100 houses are there including 20 pucca houses constructed by state Government and the rest huts.

The State S.C. Corporation allotted 50 acres of land to 18 youths of this village. The digging, deepening, shaping, arrangements of inlets, outlets and water flowing chanals were done by the S.C Corporation following MPEDA design. Each person got 2.5 acres of land as their part. Figs. 1 and 2 show the prawn culture fields with all facilities.

Initially they purchased prawn seed (*P.*

monodon) from TASPARC at Vizag and Kakinada. With a capital of Rs. 5,000/- they obtained about Rs. 60,000/- in four months. In November 1992 they seeded and harvested in May '93. Each of them paid Rs. 23,000/- to S.C. Corporation and cleared the loan.

Second time they purchased prawn seed from Kakinada. They started seeding in August '93. This time a high mortality was caused to *P. monodon* larva due to high salinity, so they incurred some loss. However, they managed to get their capital amount by harvesting the rest of the *P. monodon* in November '93.

Now they are of the opinion that the prawn seeds from TASPARC are better for their prawn culture.

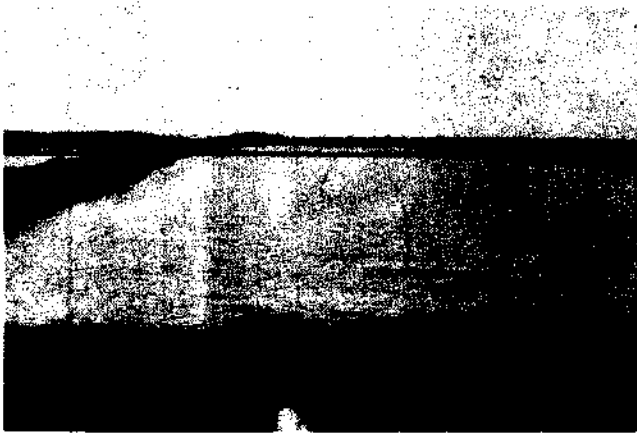


Fig. 1. View of the shrimp culture ponds.

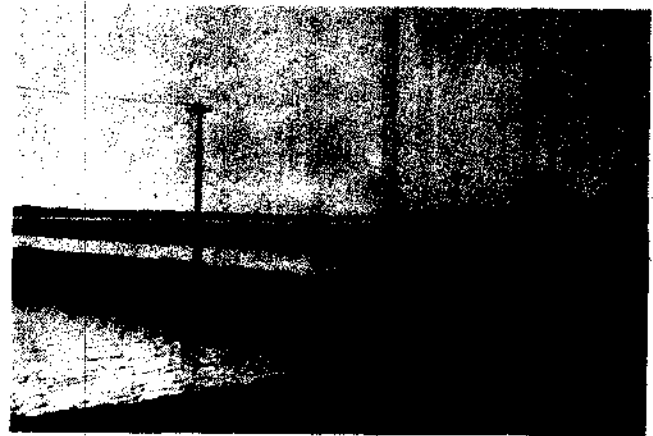


Fig. 2. View of the culture ponds with sea, creek and pump houses.