

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

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 4183
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19th AUGUST, 2025

Protection of Fisheries Sector

4183. Shri Ve Vaithilingam:

Will the Minister of **FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps to raise awareness about the threats facing like overfishing habitat destruction and illegal fishing practices in the country in fisheries sector;
- (b) whether the steps taken by the Government to protect the rights of small scale fishers who are often among the most marginalized and vulnerable groups; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING

(SHRI GEORGE KURIAN)

(a) to (c): 'Fisheries' is a State Subject. All coastal States and Union Territories (UTs) are governing marine fisheries through their respective Marine Fishing Regulation Acts (MFRAs). The areas for fishing by the small-scale fishers are reserved under the MFRAs to protect their livelihood interests.

The Department of Fisheries, Government of India (DoF, GoI) is implementing a flagship scheme namely "Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)" with highest ever estimated investment of Rs. 20050 crore for overall development of the fisheries sector and socio-economic wellbeing of traditional and small scale fishers. The DoF, GoI has also notified the 'National Policy on Marine Fisheries, 2017' to guide the responsible and sustainable fishing in the country. Besides, the DoF, GoI has issued advisories from time to time to all the coastal States/UTs for preventing juvenile fishing and ban on destructive fishing practices for ensuring sustainability. Paired bottom trawling or bull trawling and use of LED lights in fishing are banned in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of India. All the maritime States/UTs have also been advised to take necessary steps to prevent pair or bull trawling and use of LED light for fishing within and beyond the territorial waters. Besides, the DoF, GoI has also advised to coastal states/UTs to review and amend their respective MFRAs to ensure mandatory use of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) towards marine turtle conservation. The implementation of TED has been included and supported under the PMMSY scheme with 100% financial assistance (60% Central + 40% State).

For enhancement of the fish stocks and sea safety reasons the uniform ban on fishing for 61 days is implemented annually in the EEZ beyond territorial waters on both the coasts (i.e., 15th April to 14th June in the East Coast, and 1st June to 31st July in the West Coast).

Similarly, the coastal States/UTs are also implementing the fishing ban within their territorial waters in line with the uniform ban implemented in the EEZ by the DoF, GoI. The livelihood and nutritional support for socio-economically backward active traditional fishers during the fishing ban/lean period as well as the group accidental insurance scheme for the active fishers is covered under the PMMSY. Further, studies on fish stocks revealed that the stocks are in good health and 91.1% of the 135 fish stocks evaluated in different regions during 2022 were found sustainable.

Under the PMMSY, the Government of India has, for the first time, extended support for activities such as sea ranching and installation of Artificial Reefs along the entire coastline of India to prevent habitat destruction, enhancing the fish stocks and supporting livelihood of fishers. The activities such as mariculture including seaweed cultivation and open sea cage culture are promoted under PMMSY to alleviate the fishing pressure in nearshore waters, and boost marine fisheries production in sustainable manner.

The PMMSY also includes a component “Development of 100 Coastal Fishermen Villages as Climate Resilient Coastal Fishermen Villages (CRCFV)”, in various States and UTs, to transform them to economically vibrant fishermen villages by providing support to a basket of activities that includes infrastructure components and economic activities that aid enhancing the resilience of the villages to climate change impacts.

A sub-component namely “Assistance for Deep Sea Fishing” and another component of “Conversion of Trawlers into Resource Specific Deep-Sea Fishing Vessels” were implemented under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) “Blue Revolution: Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries” to provide financial assistance to traditional fishermen for promotion of resource specific deep-sea fishing. The DoF, GoI had introduced the components namely, “Support for acquisition of Deep-Sea Fishing vessels for traditional fishermen” and “Up-gradation of existing fishing vessels for export competency” under PMMSY, to provide financial assistance to traditional fishermen for promotion of resource specific deep-sea fishing in all coastal States and UTs.

The National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB), and the R&D Institutions such as the Fishery Survey of India (under DoF, GoI), the Centre for Marine Living Resources & Ecology (under Ministry of Earth Sciences) and Fisheries Research Institutes under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) have undertaken a series of initiatives in association with State Fisheries Departments to raise awareness on critical threats to the fisheries sector including overfishing, habitat degradation, and prevention of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. These efforts encompass national and regional workshops, stakeholder consultations and capacity-building programs that train fishers with sustainable fishing techniques, by-catch reduction device, safe handling practices and bycatch mitigation measures, river ranching and sea ranching programs to enhance the fish stocks, responsible and efficient fishing methods and to address environmental and sustainability issues of the marine fishing.
