

**Tamil Nadu News Articles**  
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## **Tamil Nadu: Concern over lack of adequate consultation on climate action plan**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/concern-over-lack-of-adequate-consultation-on-climate-action-plan/article65903700.ece>

"The Greater Chennai Corporation has received criticism over the draft Chennai Climate Action Plan (CCAP), uploaded recently on its website to seek feedback from the public, for alleged lack of adequate window for consultation and non-availability of the document in Tamil. The 52-page presentation, prepared by the Corporation with the support of C40 Cities and Urban Management Centre, has identified key risks faced by the city and the long term solutions that it ought to pursue to make the city "climate-resilient."

It has highlighted some important risks, including the possibility that 100 metres from the coast may get submerged over the next five years due to a 7-cm rise in the sea level. The civic body has given two weeks till September 26 for the public to send feedback and suggestions to the email address [chennaiclimateactionplan@gmail.com](mailto:chennaiclimateactionplan@gmail.com).

G. Selva, secretary, Chennai central district unit of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), said that it was unacceptable that such an important document was not released in Tamil. "There is an increasing trend of such policy documents being made available only in English first. Only after demand, a Tamil version is being released," he said.

Urging the Corporation to immediately release a Tamil version of the draft CCAP, G. Sundarrajan of Poovulagin Nanbargal said the two-week window provided for offering feedback was inadequate. He stressed on the need for wider consultations to be organised by the civic body. He said the consultations done while preparing the draft were inadequate. He said although his organisation participated in a couple of online meetings regarding this, they were not constructive.

Nityanand Jayaraman of Vettiver Collective said the exercise of seeking feedback from the public appeared insincere and ritualistic as the Corporation seems to have made up its mind on what ought to be done. He said the document tried to frame the whole issue as an "engineering" problem and not as a socio-political problem that exacerbated the existing social inequalities. He said that while the document stated that 204 consultation meetings were held, none appeared to be with the public, particularly the most-vulnerable fishing community.

He said the GCC as an institution with elected councillors was well-placed to organise adequate consultations with the public. In such a situation, he said the release of the document, which articulated policy framework for the next few decades, only in English and providing two-weeks to offer feedback, was unacceptable."

## **Tamil Nadu: New deep-sea fishing rules favour corporates, rue small-scale fishers**

<https://thefederal.com/news/new-deep-sea-fishing-rules-favour-corporates-rue-small-scale-fishers/>

"Jobith, a fisherman from Tamil Nadu's Kanyakumari district, has ventured into the sea in his boat, heading to Kochi from Nagercoil. When The Federal reached out, he had started sailing from home to Kochi harbour, from where he filled up the oil tank and packed food to survive for the next one month. Typically, Jobith and his 14 co-workers spend 30 to 45 days in the high seas for fishing. They go to the high seas around 700 nautical miles away from the coast. They fish there, competing with fishing ships from Iran, Oman and China.

"We do fishing in the high seas. Usually, the fishermen-sailors from other countries consider the sea as everyone's property. Though there are gigantic ships of foreign countries, we manage to catch fish worth ₹15-20 lakh," Jobith told The Federal. They make a profit of ₹5-10 lakh, which is shared among all the workers, he added.

However, Jobith is clueless about what is in store once the new policy on deep sea fishing becomes law. The draft policy note, published by the Central Fisheries Ministry on August 30, triggered unrest among hundreds of small-scale fishermen like Jobith. "The new policy gives priority to big vessels as far as I know. More companies and corporates will enter into fishing. It will become difficult for small-scale fishers," said Jobith, expressing his worries to The Federal.

According to the guidelines of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), vessels with lengths less than 25 metres are categorised as 'small-scale'. The fishermen's communities in Tamil Nadu and Kerala collectively share the same concerns. "The new policy is drafted with an intention of corporatising the fishing sector. The traditional small-scale fishermen will be kept away from high seas, which will eventually make them leave the occupation," said Charles George, president of All India Deep Sea Fishers Association.

The Guidelines for Regulation of Fishing by Indian Flagged Fishing Vessels in the High Seas, 2022, was published on the website of the Union Fisheries Department on August 30 and suggestions were invited. There is much apprehension among the fishermen and experts in the field on the new guidelines. It has been suggested that it should be modified to make it more fishermen-friendly; currently, it's seen as more 'industrial friendly'. The guidelines stipulate that all Indian flagged vessels require a permit to fish in the high seas. Those with a length of 25 metres or more are required to pay ₹5 lakh as fee. Boats between 15 and 24 metres in length have to pay ₹1 lakh to get a permit. The fee prescribed for vessels with lengths less than 15 metres is ₹50,000.

The All India Deep Sea Association, in a letter to the Union government, has demanded that these provisions be reviewed and the fee reduced. The government has not even updated the number of Indian vessels engaged in fishing, said the association. The preamble states that there are 40 million fishermen in India.

“Even the preamble of the guidelines needs to be updated. There are 315,000 cannons being operated in India, which indicates that the actual number of fishermen is much greater than that mentioned in the policy draft. In the international sea alone, there are roughly 1,000 boats. All of them are about 20-22 metres in length and come under the category of small-scale fishing,” said George. According to the association, almost 100 per cent of vessels belonging to small-scale fishermen have lengths less than 25 metres.

The new draft policy also centralises the process of getting permission. The authority empowered to grant permits is the Union government, per the new policy. The definition clause of the draft policy makes it clear. “The issuing authority is the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India, or any other Issuing authority as authorised by the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India on its behalf”. “Every fisherman from the other end of the country cannot go to Delhi to get a permit. This has to be decentralised,” M Majeed, secretary of the All India Deep Sea Fishers Association told The Federal. The association has demanded that the licence issuing authority be the respective state fisheries departments.

India is the second largest country in the production of fisheries and aquaculture (8 per cent), following China (35%). According to the 2022 report of the FAO, ‘The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA)’, India’s marine exports have shown a declining trend.

“India had become the fourth major exporter in 2017. However, India was overtaken by Chile in 2020 as the value of India’s exports has been on a downward trend since 2018. In 2020, the total value of India’s exports of aquatic products reached \$5.8 billion, down from \$7.2 billion in 2017,” stated the FAO report.”

**Tamil Nadu: Ramanathapuram fishermen strike continues; loss of revenue earnings worth ₹ 5 crore**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/ramanathapuram-fishermen-strike-continues-loss-of-revenue-earnings-worth-5-crore/article65882620.ece>

"Following the announcement of the indefinite strike by the fishermen associations here since Saturday (Sept. 10), the revenue earnings to the tune of ₹ four to five crore may have been lost, said fishermen association leader Jesu Raja here on Monday. The indefinite strike was necessitated as the fishermen demanded enhancement of diesel subsidy from 1,800 litres to 3,000 litres for the fisherfolks and among other demands from the Union and State governments.

Speaking to The Hindu Mr Jesu Raja said that since 2019, 95 mechanised boats were impounded by the Sri Lankan Navy personnel under charges of crossing the IMBL. Of these 60 belonged to Rameswaram fishermen and the cost of each boat was around ₹ 25 to ₹45 lakh. "Under such circumstances, the Sri Lankan government has not returned the boats, but released the fishermen jailed in their prisons. Even today, six fishermen were released by the Sri Lankan court, while the boat seized has not been handed over", he claimed and thanked the Union government and Tamil Nadu government for their gesture in this connection.

The fishermen associations had announced to stage a dharna at Thangachimadam on Tuesday (Sept. 13) to draw the attention of the governments. However, senior officials from the Department of Fisheries and Revenue department held a meeting with the fishermen leaders. After sustained persuasion by the officials, the fishermen agreed to postpone the agitation scheduled for Tuesday, however, they clarified that the indefinite strike call would continue and urged the governments to intervene into their demands immediately.

The fishermen association representatives said that the TN government had announced ₹5 lakh each as a relief for the mechanised boats impounded by the Sri Lankan authorities. However, the compensation was yet to reach some of the applicants. Close to 5,000 fishermen were off the sea since Saturday without wages. About 1,000 boats may have ventured into the sea for fishing on the normal course and about 20,000 people including their families and other stakeholders would have benefited from the catch. With the strike in force, they were looking for assistance from the government, the fishermen said."

**Tamil Nadu: Decks cleared for establishing fish-landing centre at Kodyampalayam**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/decks-cleared-for-establishing-fish-landing-centre-at-kodiyampalayam/article65857663.ece>

"Fishermen of Kodiyampalayam fishing village in Kollidam taluk will shortly be provided with a land-side facility at an expenditure of ₹ 2.85 crore. Accompanied by senior officials of police, revenue, forest and other departments, Collector R. Lalitha inspected the village where the fish-landing centre was sanctioned by the Minister for Fisheries in the Assembly during the 2020-21 budget session.

The NABARD-funded project, for which an administrative sanction was issued by the Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Department during October, 2020, encompasses a 45 metre quay with precast blocks, an auction hall, net-mending shed, approach road, and electrification and water supply arrangement.

The infrastructure will cater to the requirements of fishers operating 21 motorised, non-mechanised boats and one mechanised boat. The fishermen have been experiencing intense suffering due to the dearth of facilities for selling the fish catches. The project would uplift socio-economic condition of the fishermen through facilitating marketing of the fisheries resources under hygienic conditions, utilising the infrastructure, Ms. Lalitha said.

The Collector said on the occasion that the mangrove forests would be developed with the support of the public and service-minded entities. The Tourism department had already sounded about the potential for making the mangrove forests in the area a major attraction for sight-seeing. The department had also sounded positive about the possibility for operating boat services between Kodiyampalayam and Pitchavaram in Cuddalore district, which is famed for its mangrove forests, by identifying ideal water lanes in the contiguous stretch of backwaters."

**Tamil Nadu: Met warnings leave fishers 'at sea' 79 out of 89 days**

<https://www.dtnext.in/city/2022/08/29/met-warnings-leave-fishers-at-sea-79-out-of-89-days-2>

"Repeated warnings by the Regional Meteorological Centre, Chennai, against venturing into sea have severely impacted the livelihood of fishermen in city for over two months. Fishermen claim this year saw the highest alerts, and from June 1 to August 28 (89 days), the RMC had issued warnings for 79 days against venturing into the sea in and around Tamil Nadu.

Previously, when the strong winds blew at a speed of over 80 kmph and a cyclone formed in the sea, a warning was directed to the State fisheries department. "Whereas now, even with 40 kmph to 50 kmph wind speed, which is considered normal, fishermen are warned and advisory issued

almost everyday. Also, the southwest monsoon has made the situation worse this year,” said MD Dhayalan, president of the Indian Fisherman Association, Kasimedu fishing harbour.

With reports on fishermen going missing during unpredictable strong winds, the State fisheries department had initiated a token system for the fishermen in Kanniyakumari, Thoothukudi, Rameshwaram, and recently in Chennai.

The fishermen should submit a form based on which the government will provide a token, with which alone they can fetch fuel from the bunk inside the harbour. “When we are instructed not to go boating, the department will not issue the token. Thus we are forced to stay on the shore till the warning is withdrawn,” said M Rajan, a fisherman at Kasimedu.

Despite warning, if fishermen venture into sea they stand to lose their licence. Pointing out that only on June 15, the two-month trawling ban came to an end, the fishermen are demanding that they be compensated for losing livelihood for reasons beyond their control.

Commenting on the frequent warnings by the weather department, P Senthamarai Kannan, scientist, RMC explained that when there is a strong wind we issue advisory so that fishermen can be on alert. “Also, during a low-pressure area formation, depression and cyclone, we issue warnings where they should not go. Due to the southwest monsoon and sudden weather change, the warning is instructed frequently these days,” he said.”

### **Tamil Nadu: Rameswaram fishermen go on one-day strike**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/rameswaram-fishermen-go-on-one-day-strike/article65825678.ece>

"More than 650 mechanised fishing boats remained anchored in the Rameshwaram harbour on Monday as part of the one-day strike called by fishermen demanding immediate release of a boat and six Rameshwaram fishermen who were arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy on Saturday. The call was given by the Federation of All Mechanised Boats Fishermen Associations.

Fishermen leader P. Sesuraja said the Centre and the State should also take steps to retrieve over 80 mechanised boats and 10 country boats seized by the Sri Lankan Navy between 2018 and 2022. “Each mechanised boat would cost around ₹25 lakh to ₹1 crore. The families of the fishermen have lost their livelihood in the absence of boats,” he said.

