

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING
DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 3543
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17TH DECEMBER, 2024**

Challenges faced by Inland Fishermen

3543. Shri Kodikunnil Suresh:

Will the Minister of FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING, मत्स्यपालन, पशुपालन और डेयरी मंत्री be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the challenges faced by inland fishermen, especially in Kerala, where river-based and inland fishing activities are vital for local livelihoods;

(b) whether steps are being taken by the Government to improve the socio-economic conditions of inland fishermen, particularly in terms of financial support, skill development, and access to modern fishing technology;

(c) whether the Government has any specific schemes or initiatives to ensure the sustainability of inland fisheries and protect the ecosystems on which these communities depend;

(d) the details of any financial assistance provided to inland fishermen in the last five years and its impact on their livelihoods;

(e) whether the Government has any plans to address the issues of declining fish stocks, pollution and illegal fishing in inland water bodies, which directly affect inland fishermen; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING:
(SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH ALIAS LALAN SINGH)**

(a): The Government of Kerala has informed that challenges such as natural disasters, sudden climatic variations, habitat destruction and anthropogenic factors like pollution, overfishing, illegal fishing practices etc. are faced by inland fishermen in Kerala, which have been addressed with implementation of Kerala Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Act, stock enhancement programs and conservation and management measures to ensure sustainability of fish resources. It has also been reported that as a result of various measures taken, the fish production from inland fisheries in Kerala has increased from 1.89 lakh mt in 2017-18 to 2.51 lakh mt in 2023-24.

(b) to (d): The Department of Fisheries, Government of India (DoF, GoI) through its schemes has been taking several initiatives towards holistic development of both marine and inland fisheries sector and to improve the socio-economic conditions of the fishermen.

Enhancing fish production, strengthening of value chain, employment generation, ensuring safety & security of fisheries and ensuring sustainability of the resources have been the core of these initiatives. The DoF, GoI is implementing flagship scheme 'Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana' (PMMSY) for holistic development of fisheries sector for implementation in all the States and Union Territories of India including Kerala for a period of 5(five) years from FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25. During last four years (2020-21 to 2023-24) and current financial year (2024-25) under PMMSY, the DoF, GoI has accorded approvals to the fisheries developmental proposals of Government of Kerala amounting to Rs.1181.10 crore.

The approved activities *inter alia* included inland fisheries development activities like assistance towards construction of freshwater finfish hatcheries, new rearing & grow-out ponds for fish culture, ornamental fish rearing and breeding units, cage culture in reservoirs, high-tech culture systems like Re-circulatory Aquaculture System, Biofloc culture units, pen culture units, integrated development of reservoirs, boats and nets to traditional fishermen, extension and support services under 'Matsya Seva Kendras'. In addition conservation activities like ranching for replenishing of fish stocks, welfare activities like livelihood support to fishers during fish ban period, insurance coverage to fishers, programmes towards training and capacity building are also provided.

The PMMSY implemented by the DoF, GoI *inter-alia* aims at harnessing of fisheries potential including inland fisheries in a sustainable manner, enhancing fish production and productivity through expansion, intensification, diversification and productive utilization of land and water, strengthening of value chain, doubling fishers and fish farmers incomes and generation of employment and also ensuring social & economic security for fishers and fish farmers. During the last four years and current financial year, projects worth of Rs. 4582.28 crore have been approved under PMMSY towards inland fisheries in all States/UTs.

In addition, in order to strengthen the institutional credit in fisheries, Kisan Credit Card has been extended to fishers and fish farmers including inland sector to help them meet their working capital requirement. Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund has been created enabling concessional financing in fisheries. Due to strategic initiatives of the Union and State Governments, over the last decade, total fish production of the country from inland aquaculture has doubled from 61.36 lakh tons at the end of 2013-14 to 131.13 lakh tons (in 2022-23). These initiatives have also ensured stable income growth to fishermen in the State and overall development of the sector.

(e) & (f) To ensure sustainability of fish stocks and mitigate pollution in waterbodies, awareness programs are been taken up by the State Governments/UTs on fish conservation during ban period, best management practices ensuring sustainability of the fish stock. In addition, monitoring of illegal fishing activities, establishment of fish protected area, restoration of damaged aquatic ecosystems are also carried out by the State Governments/UTs under their respective Inland Fisheries Acts. Further, Government of India and local administrations are implementing various flagship clean-up programmes in both marine and inland waters to address the issues related to pollution.