The Centre should get the Sri Lankan government to immediately release all the seized boats and the arrested fishermen. Recalling that the Centre and the Tamil Nadu government were giving

economic assistance to the crisis-hit Sri Lanka, Mr. Sesuraja said that when the Indian government was magnanimous towards the island nation, he wondered why the Sri Lankan Navy was treating the Tamil Nadu fishermen with indifference. Today, 25,000 fishermen families have lost their livelihood because of the strike. If the Centre and the State fail to bring back the boats, we would organise a State-wide agitation very soon," he said."

### **Tamil Nadu: Plan to impart training to fisherwomen on making value-added products**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/nagapattinam/article65802432.ece>

"The Metro Fish Processing Incubation Facility (FPIF) at Keechankuppam, an off-campus facility of College of Fisheries Engineering, Tamil Nadu Dr. J. Jayalalithaa Fisheries University, is into the process of imparting training to fisherwomen on making value-added products and motivating them to take a plunge into entrepreneurship. Dovetailing the advantages inherent in the 'one district, one product' scheme of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, fisherwomen belonging to Keechankuppam, Akkaraipeetai and Nagore were initiated into production of value-added products, including Cake, biscuit, brownie, pasta, noodles, kurkure, pickles, chutney powder, spice coated dry fishes and ready to serve fish curries, from fishes by the department of fish process engineering faculty.

Alongside providing support for existing individual micro-units for capital investment, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries accords preference to those producing ODOP products. In the case of capital investment by groups, those involved in ODOP products would be supported. Highlighting these advantages, the faculty also engaged the beneficiaries in discussions on preparing detailed project report for funding from banks.

The participants of training programmes are being exposed to the various fish processing machinery and packaging techniques at the facility established with the funding support from the State Government under the National Agricultural Development Project (NADP) scheme.

The FPIF encompasses a cold chain facility, comprising of one chill room of 10 tonnes capacity, two blast freezer of half a tonne capacity and Cold room of 20 tonnes capacity, besides extrusion processing facility comprising Twin screw extruder, Flavour coater and Automatic nitrogen fill packing machine, Fish pickle packing machine, Product testing laboratory, and solar drying facility. Incubatees have started launching their products, P.

Karthickumar, Assistant Professor and Training coordinator, said, adding that the prospective entrepreneurs receive Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) automatically. The location of FPIF close to the Nagapattinam Fish Landing facility makes it easier for the entrepreneurs to procure raw materials. The FPIF was originally meant to be a primary processing

centre. However, the utility on this count was limited as the demand for fresh fishes far exceeded supply. The perceptible inclination of fisherwomen to make additional income through value-added products has enhanced the relevance of the FPIP, Prof. Karthickumar said."

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish landing centre waiting to become full fledged fishing Harbour**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fish-landing-centre-waiting-to-become-full-fledged-fishing-harbour/article65801529.ece>

"As extension of the jetty of Tharuvaikulam Fish Landing Centre, a base for 220 mechanised boats, is progressing at snail's pace, fishermen find it difficult to berth their boats after returning from multi-day deep sea stay fishing. When the mechanised boats started operating from Tharuvaikulam three decades ago, this coastal hamlet situated on East Coast Road about 10 km north of Thoothukudi had only 25 boats. The fishermen's harvest of marine products and increased revenue jacked up the number of mechanised boats to 220. Besides, around 100 fibreglass country boats and 150 medium-size boats are going for fishing from Tharuvaikulam.

Considering the need for developing a fish landing centre at Tharuvaikulam, the Department of Fisheries created a 200 metre-long 'T' shaped jetty for berthing mechanised boats, all involved in multi-day deep sea stay fishing. Since it became insufficient and the jetty became cramped, mechanised boats are being anchored in a scattered fashion around the jetty due to space constraint. Now, the existing jetty is being extended for another 100 metres to accommodate a few more boats.

"Since the work is progressing very slowly, we are planning to meet the officials concerned to expedite the work so that we can berth our boats properly," said a owner of a mechanised boat. When Minister for Fisheries Anita R. Radhakrishnan announced recently in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly that his department would submit to Chief Minister M.K. Stalin a proposal for establishing a full-fledged fishing harbour, it triggered jubilation and expectation. However, the delay in the announcement by the Chief Minister has dampened their spirit.

When sand accumulated along the existing 200 metre-long jetty, members of St. Michael Mechanized Boat Owners and Gillnet Fishermen Welfare Association, Tharuvaikulam, contributed to dredge the shallow waters that threatened to damage the mechanised boats due to lack of depth. "We had to spend around Rs. 50 lakh on this task, which is very much essential for unhindered operation of our boats without any damage. Since we're taking care of our needs to some extent with our contributions and more mechanised boats becoming members of this jetty, we appeal to Chief Minister M.K. Stalin to sanction a full-fledged fishing harbour for Tharuvaikulam," appealed T. Raj, an office-bearer of the association.

While admitting that the fishermen were struggling to berth their mechanised boats in the crowded fish landing centre with 220 boats, Joint Director of Fisheries, Thoothukudi, Amal Xavier said the feasibility study on establishing a fishing harbour in Tharuvaikulam would be conducted once the government gives its nod for the survey. "If the feasibility study favours the construction of a full fledged fishing harbour in Tharuvaikulam, the State Government will make formal announcement," Mr. Amal Xavier said."

### **Tamil Nadu: Aquaculture farms threaten livelihoods of small-scale fisherwomen**

<https://www.socialnews.xyz/2022/08/22/aquaculture-farms-threaten-livelihoods-of-small-scale-fisherwomen-on-tn-island/>

Women engaged in activities ancillary to fishing in the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu are losing their livelihoods due to the rising salinity of water and encroachment of commons by aquaculture farms. Fisherwomen belonging to the marginalised caste groups of Mutharaiyar and Kadayar make ends meet by harvesting natural seaweed such as Gelidiella (known in Tamil as Marikkoluntu paci), cultivating seaweed, mostly Kappaphycus, collecting seashells and engaging in small-scale cultivation, besides rearing of livestock and fishing in inshore waters. During the favourable season (November to February) for Kappaphycus, a fisherwoman may earn up to Rs 500 a day, while ancillary activities may fetch anywhere between Rs 150 and Rs 200. For these women to continue these activities and contribute economically to their families, safety at worksites, uninterrupted access to the seashore, unpolluted inshore waters and availability of potable water are paramount. The locals blame the aquaculture farms for the rise in salinity, both in their lands as well as household wells, thus polluting the water used for agricultural purposes. The lack of capital, both its availability and access, has prevented these communities from investing in aquaculture farms and mechanised fisheries. Hence, they fish in the inshore waters using passive fishing gears and small rafts.

Nirmala from Ariyankundu hamlet in Pamban Island of Ramanathapuram said: ""We used to cultivate grains on these lands seasonally, but lack of rain, poor agricultural returns and increase in value of real estate made a few locals sell their lands to aquaculture farm owners. The rise in soil salinity forced several others to give up their lands to these farms.""

The struggles of fisherwomen, however, is not recent. Kalpana Ram, in her 1992 book *Mukkuvar Women*, argued that fisheries have prevented women from directly accessing resources at sea and they can be engaged only in ancillary activities such as fish vending, fish curing, and net mending. In the last few decades, modernisation of fisheries, including the introduction of trawlers and the development of coastal areas, have alienated the fisherwomen from their traditional sources of livelihood. In the book *Sengeni*, author Amidhavalli pointed out that fisherwomen in Puducherry are gradually moving away from fishing-related activities and

working as housemaids and daily wage labourers.

In the early years of aquafarms, many believed that these farms would provide them with employment opportunities. In the late 1990s, these farms indeed accommodated local labourers. At the time of preparation of ponds for cultivation and during shrimp harvest, a farm owner may employ about 50 to 60 locals, both men and women, for three to four weeks.

In addition, a farm owner may employ four to five local men on a regular basis to look after shrimp production. These opportunities in a way quelled the initial protests against aquaculture farms, which were taking root in coastal districts of Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Andhra Pradesh. There was an organised movement by farming and fishing communities against commercial shrimp farms which culminated in the famous case, S Jagannath vs Union of India, where the Supreme Court passed orders highlighting the social and ecological impacts of commercial shrimp farms. Within a year or two of the introduction of P. Vannamei, a Pacific white shrimp, in 2009, the number of aquaculture farms started proliferating. The frequent disease outbreaks and heavy financial loss led farmers to stop the cultivation of P. Monodon (tiger prawn) and switch to P. Vannamei.

The introduction of automation in earthworks, new kinds of fishing nets and influx of cheap migrant labourers from West Bengal and Odisha altered the entire process of production. Gradually, the number of locals being employed by these farms began to decrease. According to Murugesan, the effluents that were drained into the inshore waters after the shrimp harvest are affecting the growth of Kappaphycus.

The aquaculture farms in Pamban Island use seawater for fish culture and have laid pipes on seashores to pump water into the shrimp ponds. The untreated wastewater from the farms is normally let out back into the sea. During the 'rough' season, i.e. the Northeast monsoon when the weather is windy and storms set in with big waves, it is released into the stormwater lake, locally called the Pancha Kalyani.

Balarajan, a small-scale farmer and livestock worker, told 101Reporters that the effluents destroyed the edible vegetation, including shrubs, coconut trees and palm trees, and contaminated made the Pancha Kalyani. Since this waterbody is an important aquifer here, potable water in household wells has also turned saline. Studies have shown how artificial inputs in the form of fertilizers, feed and drugs, which are given for optimal growth of shrimp, are washed away into the canals as effluents during harvest; the large amounts of wastewater discharge pose a grave threat to the coastal ecosystem and the groundwater. Moreover, in order to pump seawater for cultivation, many aquaculture farms illegally encroached the seashore to construct pump rooms and install PVC pipes.

In May this year, a fisherwoman was raped and murdered in Vadakadu village of Pamban Island, allegedly by two migrant workers of an aquaculture farm. A few days before the incident, the workers had passed lewd comments at the victim when she was working alone. She had shared this unpleasant experience with a few of her close women relatives. After the crime, locals retaliated by ransacking the farm and soon several irregularities started to emerge.

Karunamoorthy, a local leader of Tamil Nadu Fish Workers Federation (CITU), said the island has over 100 aquaculture farms. "Many are functioning without proper licences. It was only after the gruesome incident that the fisheries and revenue departments found out that the farm in question was operating without a proper licence under the Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act, 2005," he said.

Saravanan, an expert in the mapping of coastal commons, said as per section 13(8)(a)(b) of the Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act, 2005, these farms should not be located within 200m of the High Tide Line (HTL). "This particular farm is located 30m from the HTL and its motor room is located within the HTL. Fisherwomen often come into conflicts with those representing farms with the latter accusing them of encroaching upon areas owned by farms," Saravanan explained.

Fisherwoman Lakshmi (name changed on request) told 101Reporters that the representatives of the farm in question had threatened these women against trespassing and, on another occasion, they forcefully removed the thatched huts that these women use while mending nets, working on rafts, eating food and resting during hot afternoons. The farm had claimed that a portion of the inshore waters was part of its patta. "Since we had no means to verify that claim, we just withdrew," she added.

Rameswaram Municipal Chairman K E Naazarkhan said the municipality has passed a resolution on June 22, 2022, asking the state government to close down all aquaculture farms in the area and not issue fresh licences. "The proliferation of aquaculture farms has contaminated potable groundwater. Also, the import of migrant labourers to the region is creating security concerns," he explained why such a resolution became necessary. Meanwhile, Shalini (name changed on request), a friend and colleague of the victim is still reeling from the shock of what transpired in their own backyard. "We don't feel safe now to access seashore and inshore waters alone," she remarked."

### **Tamil Nadu: Pitchavaram fisherfolk to benefit by rearing clown fish**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/pitchavaram-fisherfolk-to-benefit-by-rearing-clown-fish/article65775632.ece>

"An agreement to develop clown fish aquaculture in Pitchavaram is expected to benefit around 200 fisher community in the region.

Pitchavaram was recently declared a Ramsar site. The National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR) of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has collaborated with Annamalai University's Faculty of Marine Sciences to develop clown fish aquaculture in the region. The Bureau conducts research on fish germplasm conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity to enhance livelihood of the society dependant on it. The Department of Science and Technology's Science for Equity, Empowerment and Development (SEED) is funding the collaboration, said ICAR-NBFGR officials.

The University's Centre for Advanced Study in Marine Biology's ornamental hatchery would be used as a supply centre for clown fish. It would be propagated in captivity and the young ones would be supplied to local SC beneficiaries in the region. It is proposed to establish community aquaculture centres to sell the fish, for which the Bureau has already established marketing linkages. Officials said the effort would help in conserving marine biodiversity.

University Vice-Chancellor R.M. Kathiresan and ICAR-NBFGR director Kuldeep K. Lal signed the agreement on Tuesday in the presence of senior officials of both institutions."

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen strike work**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fishermen-strike-work/article65776034.ece>

"Condemning the 'unscientific' design of Thengaipattinam Fishing Harbour and the groynes that have caused several fatal accidents at the entry / exit point of the harbour, fishermen struck work on Tuesday and staged continuous protests since morning.

Since the flawed designing of the fishing harbor and the groynes laid nearby have failed to neutralize violent tides, mechanised and the country boats entering or leaving the harbour would be tossed up in the air and vessels would overturn to kill the fishermen. According to the fishermen operating from this harbour, 26 persons have lost their lives since 2017.

Moreover, 20 country boats and five mechanised boats have been damaged badly in these accidents, they say.

Whenever the fisheries department officials visit the fishing harbour after every accident, they used to leave the spot with the assurance that "corrective measures" would be taken at the

earliest to avert accidents at the harbour's entry / exit point. But no step has been taken to translate these assurances into action so far."

### **Tamil Nadu: Coastal zone plan maps omit fishers' community assets**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2022/aug/12/tn-coastal-zone-planmaps-omit-fishers-community-assets-2486645.html>

"The local-level Coastal Zone Management Plans (CZMP) prepared for coastal districts of Tamil Nadu are 'incomplete', with several important community assets of fishermen being omitted from the plan in violation of law. For instance, as per Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notification 2011, fishing zones and fish breeding areas should be clearly demarcated in CZMP maps. Also, States must prepare detailed plans considering long-term housing needs of fisher communities, future expansion, and provisions for basic amenities such as sanitation, safety, and disaster preparedness. However, none of these crucial components are part of the CZMP maps approved by the Tamil Nadu government.

TNIE has reviewed the maps, which were accessed by Pooja Kumar of Coastal Resource Centre through RTI. Fisher organisations have called the maps prepared by Institute of Remote Sensing (IRS), Anna University, as flawed and have urged the government to withdraw its approval and redo the maps in compliance with law. State authorities, however, said the maps can be revised only if the complaints are valid.

Pooja Kumar said features such as common resources of fishing communities, land use and land cover, important fishing areas at sea and rivers, fish breeding areas, pollution levels and housing plans for coastal communities are missing in the maps. "Such omissions will push the vulnerable coastal communities to face an uncertain future. These maps have not been placed in public domain yet by the Department of Environment," she said.

"In order to validate the traditional and customary rights held by our community, it is of utmost importance that these plans, which will be used for local level appraisal and decision making, are prepared in strict adherence to prescribed guidelines. Failure to demarcate these features is an attempt to erase the rights and heritage of small fishing communities," said K Bharathi of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association.

K Saravanan, an activist and fisherman from Urur Kuppam, said his own village is not properly demarcated in the local CZMP map. Saravanan, who is an expert in coastal mapping, said more than 100 fishing villages have sent detailed land-use maps identifying their use of coastal and ocean/riverine commons to assist the State in preparing the maps.

The environment department has chosen to ignore these maps in what is seen as an attempt to make it easier to convert these community resources into mega ports, real estate or high-end tourism projects. “These incomplete maps must be taken back and fully compliant local-level CZMPs must be prepared.

These mistakes won’t happen if these maps are prepared in consultation with fishermen and proper ground truthing is carried out,” said Durai Mahendran of Tamil Nadu Fishermen’s Association. Deepak S Bilgi, Director of Department of Environment, said the maps at 1:4000 ratio were prepared based on Government of India approved CZMP (1:25000) map prepared by the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management.

“The objections raised by fishermen and people during the public hearing conducted for CZMP were forwarded to the Institute of Remote Sensing and were incorporated in the local-level cadastral maps. Further corrections can be carried out if fishermen association routes their concerns through the fisheries department and respective district coastal zone management authorities headed by district collectors.

Also, a fresh draft of CZMP is being prepared as per the CRZ Notification, 2019, and will be put out in public domain shortly seeking objections and comments. Fishermen can raise their concerns during the public hearing,” he said."

### **Tamil Nadu: Sri Lankan court releases six Indian fishermen**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/sri-lankan-court-releases-six-indian-fishermen/articleshow/93352810.cms>

"A Sri Lankan court on Thursday released six Rameswaram fishermen who were arrested on charges of poaching in the Island nation’s territorial waters. The court released the fishermen on conditional bail stating that they should not return to fish in the country’s waters failing which they would be locked up for a period of two years.

The fishermen were arrested by the Sri Lankan navy on July 20. They were lodged in a Vavuniya prison. Chief minister M K Stalin had appealed for the intervention of external affairs minister S Jaishankar to secure their release. On Thursday, the Mannar court heard the case. Justice Niranjani Muralidharan ordered the release of the fishermen Boat owner Arockiaraj of Thangachimadam was ordered to be present in Mannar court with all documents of the boat on September 29 for further hearing.

Fisheries department sources in Chennai said the released fishermen were likely to return to India next week.

## **Tamil Nadu: Fishers urge change in trawling ban period**

<https://www.dtnext.in/tamilnadu/2022/08/01/fishers-urge-change-in-trawling-ban-period>

In a decade, the number of fishermen in the city has surged drastically however the quantity of fish remains the same due to the change in sea pattern. With many fish varieties seeming to be extinct post Tsunami in 2004, fishermen have placed several demands including change in the annual fishing ban period during the northeast monsoon.

The fishermen have urged to increase the assistance cash from Rs 5,000 to Rs 20,000 for 61 days. “Every year, during the 61 days annual fishing ban period, we get Rs 5,000 which is not sufficient to manage a family. The price of all products has increased post-Covid pandemic including fuel and grocery items. Also, fish sales seem to be dull in the market for the past few months,” said L Kumar, a fisherman and wholesale trader at Ennore.

“There are many fishermen’s children studying at private schools. As we are unable to pay the fees due to fishing restrictions. The government should give us fee concession,” said MD Dhayalan, President of Indian Fisherman Association, Kasimedu fishing harbour. He added that the department should give at least Rs 3 lakh to cover the maintenance charges of the boats. Fishermen using trawlers have urged the government to increase the diesel subsidy.

Fish varieties have decreased drastically after the Tsunami. There are several fishes which have vanished and reduced including sennagarai, white fishes (sudumbu), parrot fish, white pomfret – where the size of the fish has reduced, Ponyfish (kaaral), and kudhupu.

“The fisheries department claimed that the decrease in fish quantity is due to overfishing, which is not true. In the past 10 years, the sea has been polluted with plastic waste, discharge of oil substances in the Indian territory by other countries, which leads to low oxygen levels for the fishes, so they stay in the deep sea,” said Nanjil P Ravi, President, All India Fishermen Association.

Meanwhile, the fishermen have urged the government to change the annual fishing ban period from April – May to October – December which is the period the fish breeding happens. The entire system has changed after the Tsunami, hence the existing ban period (April – May) is the time the fishermen can get a good catch.

“Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have banned fishing during the fish breeding season. In Tamil Nadu, though several petitions have been filed to change the season they have not done any research or have taken any steps. While fishing during the northeast monsoon, we could spot eggs inside the fishes. If the government changes the ban period, we can prove that within five years there will be an increased quantity of the fish,” said Ravi.

### **Tamil Nadu: Activists worried about frequent cases of fish kill in Ennore Creek**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/activists-worried-about-frequency-cases-of-fish-kill-in-ennore-creek/article65682061.ece>

"Fishermen of villages in and around Kattupalli and Ennore have complained of a large number of dead fish floating in the waters of the creek for the past two days.

Activist R.L. Srinivasan said that around half a tonne of fish would have died. "The fish is not fit for human consumption and so can't be dried and used. However, we are worried about the birds and dogs that are eating the dead fish. This would only lead to the toxins being taken back to the food chain," he said.

Mr. Srinivasan expressed concern about such repeated deaths of fish. "This time quantity is too large. Though we keep complaining, nobody fixes any responsibility on any of the industrial units in the surrounding areas. We don't know if the water is safe for human consumption or for fishing. No agency tells us what to do," he alleged.

A fisherman said that fish including kaanankeluthi, kezhangam, udupathi and madava and even prawns and crabs were among those that died. Fish varieties from the sea that usually enter the creek to breed were seen, he added.

Samples of water and fish were lifted from two points in the creek on Monday by the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board. A retired official of the Board explained that toxicity in the fish and the dissolved oxygen levels in the water would be checked in this case."

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen protest attacks by Sri Lankan Navy**

<https://www.firstpost.com/world/rameswaram-fishermen-stage-protest-condemning-attacks-by-sri-lankan-navy-10950881.html>

"Fishermen in Tamil Nadu's Rameswaram on Sunday staged a protest condemning the imprisonment and attacks by the Sri Lankan Navy on Indian fishermen. Earlier on 20 July, the Sri Lankan Navy arrested six Indian fishermen and seized their boat after they had gone fishing from Rameswaram, claiming that they had crossed the border, which had caused consternation among Indian fishermen. Following this, the Rameswaram fishermen have been on a strike for the past three days, condemning the serial attacks by the Sri Lankan Navy on the Tamil Nadu fishermen, and their engagement in the violations of an agreement including the capture of the fishermen, seizure of the boat, and demanding the immediate release of the captured fishermen and their boat.

Fishermen protested in front of the Rameswaram bus stand, condemning the Lankan Navy, which is engaged in violations against the Katchatheevu Agreement with an anarchic trend, and criticised the central and state governments for not opposing it. The protest was led by All Fishermen's Union President NJ Bose. ""We have organized this protest to draw the attention of central and state governments to intervene and solve the problem,"" NJ Bose said threatening that if further action was not taken, their ""protest will take a different form"".

Fishermen's Association President N. Devadas, District Fishermen's Association Secretary Jesuraj, Fishermen's Association President Eamerit, Fishermen's Association in-charge Sagayam and all the fishermen's association executives and a large number of fishermen took part in the Rameswaram protest and raised slogans emphasizing the demands. Earlier, 12 Indian fishermen were arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy for allegedly fishing illegally in the country's territorial waters.

Following that, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin requested External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar to take appropriate action for the immediate release of 12 Indian fishermen arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy. All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) leader O Panneerselvam also wrote a letter to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar seeking his immediate intervention for the release of 12 Indian fishermen arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy.

On 25 March this year, the fifth meeting of the India-Sri Lanka Joint Working Group on Fisheries was held through virtual mode. The Joint Working Group discussed all relevant issues in detail including the concerns relating to fishermen and fishing boats which have been on the agenda of bilateral discussions between India and Sri Lanka for many years. The Indian side expressed its readiness to work together with Sri Lanka for joint research to enhance the productivity of the Palk Bay fisheries.

The meeting concluded on a positive note, with a commitment toward continued cooperation and dialogue to solve the fishermen-related issues and to hold the next meeting of the Joint Working Group as per schedule."

### **Tamil Nadu: Country craft fishermen plan protest against mechanised boats**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/country-craft-fishermen-plan-protest-against-mechanised-boats/article65661178.ece>

"Even as country craft fishermen have threatened to stage a protest in sea against mechanised boats fishing within five nautical miles from seashore violating Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Act, Fisheries Department officials have clarified that continuous enforcement of the fishing regulation law was being done. The country craft fishermen have complained that their livelihood is affected as the mechanised boats continue to fish within five nautical miles.

'The violation is so worse that mechanised boats do not spare areas where vallams and vaththais are anchored,' said Sea Workers Association, affiliated to Centre for Indian Trade Unions (CITU), M. Karunamoorthi. The association complained that their repeated representations on the issue to the Department of Fisheries have not evoked any positive response.

After a meeting of fishermen from Kariyur, Serangkottai, Natarajapuram, Ramakrishnapuram at Sangumal Fishing Harbour, the fishermen have decided to hold a massive demonstration in the sea followed by opening a 'gruel centre' as a mark of their protest on August 3. However, Deputy Director of Fisheries, Ramanathapuram district, E. Kathavarayan, said that Tamil Nadu Marine Enforcement Wing and Coastal Security Group were continuously monitoring the sea and were enforcing the law.

""Last year, 25 mechanised boats were caught violating the five nautical miles rule and were penalised. The punishment varies from imposing fine of 5 times the value of the catch found in the violating boat to cutting of subsidised diesel,"" he added. If a boat continues to violate, the boat would be impounded and later the fishing licence will be cancelled, he said. A fine of Rs. 3.90 lakh was collected from boat operators for violating the five nautical miles norm. Besides, action was initiated against 23 boats for sailing into the sea without tokens issued by the department.

""This year, we have taken action against 21 boats for violating distance norms and against 179 boats for venturing into the sea without tokens,"" he added. The department was deploying its boat for monitoring the sea. ""Whenever required, we hire private boats also for enforcement,"" Mr. Kathavarayan added. The district has over 1,670 mechanised boats and 4,600 country craft."

**Tamil Nadu: Nagapattinam fishermen fear that turmoil in Sri Lanka may trigger mid-sea trouble**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/nagapattinam-fishermen-fear-that-turmoil-in-sri-lanka-may-trigger-mid-sea-trouble/article65640428.ece>

"Fishermen from Nagapattinam district are understood to be exercising restraint in venturing into the sea against the backdrop of economic and political turmoil in Sri Lanka. In recent days the Fisheries Department had reached out to the Indian Navy to sensitise the local fishermen to the hazards in getting close to the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL). ""We have been advising fishermen to take along life-saving and communication equipment and identity cards unfailingly,"" a senior official of Fisheries Department said.

There is indeed an element of fear among the fishermen since the mechanised boats costing between Rs. 60 lakh and Rs. 80 lakh that get confiscated after crossing IMBL by Sri Lankan Navy becomes unusable after the lengthy duration of detention by the Sri Lankan authorities. There is, nevertheless, a cause for comfort for the Fisheries Department since the fishermen are kept in check by the respective elders (nattars) of the hamlets, the official said.

The elders in the hamlets have been cautioning the fishers against breaching the IMBL, by apprising them about the travails faced by those who had in recent months been arrested by the Sri Lankan authorities. It has come to light that the arrested fishermen were not being fed properly in the Sri Lankan jails. In some hamlets, fines are also imposed on the erring fishermen, who have to necessarily comply to avoid isolation, sources said.

However, there are also instances of a section of fishermen venturing beyond the IMBL emboldened by the absence of Sri Lankan fishermen in the sea due to the acute shortage of petrol and diesel.

Those among the fishermen who had ventured beyond the IMBL have recounted that patrolling by Sri Lankan Navy had also become invisible due to fuel shortage, said Durgeswaran, a fisherman belonging to Kodiakarai. The trespassing of IMBL by a section of fishermen from Indian side taking advantage of the situation has caused extreme consternation among the coastal community in Sri Lanka, Mr. Durgeswaran said."

**Tamil Nadu: Major pilferage in giving subsidised diesel to mechanised boats alleged**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/major-pilferage-in-giving-subsidised-diesel-to-mechanised-boats-alleged/article65636133.ece?homepage=true>

"Alleging pilferage in giving 'subsidized diesel' to the mechanised boats of Tharuvaikulam, a group of fishermen and owners of boats from coastal hamlets submitted a petition in the Office of Joint Director of Fisheries here on Wednesday.

In the petition, office-bearers of St. Michael Mechanized Boat Owners and Gillnet Fishermen Welfare Association, Tharuvaikulam, said each of the 220 Tharuvaikulam-based mechanised boats, all involved in multi-day deep sea stay fishing, is given 1,800 litres of diesel every month at subsidised rate. When this diesel is given in 50 litre barrels, each of these 36 barrels has only 49 litres of fuel instead of 50 litres.

In other words, Rs. 7.50 lakh per month is being swindled by stealing the 'subsidised diesel' while selling the fuel to these 220 mechanised boats of Tharuvaikulam.

"When our fishermen, who take the mechanised boats for multi-day deep sea stay fishing complained about this shortage, we cross-checked the quantity of the diesel being given to us by the Tamil Nadu Government. As all the barrels had only 49 litres of diesel instead of 50 litres, we confirmed that a major scam is going on in giving diesel to the mechanised boats. Since the fuel outlet's manager, who is apparently involved in this scam, is selling the fuel in the black market, the Joint Director should take appropriate steps for selling exact quantity of 'subsidised diesel' to the mechanised boats," said A. Antony Panneerdas, president of the Association.

Association's office-bearers N. Pugazh Selvamani, Y. Antony Jayabalan and A. Nirmal Raj were present even as the petition was submitted."

### **Tamil Nadu: Upload coastal management plan with clear markings**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/upload-coastal-management-plan-with-clear-markings-nochikuppam-fishermen/article65627939.ece>

Fishermen of Nochikuppam on Monday staged a protest demanding that the district-level coastal zone management plan (CZMP) for Chennai city and other coastal districts in the State be uploaded along with markings in 1:4000 scale. They said that only if the plans were shown on such a scale, their villages would be marked.

"The NGT in an order had said that high-tide levels, common areas, fishing grounds, fish drying spaces and houses too have to be marked and shown clearly in the CZMP for 2011. However, the plan does not have such detail. When it is time for the next CZMP, we would be obliterated from the maps. Fishermen have been living on the coast for ages and when fishing hamlets are not to be found in the CZMP, we would not be consulted for any future proposal. If the maps are uploaded, then we can at least check if they are to the required scale and if not, we can approach

the appropriate forum,” said K. Bharathi.

Community leader Ko. Su. Mani said that during the last set of public hearings held in 2017, there were protests by fishermen in many cases. “At every meeting, fishermen had protested. Now, it is time for the next CZMP which is why we are demanding that our villages be marked properly. However, the department does not seem to be hearing our voices,” he said. The fishermen demanded that the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management be removed as nodal agency for the CZMP.

The fishermen protested against the construction of a manhole and other structures on the coast by a private telecom major for laying an undersea optic fibre cable without due permission.

### **Tamil Nadu: 2017 Ennore oil spill: NGT orders more compensation to fishermen**

<https://www.daijiworld.com/news/newsDisplay?newsID=977672>

"Fishermen affected by the 2017 oil spill off Tamil Nadu's Ennore, following the collision between two ships, will get additional compensation, a five-member bench of the National Green Tribunal has ordered.

The NGT, has in a recent order, directed the Tamil Nadu government to encash the bank guarantees deposited by the two shipping companies and disburse the amount proportionally to the affected people. The state Fisheries Department will be the nodal agency to oversee the payment of compensation to the affected people and the bench has directed it to take the assistance of individuals or companies for executing the compensation.

Cargo ships MT BW Maple and MT Dawn Kancheepuram near Kamarajjar port on January 28, 2017, led to the spilling of oil and affected the lives of fishermen up to Puducherry. The oil spill affected aquatic life and around 100 Olive Ridley turtles were found dead during their peak breeding season. The fishermen were able to venture into sea only in April 2018 leading to major losses in their revenue

Several rounds of discussions were carried out regarding the compensation to the affected and the Madras High Court pronounced an order to execute the compensation. Following this, a compromise was arrived between the two shipping companies to pay Rs 240 crore as compensation for the claim of the state government. Of this amount, Rs 141 crore was deposited as the claim of the fishermen and Rs 15 crore was reimbursed to the state government for the interim compensation paid to the fishermen. A bank guarantee of Rs 84 crore was provided for the balance amount.

The state Fisheries Department had assessed that there were 1,04,728 eligible beneficiaries to

whom a compensation of Rs 131.28 crore was paid. According to the Fisheries Department, another Rs 72.11 crore has to be distributed and the NGT ordered that this amount be utilized from the Rs 84 crore bank guarantee provided.

The shipping companies had argued that all the claims including the loss of ecology, restoration cost, and remedial measures were taken care of by the deposit of Rs 156 crore and demanded a refund of the bank guarantee. The state government argued that the original compensation preferred by it was Rs 240 crore and that the balance could be paid only from the bank guarantee."

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen object to location of proposed fishing harbour near Pulicat**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishermen-object-to-location-of-proposed-fishing-harbour-near-pulicat/article65620636.ece>

"Fishermen of Pulicat are objecting to the location of a proposed fishing harbour in the region. Meetings held to disseminate information have only ended up in creating a rift among the villages. K. Bharathi of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association said it was unfair that one large village had been chosen without even holding consultations with stakeholders. "Many fishermen leaders have not attended these meetings or have raised objections to the proposal," he said.

Durai Mahendran, a fishermen leader, said the government should first complete the deepening of the estuary and keep it permanently open. It has been five years since the government sanctioned funds for it. "Something has to be done before the onset of the north east monsoon. The government can also take steps to dredge the lake," he said.

Mr. Mahendran said that fishermen were dying due to boats capsizing due to the lack of depth near the bar mouth. This happened during the last monsoon, he added. Sources in the Fisheries department, however, clarified that the location of the harbour was yet to be finalised. "Work cannot be taken up without consulting all the stakeholders and conducting a proper study of various locations. Funds are yet to be sanctioned for the proposal," the official said."

### **Tamil Nadu: Notify full extent of Ennore wetlands under wetlands mission**

<https://storyofennore.wordpress.com/2022/07/07/press-release-ngt-directs-gotn-to-bring-full-extent-of-ennore-wetlands-into-tamilnadu-wetlands-mission-calls-for-dpr-for-remediation/>

"The National Green Tribunal (Southern Zone) directed the Government of Tamil Nadu to notify the full extent of the un-encroached portion of the Ennore wetlands under the

Tamilnadu Wetland Mission to protect it from further abuse. In its final order in a case filed by Ennore fishers Ravimaran (late) and R.L. Srinivasan, and fisher activist K. Saravanan seeking remediation of ash-choked wetlands, the NGT has directed the Department of Environment to ensure that a Detailed Project Report is readied in 9 months as per the comprehensive ToRs issued by the Joint Experts Committee in March 2022.

“If remediation is done as per the ToRs issued by the Joint Experts Committee, we are certain that the river will return to life. This will help lift local fishers from poverty, and protect north Chennai from flooding,” said K. Saravanan of Save Ennore Creek campaign.

The order directs the Additional Chief Secretary, Environment, Forests and Climate Change to study the “unutilised” Ennore wetlands on the basis of the 1996 Coastal Zone Management Plan and protect that area against further development, declare the same as Ennore wetlands under the Government’s wetland mission and develop a plan for restoration of the fragile Ennore creek ecosystem and Ennore wetland complex.

Additionally, the Tribunal has directed the Chief Secretary to constitute a committee headed by the District Collector and including officials from Greater Chennai Corporation, TNPCB and TANGEDCO to hold quarterly meetings to hear and address public’s grievances regarding TANGEDCO’s functioning. It has tasked the TNPCB to prosecute and penalise TANGEDCO for its unlicensed operation.

“We are overjoyed with the order. Notifying the area covered by the 1996 Coastal Zone Management Plan as a wetland under the Wetland Mission and restoring the wetlands will be the most effective defence against the extreme weather events that will become commonplace in the coming era of climate change,” said R.L. Srinivasan, a fisher from Kattukuppam in Ennore."

### **Tamil Nadu: Country boat fishermen demand action against use of purse seine fish nets**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/countryboat-fishermen-demand-action-against-use-of-purse-seine-fish-nets/article65600508.ece>

"Members of the countryboat fishermen association from 10 districts have appealed to the State government to take firm action against the use of double net or purse seine fish nets in the Palk Straits.

Speaking to reporters, country boat fishermen association presidents of Ramanathapuram and Thoothukudi, Rayappan and S.J. Gayas, said though the governments claimed to have issued ban orders, many mechanised boat owners and fishermen used them.

Recently, the fishermen in Sri Lanka too had objected to the use of these banned nets. It may fetch huge catch for the fishermen, but the damage done to the ecology is so high, Mr. Gayas said. The use of the nets was high in Palk Straits, he underlined and said that when the High Courts had directed the Fisheries Department to act as per the laws, it seemed to have neglected the orders.

He further said that many of the mechanised boats had also had higher horsepower than the permitted levels. The length of the boats too were a case of clear violation. The silence of the authorities only encouraged the violators.

The country boat fishermen were at a loss to understand on slackness showed by the officials in enforcing the law. "We have set a deadline to the government. If they do not act, we will again approach the court for contempt," Mr. Gayas said.

Fishermen from Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Ramanathapuram, Cuddalore, Thanjavur, Mayiladuthurai and other districts attended the meet. The Fisheries Department officials, however, maintained that before COVID-19 struck, they had acted against mechanised boat fishermen for using banned fish nets and collected ₹26 lakh fines. Due to the pandemic, the enforcement was not regular and the action would begin, they added."

### **Tamil Nadu: Congested fishing harbour to be expanded**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/congested-fishing-harbour-to-be-expanded/article65561569.ece>

"The congested Colachel Fishing Harbour will be expanded to accommodate more mechanised boats as it lacks facilities to meet the rapidly growing demands. Addressing fishermen grievance meet on Friday, Collector M. Aravind said various surveys on expansion of Colachel Fishing Harbour had been conducted in a bid to accommodate more mechanised boats in this busy harbour. Following the surveys, the techno economic feasibility report had been prepared and submitted to the Tamil Nadu government.

On getting the government's administrative sanction, steps would be taken to expand the harbour to accommodate more mechanised boats and create additional facilities to ensure hassle-free berthing of boats and auctioning of fishes, he said. The Collector informed that the country boat

fishermen from Keezha Manakkudi, Manakkudi, Pallam and Periyakaadu coastal villages could anchor their vessels near the spot close to the Chinna Muttom Fishing Harbour.

The fishermen, who would anchor their country boats near Chinna Muttom Fishing Harbour, could also auction their fishes at this place. He said that the Tamil Nadu government had constructed fish landing and auction centres in the coastal hamlets of Neerodi, Vallavilai and Marthandamthurai on an outlay of Rs. 116 crore.

Moreover, work on upgrading the Thaengaipattinam Fishing Harbour into an integrated fishing harbour had commenced. The 15 coastal hamlets in this region could use these facilities. When the fishermen raised the issue of clash between country boat and catamaran fishermen during the ongoing annual fishing ban period for the mechanised boats, Mr. Aravind assured them that the officials concerned would be instructed to study the issue and take appropriate remedial measures.

The Collector promised to look into their demands like construction of fish landing centre at Kurumbanai and repairing and extension of breakwater in Kadiyapattinam. District Revenue Officer A. Sivapriya, Deputy Director, Department of Fisheries Kasinatha Pandian and senior government officials participated."

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen bodies demand monitoring of fishermen societies**

<https://www.socialnews.xyz/2022/06/28/tn-fishermen-bodies-demand-monitoring-of-fishermen-societies/>

"Fishermen organisations of Tamil Nadu have urged the state government to monitor the functioning of the fishermen cooperative societies. They demanded that the cooperative societies function in a proper and transparent manner and refrain from collecting extra money from them under the National fishermen Savings-cum-relief schemes.

According to fishermen association, this scheme envisages each fisherman to contribute Rs 1,500 while the government contributes Rs 3,000 or double the amount that individual fisherman contribute. The money is used to fund the needs of the fishermen during the ban period for fishing in the state and when fishing is not possible.

All Fishermen association president Nanjil Ravi Puyal told IANS: ""The fishermen societies must collect the amount in monthly installments as currently it is being collected in a single shot which is difficult for the fishermen."" He said that resolutions regarding the functioning of the society have to be passed by the directors and other office-bearers of the concerned societies but is not done properly.

The fishermen association leaders said that they would be directly petitioning the Chief Minister to ensure that the societies are functioning properly and in a transparent manner.

Marimuthu Nanjappan, a fisherman from Kasimedu village in Tamil Nadu, while interacting with IANS said: ""There are 18 fishing villages in Kasimedu alone and each society has 1,000 members each. This means huge money is being transferred through these societies leading to political clout for the directors of these societies. However, they are not providing us proper help at the time of our need and these societies commenced operation only for helping the fishermen in distress.""

The fishermen and association leaders fear possibilities of misappropriation of funds as the government support coupled with the fishermen contribution leads to a huge financial base for these societies."

### **Tamil Nadu: Traditional fishermen denounce proposal to give five additional fishing hours for mechanised vessels**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2022/jun/25/traditional-fishermendenounce-proposal-to-give-five-additional-fishing-hours-for-mechanised-vessels-2469682.html>

"Fisheries Minister Anitha R Radhakrishnan's recent announcement about the proposal to provide additional five fishing hours for mechanised vessels has not gone down well with traditional fishermen as well as marine conservationists.

As per the Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Act (TNMFR), 1983, mechanised fishing vessels are allowed to fish between 5 am and 9 pm in the sea within 12 nautical miles (nm) from the shore. The Minister said that the department was considering extending it by five hours from the existing 16 hours.

The announcement comes at a time when the Union and the Tamil Nadu government have been working on trawler diversification schemes and extending financial support to fishermen in Palk bay, districts including Nagapattinam, to do away with the trawling method and to purchase new deep sea fishing gill netter cum long liner vessels. They have also ensured not to give new registration for the trawlers since 2017 in the districts Ramanathapuram, Pudhukottai, Thanjavur and Nagapattinam.

The TNMFR Act was drafted for the mechanised vessels having engine capacity of 70 HP to reach the fishing ground in four hours and fish for eight hours. However, the relevant sections were amended four times to legitimate mechanised vessels measuring 24 metre-long and 240 HP

for fishing, said advocate Dayan representing country boat fishermen.

Thoothukudi Country Boat Fibre Boat Fishermen Association president Dr SJ Gayes alleged that many mechanised vessels use Chinese made engines of more than 600 HP capacities, which helps them to reach out to the fishing ground quickly and do fishing for more than 12 hours. It also attracts Labour Acts, which permits only eight hours work per day for a labour, he charged. Though law permits to fish between 5 nm to 12 nm, in reality it is disregarded as the mechanised vessels trawls right from two nm to as far as 40 nm, which eventually destroys marine wealth and risking livelihood of country boat fishermen, he says.

Environmentalists say, ""More the fishing hours, more the catch, and hence more the destruction of marine wealth. This allows fishermen to catch double the quantity of fish in a single day, which otherwise is done in two days."" The augmentation of time in favour of mechanised vessels may deplete the marine wealth, they say.

Jones, an environmental activist, noted that fishing practice using trawlers is already proven to be a destructive fishing method as it involves dragging or sweeping the sea bed for several kilometres, which wipes out the underwater ecosystem such as corals, reefs, seagrass and other marine life. To find a solution, trawlers should be banned in the terrestrial waters.

""Otherwise, the State government should be empowered to grant license for the deep sea fishing vessels to fish beyond 12 nm, that fall into the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which is a union government domain, so that the mechanised vessel fishing does not affect the traditional fishermen and the sea environment"", he suggested.

Gayes said the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court had set aside an impugned order issued by Kovilpatti Revenue Divisional Officer dated October 13, 2009 extending one hour of fishing for Vembar fishermen. The minister's announcement contradicts the court order and also interest of the State government to phase out the trawlers, he said while seeking intervention of Chief Minister MK Stalin.

Meanwhile, mechanised boat owners were happy. A boat owner told TNIE, ""The spiking fuel price has been a major constraint for us as it has eaten into our profit margin in just a few years. As fishing resources have drastically reduced, they have to go as long as 35 to 40 nm for trawling. ""We depend on the volume of catch to get a profitable income, given that the catch is after all auctioned, which may be profitable or yield loss."" he said.

A senior official said that the mechanised vessels play a crucial role in bringing revenue out of fishing. ""Of the total catch, 70 percent is achieved by the mechanised vessels"", he said.

When asked, Fisheries minister Anitha R Radhakrishnan told TNIE that there is demand among the mechanised vessel fishermen to increase the fishing hours citing spiking fuel cost. ""It will be discussed at the department level with consent from the Chief Minister MK Stalin. It needs to be deliberated with both country boat and mechanised vessel fishermen before amending the Act"", he said."

### **Tamil Nadu and Gujarat: World Bank approves Rs 4,400-cr funding for three projects**

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/world-bank-approves-usd-562-million-funding-for-3-projects-in-india-122062301191\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/world-bank-approves-usd-562-million-funding-for-3-projects-in-india-122062301191_1.html)

"World Bank has approved three loans totalling USD 562 million (about Rs 4,393.70 crore) to fund an education project in Gujarat, a social protection programme in Tamil Nadu and a project to help recovery in the fisheries sector post the pandemic, the multilateral funding agency said on Thursday.

The World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved additional financing of USD 250 million for Outcomes for Accelerated Learning (GOAL), a programme which aims to improve education results for children across the state of Gujarat, it said in a release. The financing towards GOAL will benefit an additional 3,000 schools that have been disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Besides, the board of executive directors of the World Bank approved a USD 150 million funding to support the recovery of India's fisheries sector and a USD 162 million for the RIGHTS project to strengthen the social protection systems and capability of the State of Tamil Nadu to promote inclusion, accessibility, and opportunities for persons with disabilities. In 2020-21, the fisheries sector saw losses of about USD 5.5 billion and fish production fell almost 40 per cent in one year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, said the multilateral funding agency.

GOAL project financing complements the original loan of USD 500 million, which was approved in March 2021. It is in line with the Bank's Rapid Response Framework that seeks to reach every child and retain them in schools, assess learning levels regularly, prioritize teaching the fundamentals and increase catch-up learning, World Bank said. It also aims to develop psychosocial health for students and teachers.

""This additional financing will scale-up the coverage of the original programme from a total of 9,000 to 12,000 schools, while also supporting new efforts to test the efficacy of the program's interventions,"" said Shabnam Sinha, Lead Education Specialist and Task Team Leader for the project. Under the USD 150 million loan to support the recovery of India's fisheries sector,

World Bank said it currently employs about 12 million people directly and another 13 million through associated activities.

The Fisheries Sector COVID-19 Recovery Project will complement the Government of India's Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, which aims to transform the sector in a sustainable manner by introducing modern practices, improving access to finance and making it more climate-resilient. Incentives for larger private investment in the fisheries sector in India have been limited, mainly due to lack of access to financing or credit, and perceptions that the sector is high-risk.

The project will help microenterprises access working capital by connecting them with government schemes that provide financial support to farmers such as the Kisan Credit Card and the Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency Limited (MUDRA)."

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish remains an expensive commodity in Chennai**

<https://www.socialnews.xyz/2022/06/21/fish-remains-an-expensive-commodity-in-chennai/>

"Even after the 61-day fishing ban in Tamil Nadu ended on June 14, fish prices remain high in Chennai and fishermen cite dwindling catch and non-availability of fish as the main reasons.

Sources in the fishing industry told IANS that it may take more than ten days for the prices to return to normal. Arul Das, a fisherman from Chennai, told IANS, ""The catch is very less this time. Even after 50 boats went to the sea, we are not able to get a decent catch. There is a dwindling catch of fish and we have to study in detail as to why there is a reduction in catch."" However, thousands of people thronged markets of Kasimedu, Chindrapet, and Vanagram to buy their favourite fish.

Indian Fishermen Association president Dayalan told IANS, ""In the past few days, only 50 boats have arrived. There are 2000 trawler and Gillnet boats in Chennai area alone. We are expecting 150-200 boats going to sea for fishing which will lead to the reduction in prices.""

Many fishermen who went for fishing on the Andhra coast said that they got only a small catch and this may be due to the dwindling presence of fish in the sea at around 10 nautical miles from the Chennai coast towards Andhra. Fish sellers at Kasimedu market told IANS that the prices in the market is more than Rs 200 to Rs 250 than the wholesale market.

Syed Mushtak Ali, a businessman at Ashok Nagar in Chennai told IANS, ""For those who relish fish and non-vegetarian items, pockets are burning. We were expecting the price of fish to fall

after the fishing ban concluded on June 14. I don't know why the prices are high even after fishermen have started going to seas in mechanised boats. My information from the Kasimedu market is that the prices will come down only after ten to 15 days as most of the fishing boats have not commenced voyage. Several fishermen also complained that there is dwindling catch."''''

### **Tamil Nadu: Kasimedu fish market comes alive as boats return from the sea**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/kasimedu-fish-market-comes-alive-as-boats-return-from-the-sea/article65543451.ece>

"There was a smile on everyone's face at Kasimedu fishing harbour on Sunday as several baskets of fish were unloaded from boats. Boats that left the shores on Wednesday night, after the 61-day fishing ban ended, returned early Sunday so that city residents would have their favourite bite of seafood for lunch this season.

R. Anandan, who loves seafood, said the sight of fish in baskets, the boats and the sea makes him happy. "At Kasimedu, they have a huge variety and the fish is fresh and priced less than other local markets. However, fish like Vanjaram and Vavval were too costly," he said.

M.E. Ragupathi, fishermen leader, said the catch was not much and only day-fishing boats had returned. "The waters are not murky in the day time, which therefore forced fishermen to catch fish at night. We will have to wait for a couple of weeks for fish, including Vanjaram and Vavval, to be caught and brought back. The gill boats too are yet to return," he said. Arasu of the mechanised boats association said since there were not many varieties available on Sunday, the rates were not very high. "Everyone had the same velloodaan, thoomili, sankara and nethili fish, which meant we could not demand much. Even export quality fish like pei kadama was priced ₹100 less than that in Cuddalore," he said. Around 600 mechanised boats left the harbour on Wednesday after waiting for 61 days. Kasimedu has around 1000 mechanised boats."

### **Kerala: Tamil Nadu fishing vessels scouring Kerala waters; boat owners to hold protest**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/kochi/2022/jun/17/tn-fishing-vessels-scouring-kerala-waters-boat-owners-to-hold-protest-2466502.html>

"Fishing boat owners have decided to stage protest alleging that hundreds of fibre boats from Tamil Nadu have started scouring the coastal waters after the start of the 52-day trawl ban period. The annual trawl ban is imposed to ensure no disturbance to fish species during the breeding season. However, as motorised country crafts used by traditional fishermen are allowed to continue fishing activities during the ban period, Kerala has been witnessing increased presence of Tamil Nadu fibre boats in the coastal waters, they said.

“Hundreds of fibre boats from Tamil Nadu are involved in fishing activities off the coasts of Kochi and Thrissur district. These boats fish in Kerala’s coastal waters and sell the catch to fish dealers in Kerala. They catch demersal fish species using banned nets, which leads to depletion of marine resources. The annual fishing ban has failed to serve the purpose as huge outboard engine boats operated by traditional fishermen and Tamil Nadu boats are involved in over fishing,” said All-Kerala Fishing Boat Operators Association general secretary Joseph Xavier Kalapurakal.

The traditional fishermen in Kerala are also concerned about the increasing presence of Tamil Nadu fishermen in Kerala waters. “The Tamil Nadu fishermen don’t allow us to enter the coastal waters even in emergency situations. But we are witnessing increased presence of Tamil Nadu fibre boats in our coastal waters during the trawl ban period. There should be some kind of regulation to stop overfishing,” said National Fishworkers Federation treasurer Jackson Pollayil.

The Kerala Marine Fishing Regulation (Amendment) Act was introduced in 2017 to regulate fishing activities following depletion of marine resources due to overfishing. As per the act, the government will allow building of a new boat only to replace an existing vessel. Fishing boat owners allege that the government is violating this provision by liberally issuing licence to Tamil Nadu boats on payment of a user fee. A meeting of the fishing boat owners on June 18 will decide on launching a protest. The boat owners are also planning to approach the High Court.

“Any traditional fisherman has the right to fish in the coastal waters anywhere in India and we cannot stop it. A few Tamil Nadu fishermen are catching fish beyond the territorial waters and they sell the catch in Kerala. We are allowing them to sell the catch in Kerala on payment of user fee. The allegations regarding the presence of a large number of Tamil Nadu boats in Kerala are not true,” said fisheries deputy director (marine) M Thajudeen.

“Many Tamil Nadu longliner boats operate from Kochi as they get better price for their catch here. The trawl ban during June and July is not helping the purpose as it is not the breeding season of demersal fish which are caught by mechanised boats. The spawning season of oil sardine and mackerel is during the months of April and May,” said fisheries scientist K Sunil Mohamed."

**Tamil Nadu: Supreme Court issues notice on plea to stay ban on use of purse seine nets for fishing**

<https://www.livelaw.in/top-stories/supreme-court-interim-stay-ban-purse-seine-nets-fishing-tamil-nadu-201766>

"The Supreme Court on Friday issued notice in the application seeking interim stay on the order dated February 17, 2022 passed by the Tamil Nadu Government on banning the use of purse seine nets for fishing. Directing the counsel to serve the copy of the IA on the counsel for the respondents, the vacation bench of Justices AS Bopanna and Vikram Nath in their order said, ""Issue notice. Dasti in addition. List after service is complete.""

Emphasizing on the fact that the fishing is only a 3 month season, the counsel for the petitioner in the hearing today submitted that the ban has affected around 15 lakhs fishermen in Tamil Nadu. It was argued in the application that the State's ban was arbitrary and was contrary to the policy of the Union of India. The petitioner's have further contended that the law had been passed by the State without considering the expert committee and the fishermen and that as a result of this 15 lakh people had lost their job.

""Fishing ban period comes to end on June 15 and the ban on using purse-seine fishing must be left for not only 15 lakhs people livelihood but also for the Blue Economy. Every year in Tamil Nadu, the fishing ban is implemented from April 15 to June 15. The two month ban on mechanized fishing will help the breeding of fish schools and help them recover from mechanized fishing. The annual 61-day fishing ban to facilitate fish breeding. All the mechanized operating from Palaverkadu to Kanyakumari will be moored during the ban period. After the ban period is a good season for fishing. The Impugned order passed by the State of Tamil Nadu is unconstitutional,"" the application states.

It may be noted that the High Court in January 2022 had dismissed the plea(s) preferred by Poompuhar Traditional Fishermen challenging Rule 17(7) of the amended Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Rules, 1983 which banned owner or master of any fishing vessel to carry on fishing by pair trawling or fishing with purse-seine net."

### **Tamil Nadu: Mechanised boats resume fishing operations**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/mechanised-boats-resume-fishing-operations/article65526936.ece>

"With fishing ban coming to a close in the early hours of Wednesday, mechanised boat fishermen get ready to venture into the sea for fishing around 5 a.m. Since fishing by mechanised boats between April 15 and June 14 is suspended every year to facilitate fish breeding along the east coast of Tamil Nadu, fishing operations in the Thoothukudi Fishing Harbor (245 boats), Tharuvaikulam Fish-landing Centre (225 boats) and Vembar (25 boats) came to a grinding halt while country boats continued their fishing. Consequently, seafood prices were skyrocketing due

to huge demand and less arrival.

Besides repairing their boats and giving a fresh coat of paint, fishermen used to prepare new nets and mend old nets for the new season during the ban period.

“Even though the annual fishing ban came into force on February 15, fishing operations in Thoothukudi Fishing Harbour was stopped on February 1 itself as the dredging of the harbour was started. So, after four-and-a-half months, we resume fishing with fresh hopes,” said Dharma Pitchai, president of Thoothukudi Fishing Harbour Fishermen Association, who alleged that the relief being given by the government during the ban period, was yet to be disbursed this year.

He also charged that the Tamil Nadu Fisheries Department failed to detain the mechanised boats from Kerala that freely carried out fishing operations along the east coast during the ban period. In Kanniyakumari district, 350-odd mechanised boats being operated from Chinna Muttom Fishing Harbour are getting ready to resume fishing from Wednesday as these mechanized boats leaving at 5 a.m. everyday should return to the fishing harbour by 9 p.m."

#### **Tamil Nadu: Trawl ban ends on east coast, but fishermen woes remain**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/rawl-ban-ends-on-east-coast-but-fishermen-woes-remain/articleshow/92191153.cms>

"As the 60-day annual fishing ban in the eastern coast comes to a close on Tuesday midnight, fishermen are gearing up with the final leg of preparations to venture into the sea. The annual ban on mechanized fishing came into effect on April 15, allowing breeding of fish species in the eastern coast. Though fishermen have prepped up the fishing crafts after the annual maintenance and are all set to sail, they are a bit apprehensive about various factors including fuel price, which is the major cause of worry since fishing is a diesel guzzling industry. Each fishing boat requires anywhere from 500 to 5,000 litres of diesel for fishing operations depending on the range and number of fishing days.

But the amount of subsidized diesel is not adequate, they said. N Mohandass, a fisherman from Akkaraipettai in Nagapattinam district, appealed to chief minister M K Stalin to increase the present volume of subsidized fuel to fishermen. “The state government is providing 18,000 liter diesel per year. That is not adequate for us. We hope that the chief minister will definitely fulfill our demand,” he says.

Xavier Vaz, president of the Federation of All-Fishermen Associations in Tuticorin said that the owners are continuing the operations because they have loyal hands at deck. “During Covid-19, we reduced the number of fishing days from six to three in a week. We are not able to scale up

because the price of all components starting from diesel skyrocketed. We can't give up our fishermen who spent decades with us. So, we continue operating," he said."

### **Tamil Nadu: Prevent use of banned fishing nets**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/prevent-use-of-banned-fishing-nets/article65511517.ece>

"Rising diesel price, issues concerning mechanised boat operators, country boat fishermen, subsidies, banned fishing nets and waiver of bank loans were some of the issues discussed at the fishermen grievance day meeting held here on Wednesday.

The meeting was held here after two years. Collector Shankar Lal Kumawat presided. St. Xavier Mechanised Boats Fishermen Association president R. Sahayam said diesel price had gone up and it affected the fishermen. They could not make profit under the deep sea fishing scheme which was introduced to replace trawlers.

He said that they had huge loans to repay but they could not do so with the present financial condition. General secretary of the Tamil Nadu Mechanised Boats Fishermen Association N.J. Bose also aired similar views. Under the scheme, if a vessel costs ₹ 80 lakh, 50 % has to be borne by the Centre, 20 % by the State government, 10 % by the beneficiaries and 20 % has to be secured through financial institutions. But, they ended up spending more, he said.

The mechanised boat fishermen said the authorities should write off their loans considering their plight. The country boat fishermen complained about the conduct of mechanised boat fishermen. Ramanathapuram Country Boats Fishermen Association president S.R. Rayappan said that banned fishing nets were being used by mechanised boats fishermen. The mechanised fishermen were also using banned Chinese engines that had higher horsepower.

Ramanathapuram secretary of Centre of Indian Trade Unions M. Karunamoorthy complained that though banned fishing nets were being used, the offenders were let off. He said tough punishment should be imposed. Fisherwomen should be permitted to collect sea algae without any restriction. Mechanised fishermen were fishing in the area where only country boat fishermen had rights to fish. He urged the authorities to monitor these issues and prevent violation of rules and regulations."

### **Tamil Nadu: 5 fishermen from Kanyakumari detained in Seychelles return**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/5-fishermen-detained-in-seychelles-return/articleshow/92114941.cms>

"Five fishermen from Kanyakumari, part of 58 from the country detained in Seychelles for trespassing into its territorial waters, have been released. They returned to India on Wednesday night and have been sent to their native places, said officials. They were the last of the fishermen to be released by the island nation as the others were released earlier.

It was on March 7 that three deep sea fishing boats named Snabaga Arulappar, Dono and Infant Jesus were held by Seychelles authorities along with 32 fishermen. Two more boats, Vidhya and Vadi Matha, and 26 fishermen were detained two days later. The arrested fishermen were from Chinnathurai, Poothurai, Thoothoor and Marthandamthurai in Kanyakumari district, one from Cuddalore and another person from Vizhinjam in Kerala.

While the masters of the vessels were detained by the country for legal proceedings, the crew members were released. With the legal proceedings getting over, Kuklin Kurusaiyah, Antony Christu, Sunil Venislos, Jerin Raju Sesayan and Maria Segar, were released by Seychelles, said fisheries officials in Chennai."

### **Tamil Nadu and Puducherry: Fishing in uncertain waters, in conversation with fishers**

<https://science.thewire.in/environment/tamil-nadu-puducherry-fishers-uncertainty-distress/>

"Even before dawn, at around 3 am, fisherfolk on the coast of Puducherry and Tamil Nadu venture into the sea. A cumbersome workday follows, often more than 12 hours long. In this time, they disentangle nets, prep boats, catch fish, auction the catch and visit fish markets. Men and women both toil, and often exchange roles. Despite several technological advancements that could make their lives easier, the trade and vocation of fishing here still depends very much on manual labour and traditional knowledge.

When my father used to fish, he navigated in the sea and found the directions using the direction with which the wind blows. We used to know at what time the wind will blow during the day. We have eight different types of winds based on the direction it blows – for example, vaadai kaathu blows from north to south and kacha kaathu blows from south to north. — Mukesh, a fisherman from Chinna Mudaliyar Chavadi

Our team at the Centre for New Economics Studies at O.P. Jindal Global University conducted an ethnographic research project. We interviewed fishers across the shores of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry – specifically, Thandiraayan Kuppam, Chinna Mudaliyar Chavadi, Vaithikuppam and Kurichikuppam.

We interviewed members from the community to inquire about their trade, fishing techniques, collating income-consumption patterns, their lived experiences from the pandemic, and understand how pollution-climate change is affecting their vocation and trade. The study also

aimed towards highlighting the emerging business patterns and trends within the trade and educated young (jobless) workers are turning to fishing as their “last preferred choice of work” sans alternative employment opportunities.

Fishing is not an isolated practice and has been significantly affected since the advent of the Anthropocene epoch. A once-tranquil coast is increasingly overcrowded with people and materials. Fishing sites are often swarming with fishers and, more recently, tourists, after the government began advertising quaint beaches and picturesque towns as good places in which to kick back.

The amount of waste has thus increased as well – and exponentially so.

We often catch plastic in the tonnes. When we measured the weight of the plastic that got caught in the net two days back, it was close to one tonne. We caught more but we had to throw it back into the sea as the boat would not take that much weight. That day, we caught no fish. Just plastic. That is why I haven't gone fishing for the past two days. — Muralidharan, a fisherman of 40 years from Vaithikuppam, Puducherry

Ten to 15 years back, we caught only 10 plastic bags if we drew the net over a distance of 2 km. Now I get 10 plastic bags if I draw the net over a distance of just 10 metres. — Mukesh, a fisherman from Chinna Mudaliyar Chavadi It's common to find fishing sites with heaps of plastic litter on the surface, taken there by a sewage pipeline that opens into the sea. Plastic waste often includes disposable water bottles, tarpaulin and abandoned or lost fishing gear. Plastic in the seas have also affected the lifecycle and well-being of the fish. Every fisher admitted to catching plastic along with the fish. In fact, eight of 10 individuals said they caught more plastic. Plastic affects the quality of the catch but also makes the already-strenuous fishing process more so. Disentangling plastic from fishing nets takes up most of the fishers' time – a resource they already have very little of Fishing has become more arduous in the Anthropocene epoch, with tourism, marine pollution, state apathy and climate change colluding to deepen fishers' uncertainties.

The fishers recalled the 2004 tsunami as a one-time shock but think of the pandemic as a rolling disaster. And they persist with their long working hours and harsh living conditions.

Despite several technologies that could make their lives easier, the trade and vocation of fishing here still depends very much on manual labour and traditional knowledge.

A team of researchers from O.P. Jindal Global University recently spoke to fishers across the coast of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry on their lives after the pandemic. The two-month ban

Another issue that affects the local fishing community here is the exploitation of the fish

population. Some 55% of the fisherfolk reported that in their lifetimes, the size of their catch had progressively dropped. They also said the populations of some species, like the kaarai (Indian silver belly fish) and the sudumbu (white fish), had dwindled more than others.

In an attempt to reduce overfishing and keep the fish from becoming locally extinct, the Puducherry government imposes a near-complete two-month fishing ban from April to May. This when the fish reproduce a

nd their newborns explore the waters. In this time, only fishers with sanctioned fibre boats can venture into the sea, for a fixed amount of time, and what they catch they are required to sell on the beach itself. In this time, the fish markets make do with an assortment of fish imported from Andhra Pradesh and Kerala..."

### **Tamil Nadu: Udangudi thermal station a threat to environment, livelihood of fishermen**

<https://www.newsclick.in/TN-udangudi-thermal-station-threat-environment-livelihood-fshermen-activists-say>

"The coal-powered, under construction Udangudi Supercritical Thermal Power Project in Tamil Nadu is threatening the environment, marine biodiversity and livelihood of the fishing and farming community. The coal jetty constructed 8 kms inside the sea is a threat to the fishing community, while the subsequent possibility of seawater intrusion would affect the farming community.

Considering the imported coal requirement for the project, the subsequent higher cost of production and the history of severe pollution from different TPS in Tamil Nadu, the local people and environmental activists continue to demand the scrapping of the project. However, the completion of 40% of construction works in Phase 1. Environmental activists question the need for more coal-powered TPS, while the installed capacity of the state is 33,500 MW against the peak demand hovering around 17,000 MW. Several countries have begun to abandon TPS and are moving towards renewable energy sources. Fisherfolk and farmers set to lose livelihood. The proposed project in Udangudi, a village in the Thoothukudi district in the state, lies close to the seashore. A number of fishing hamlets lie along with the project site, in which around 50,000 members make their living from fishing. "The fishing community remains the most affected by the TPS in Tamil Nadu, with Mettur TPS being located inland," said V Prabhakaran, a research scholar with Poovulagin Nanbargal, an environmental organisation which released a documentary on the possible impacts of Udangudi TPS recently.

### **The fishing community along 26 coastal villages has**

""<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/fishermen-protest-construction-of-coal-jetty-for-udangudi-thermal-power-plant/articleshow/65844411.cms>""

Opposed the project since the announcement and has held protests against the coal jetty construction in 2018. “The TPS in Tamil Nadu are known for polluting the environment and causing damage to marine biodiversity since three of the four major existing plants are close to the seashore. One more such plant, with huge capacity, could be dangerous for the environment and the people,” Prabhakaran said.

Stage 1 of the project would have 2\*660 MW units, while the next two stages would add four more units with 660 MW capacities. “The ongoing construction work itself has started polluting the groundwater. The used seawater has been redirected to farmlands resulting in damages to coconut and palm trees on around 4,000 acres. If the plants become functional, farmlands in around 10 kms would be affected,” Prabhakaran said.

The fisherfolk faces the threat of severe erosion due to the construction of the coal jetty and the possible dumping of fly ash, with North Chennai Thermal Power Plant (NCTPS) being an example. The Kosasthalaiyar river, running close to NCTPS, is highly polluted, and thousands of fishing hamlets have lost their livelihood while polluting the northern part of Chennai.

Pollution remains a major threat the thrust for the renewable energy sector has been continuously increasing across the globe as global warming has become a major threat. The COP26 held in Glasgow has highlighted the threat from coal-powered thermal plants and the need to reach.

“From a 500 MW coal-powered plant, 100 tons of Sulphur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), 24 tons of Nitric Oxide (NO), 2.5 tons of particulate matter and 3000 tons of fly ash would be generated. Six such plants are proposed in Udangudi, which will end up in massive emission of dangerous materials, affecting the public and the environment,” Prabhakaran said.

Responding to the allegation of major TPS violating the emission norms, Prabhakaran accused that the stations have violated the norms for 400 days in the last two years. “The emission has been 7 to 8 times higher than the prescribed conditions. People living closer to NCTPS have a history of higher illness and have reported deaths due to pollution in Chennai,” he said.

The threat to marine biodiversity is another factor as the hot water discharge to the sea would be around 60-70% of the 17 crores litres used by the plants. The Udangudi region is close to the Mannar bio reserve and is known for the coral reef and grass, while the locality is also known for sea turtle breeding. The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) has proved inefficient in controlling emissions, both by government and private run entities, leading to air, water and land pollution in cities across Tamil Nadu. Poovulagin Nanbargal has also flagged the usage of water

bodies to construct the power plants. The site has been allegedly reclassified as ordinary land, while the maps and revenue records till 2003-04 have marked the site as a 'catchment area', a statement of the organisation said.

Why need higher installation capacity than demand?

Another intriguing question is the push by successive state governments to install more generation capacity while the peak demand is almost half of the installed capacity. Apart from the Udangudi TPS project, the state government has announced here solar projects to the tune of Rs 70,000 crores for generating 22,000 MW. Tamil Nadu has generation capacity of around 32,000 MW as of April 2020, while the demand during 2022 was reported as 17,370 MW on March 29. Instead of utilising and increasing the efficiency of the existing power plants, which are normally operated at lower power factors, the government is announcing more coal-powered TPS.

“The government spending on TPS will only increase the financial liability of the state government. Electricity generation from solar could cost around Rs 3-4 while from this project would be around Rs 8 per unit. Further, the higher initial cost will also become a burden in addition to the impact on the environment and the people,” Prabhakaran said.

The project is expected to increase the financial liability of the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (TANGEDCO) and Tamil Nadu Transmission Corporation (TANTRANSCO), the two entities which already contribute to the debt of the state. The Poovulagin Nanbargal released documentary on the possible impacts of the Udangudi thermal plant. Renowned social activist Medha Patkar visited the people residing closer to the project site and pledged support to their struggle.

“The different renewable energy projects will start generating electricity in another five years from now, implying that the generation from TPS would be over and above the requirement. The government of Tamil Nadu should act wisely and save money, people and the environment by abandoning such dangerous projects,” Prabhakaran said.”

**Tamil Nadu: No illegal aquaculture farms allowed near Pulicat, says NGT**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/ngt-no-illegal-aquaculture-farms-allowed-near-pulicat/articleshow/91876808.cms>

"The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed government agencies to remove and demolish all illegal aquaculture farms in and around the ecologically-sensitive Pulicat Lake at Ponneri near Chennai.

A few decades ago, several farmers in Thiruvallur converted their agricultural lands into prawn and shrimp farms due to commercial interests. In the 1990s, Ponneri witnessed an exponential rise in aquafarm business.

But in the process, they end up polluting the area. Almost all these farms use effluents and release the contaminated water directly into water bodies, particularly Pulicat lake and into the sea. Besides this, the groundwater in the area has become contaminated due to seepage of polluted water from the farms. Against this backdrop, a section of Ponneri residents in 2016 approached the NGT seeking action against polluting farms. The tribunal constituted a joint-committee to study the issue and suggest permanent solutions. This committee initially found out that 382 aquafarms in the area did not have approval from government agencies. Based on the panel's findings, the NGT in a recent hearing directed the Coast Aquaculture Authority, Chennai to remove all illegal farms and collect compensation from them for damaging the environment."

#### **Tamil Nadu: Annual inspection of fisheries department reveals 119 unregistered vessels**

<https://www.freepressjournal.in/india/annual-inspection-of-tn-fisheries-department-reveals-119-unregistered-vessels>

"A total of 119 unregistered vessels were found by Tamil Nadu fishing department in its annual inspection in the delta districts of the state. The annual inspection of vessels was done between May 25 and 26, a statement from the department said on Tuesday. The department inspected 1,580 vessels, of which 119 vessels, including 76 purse seine boats, were not registered.

Registration with the concerned state fisheries department is a mandatory requirement for fishermen to wade out on sea, insurance and all other government-related compensation. Other than Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai district also reported 78 vessels that were not registered and 69 of them were purse seine vessels. Nine trawlers were also reported in the district without license. Fisheries department officials told IANS that most of these trawlers were bought recently and hence not registered.

A fishing trawler owner from Nagapattinam, Rajashekharan told IANS: ""We just bought this trawler and will register soon."" Boat owners' association also told IANS that most of the new vessels are yet to be registered and it will spread awareness on mandatory registration of boats."

#### **Tamil Nadu: Withdraw anti-nuclear protest cases filed against fishermen**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/withdraw-anti-nuclear-protest-cases-filed-against-fishermen/article65464035.ece>

"Fishermen living in a few coastal hamlets near Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project, who are facing cases for their alleged involvement in the anti-nuclear protests, have urged the Collector V. Vishnu to drop the cases filed against them as the cases were spoiling their chances of getting or renewing their passports.

"Since this stumbling block is preventing us from getting passports and going abroad for employment, the Collector should take immediate steps to withdraw these cases," the fishermen urged Mr. Vishnu as he chaired the fishermen grievance meet at Radhapuram on Thursday while asking him not to allow construction of Away From Reactor (AFR) facility at KKNPP to store the spent fuel.

As the affected fishermen raised issue of pending cases against them in the meet, Mr. Vishnu promised to take up this matter with the government and organise special camps for giving or renewing the passports with the help of the Regional Passport Office, Madurai.

The fishermen expressed their willingness to get benefited from the KKNPP-sponsored welfare programmes and give employment in the upcoming nuclear park for their children.

Participants from Uvari including S.V. Antony, former panchayat president of the village and Raymond of MDMK, stressed the need to provide scientifically designed groynes in all the coastal hamlets in the district to protect the fishermen and their boats from high and violent tides. They asked the Collector to explore the possibility of creating a fishing harbour in a suitable place so that the country boat fishermen could switch over to fishing with mechanised boats.

On the drinking water crisis, ward member of Vijayapathi village panchayat Regina from Idnithanakarai said the water the villagers were getting was unfit for consumption since the project executed exclusively for providing drinking water for the coastal hamlets became defunct.

When the fishermen from Idinthakarai informed the Collector about the land, which was given in 2019 as free house sites to them, had been encroached upon by an individual, Mr. Vishnu promised to take corrective measures.

Mr. Vishnu agreed to start capacity building training programme exclusively for the youth from the coastal hamlets."

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen block entry to Kattupalli port**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishermen-block-entry-to-kattupalli-port/article65464349.ece>

"Continuing their protest, the Pulicat fishermen blocked entry to the Adani Port and L&T Ship Building Yard from the seaside preventing a container carrier from exiting the port.

Shops in Pulicat's bazaar area downed shutters on Thursday as traders lent support to the fishermen protesting against low wages paid to them at the private port and ship building yard in Kattupalli in Tiruvallur district. Women and children too joined in the protest and sat the entire day under hot sun.

"We have been waiting for a long time, making requests and staging protests time and again. But to no avail. Our wages remain paltry and nobody who has a say in the company concerned comes for talks. The district administration too has made several attempts. Since we are not in Chennai city, nobody listens to our voices," said Karunakaran, a local.

Durai Mahendran of the Tiruvallur District Traditional United Fishermen Association said that over the years, successive officials and even chief ministers had given them word that they would be duly compensated for the loss of livelihood. "However, only one company provided jobs. The others did not. We were promised that 1,750 persons would get jobs. Our coastline has eroded. Fishing resources have vanished with so many ships entering our waters," he said.

K. Bharathi of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association said that the lives of fishermen were intertwined with protests since 1975 when the rocket launch station at Sriharikota was inaugurated. Three villages were shifted to make way for the facility and even after that, fishermen were not allowed to fish for about two weeks every time a rocket took off. "It took several protests to stop that and now they wait for a couple of hours during the launch," he said. He said the protests demanding jobs continued with the setting up of the thermal power stations and starting of other ports.

Later in the evening, officials of the district administration interacted with fishermen and requested them to stop their protests since a meeting had been convened with the companies concerned next week. "We are for early redress of their grievances," said an official."

**Tamil Nadu: Pulicat fishermen stage sea blockade, demand pay hike from private port**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/pulicat-fishermen-stage-sea-blockade-demand-pay-hike-from-private-port/article65457819.ece>

"Fishermen of villages in and around Pulicat lake on Tuesday staged a sea blockade, preventing ships from entering or exiting a private port and ship building yard in the area, and demanded pay hikes for 250 of their men working in the establishment. Around 200 boats participated in the blockade.

Chinnapulla of Goonanakuppam said nobody was listening to them, and they had been forced to stage the protest. "We have been resorting to protests since the company has not kept its promise of providing jobs for 1,750 men. Even those who work in the port earn just ₹300 a day after putting in eight hours of hard labour. The women in our homes earn more than us and question the men as to why we earn such low wages," he said.

Karunakaran of Light House Kuppam said they would continue to hold protests since the company was not responding to their requests. "We can only urge Chief Minister M.K. Stalin to hear our pleas. We have lost our livelihood and don't even find fish to eat. These companies have led to the erosion of the coastline, leading the fish to keep away due to all the industrial activity. We are not deep sea fishermen," Mr. Karunakaran said."

### **Tamil Nadu: 140 displaced fishermen families waiting for promised permanent jobs**

<https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/national/140-displaced-fishermen-families-in-tn-waiting-for-promised-permanent-jobs>

At least 140 families from Kattupalli Kuppam in Tamil Nadu's Tiruvallur district, who were displaced in 2009 due to a project to build a shipyard and a port, are still awaiting for the permanent jobs they were promised. To bring an end to their problem, members of the affected families and a group of senior citizens have petitioned Chief Minister M.K. Stalin. Following their displacement, the families, who earned their livelihood by fishing in the deep sea, were provided housing at a place that was some 2 km away from the nearest beach.

Even though the company, which was incharge of the project, had assured in writing that one member of the family would be provided a permanent job, but to no avail. They were given appointments on a temporary basis and were trained and given jobs in welding, fitting and crane operation.

One such displaced person, Sajith Lal told IANS: ""We were promised permanent jobs by the company and the district administration had endorsed it. Presently each of us is getting a meager salary of Rs 16,000, while those doing the same job and who are permanently employed are getting thrice of our salary along with other benefits."" Sajith said that the workers, including him, are on strike since February but the company and the district administration are not listening to them.

Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO) also did not hear them properly and has not brought out a solution to their woes, the affected family members said. Social activists, who have taken up the cause, said that a cooperative society of the workers was formed in 2014

at the insistence of the company and the government and the workers are employed through this society.

Speaking to IANS, C. Rajeev, Director, Centre for Policy and Development Studies who is closely monitoring the development, said: ""The government should not shy away from this and take up the matter with the concerned company and the rights of the ports are now with another company.

""Whoever is the owner of the company, the government, and the Tiruvallur district administration have a commitment to the fishermen and must provide all necessary support for at least one member of the fishermen's family at Kattupalli Kuppam to be given permanent employment. ""We are taking up the matter with the state government and the Union Shipping Ministry regarding this issue.""

### **Tamil Nadu: 13 years on, displaced Kattupalli fishers still await permanent jobs**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/13-years-on-displaced-kattupalli-fishers-still-await-permanent-jobs/article65411616.ece>

"Families displaced in 2009 due to the shipbuilding and port project in Kattupalli in Tiruvallur district and a group of concerned citizens on Friday sought the direct intervention of Chief Minister M.K. Stalin over the failure of the companies to provide permanent employment to the families.

A total of 140 fisher families from Kattupalli Kuppam lost their land and direct access to the beach in 2009 when L&T started work on the shipbuilding yard and the port project. As part of the rehabilitation package, they were provided alternative housing more than 2 km away from the beach. The company had agreed to provide permanent job to one person from each affected family.

Despite assurances made in writing in 2009, 2014 and in 2017, the 140 persons have not been offered permanent jobs. They continued to work on contract for a poor salary. Meanwhile, the port had been acquired by the Adani group.

D. Anith Kumar, one of the affected workers, said all of them underwent training and were given a variety of jobs, including welding, fitting, crane operation and data entry. "We were paid a meagre salary initially. Now, we get around ₹16,000 a month. However, permanent workers doing the same jobs get thrice our salary with all other benefits," he said.

The workers have been on strike without pay since February demanding permanent employment.

They said that several rounds of negotiations with the company, the Tiruvallur district administration and the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO) failed as their demand for permanent employment had been rejected.

Pointing out that a cooperative society of the workers was formed in 2014 at the insistence of the company and the government, advocate Ramapriya Gopalakrishnan said the workers were employed through this society. She said this was used to exploit the workers and keep them on contract.

Nityanand Jayaraman of the Chennai Solidarity Group said that while the fishing community kept its promise by ceding land, the government and the companies had betrayed them.

Musician T.M. Krishna said that while economic development was cited as the reason for implementing environmentally harmful projects, Kattupalli Kuppam was a case where the local community suffered without seeing the promised development. "If the present ruling dispensation is actually a government with a difference, then that difference should be seen in action now," he said.

Among those who have signed the letter to the Chief Minister are D. Hariparanthaman, retired Judge of Madras High Court; V. Vasanthi Devi, former Vice-Chancellor of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University; and M.G. Devasahayam, retired IAS officer. L&T did not respond to The Hindu 's efforts to get its views on the matter."

### **Tamil Nadu: Modernised fishing harbour at Kasimedu to be ready in 18 months**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/modernised-fishing-harbour-at-kasimedu-to-be-ready-in-18-months/article65401696.ece>

"The modernisation of the Chennai Fishing Harbour at Kasimedu will be completed in 18 months, L. Murugan, Union Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and Information and Broadcasting, said here on Tuesday.

This port sprawls over 96 acres and is located north of the Chennai Port, according to a press release.

After reviewing the modernisation and upgrade work planned at the Chennai Fishing Harbour with Chennai Port officials, he said this project would be carried out at a cost of ₹98 crore, and the tenders would be floated within two months.

He noted that the Chennai Fishing Harbour is among the fishing harbours proposed for upgrade to international standards. "The modernisation and upgrade of the Chennai Fishing Harbour shall include Infrastructure projects, such as additional fish landing wharves, a mechanised fish-handling complex, a ship-lift boat repair facility, cleaning, packaging and cold storage and upgrade of essential facilities such as drinking water supply, solid and liquid waste management, construction of a sanitary complex, laying of two-lane roads and construction of electrical high masts," the release said

Mr. Murugan said that since 2015, nearly ₹7,500 crore had been allocated for the Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund. Under it, Tamil Nadu got 32 projects worth ₹1,000 crore."

### **Tamil Nadu: Formulate pragmatic roadmap towards progress in fisheries sector**

<https://theprint.in/india/formulate-pragmatic-roadmap-towards-progress-in-fisheries-sector-tn-governor/944244/>

"Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi urged members of the Indian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum to formulate a pragmatic roadmap for the sector by developing new skills and knowledge so that the fishermen society reap more benefits.

He said while India was celebrating 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' and commemorating freedom fighters for their selfless sacrifices for the nation, India was in need to attain enormous growth in all fields, for its overall development.

Ravi noted that the fisheries sector has been given special attention with the creation of a separate department by the Central government in 2019 with funds to raise fish production to 22 million metric tonne.

The country was looking ahead with 'vision and mission' in the next 25 years which is called 'Amrit Kaal' for attaining its destiny of becoming a world leader by 2047 commemorating India's 100th year of independence, Ravi said after inaugurating the 12th Indian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum (IFAF) organised by Tamil Nadu Dr J Jayalalithaa Fisheries University.

He urged the stakeholders at the meeting to find and formulate a 'pragmatic roadmap' towards progress by incorporating all new skills and knowledge and to ensure that they reach out to the fishermen society to reap more benefits in building a strong and developed nation. The Governor wished scientists, experts, research scholars, entrepreneurs across the country to bring good

outcomes and research findings with innovative ideas, improvised strategies and new technologies to meet the challenges and to make the sector more profitable and for betterment of fishermen. Hailing Tamil Nadu as the ‘spiritual capital’ of India, the Governor urged the delegates from outside the state to visit some of the living spiritual heritage of India.

Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the nation was marching ahead with confidence and determination of achieving more with the motto of Sabka Saath-Sabka Vikas (inclusive development for all), he said."

### **Tamil Nadu: NGT junks green nod for Ennore Polymer Park**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2022/may/05/ngt-junks-green-nod-for-ennore-polymer-park-2449852.html>

"The Southern Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) set aside the Environmental Clearance (EC) granted to the Polymer Industrial Park proposed in Ennore and told the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) to make a fresh review of the biodiversity of the project site. As per the 1996 Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP), the project site is marked as a salt pan and tidally influenced waterbody.

Challenging the EC, Chennai-based activist K Saravanan filed a petition before the NGT. The NGT bench, comprising judicial member Justice K Ramakrishnan and expert member K Satyagopal, while disposing of the case, sought an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) report to be prepared by an accredited agency. Most of the area has been filled with fly ash and the EIA report will consider the permissibility of using untreated wet fly ash to fill the area and its impact.

The tribunal said the study must also identify the flora and fauna of the place and the presence of any migratory bird. "After getting the EIA report, SEIAA is directed to place it before the State Expert Appraisal Committee (SEAC)," the order said. The bench directed the SEIAA to complete the process of assessment within nine months.

The petitioner alleged that the project was proposed inside the Ennore Pulicat wetland complex and the site is a tidally influenced waterbody. It was classified as a salt pan in the revenue records. Saravanan said in the petition that Tamil Nadu Polymer Industries Park Limited suppressed the fact that it is a waterbody and referred to it as patta dry land and government poramboke land. In the pre-feasibility report, the project site was described as plain terrain with no notified forest or waterbodies and the land is predominantly barren.

The park is a special purpose vehicle with Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation

Limited and State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited as joint-venture partners. The authorities said the park will create world-class infrastructure and a common technology centre at a cost of Rs 3,000 crore."

**Tamil Nadu: Port at Puducherry will cause coastal erosion, destroy livelihoods: Water-users association**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2022/apr/28/port-at-puducherry-will-cause-coastal-erosion-destroy-livelihoods-water-usersassociation-2447467.html>

"Flagging environmental concerns, a water-users association on Wednesday opposed the construction of a mini port-cum-harbour at Moorthikuppam - Pudukuppam by cutting open the mouth of Mullodai River. In a memorandum to the Lt Governor, 'Bangaaru Vaickal Neeraadhara Koottamaippu' president V Chandrasekhar stated that the proposed project was in violation of the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) rules. This is with the added caution of the NGT telling States to revise the shoreline plan to restore TN's coastline.

According to the association, the project will cause irreversible destruction to all agriculture upstream of Mullodai channel, which connects to irrigation tanks, wetlands and fields in Puducherry as well as Tamil Nadu (Kanganamkuppam and Uchimedu). The port construction would restrict sand movement, causing coastal erosion.

The existing Puducherry port is a classic example of the government's failure in preventing coastal erosion and salt water intrusion, said the guild. This had caused a high levels of Total Dissolved Salts (TDS) of 3,000 and above in coastal Puducherry and in TN's Muthialpet and Kottakuppam regions. These areas already suffer from existing erosion.

The president pointed out, the project had not carried out Environment Impact Assessments. He reminded the government Ministry of Environment and Forests Bengaluru Regional Director Dr U Sridharan inspected the site and rejected the project. When the same project was submitted to the World Bank for funding, it was rejected again due to environmental concerns.

In a reply, the project officer P Meera Saheb said, ""The Directorate of Fisheries initiated the project based on a long-pending demand from people's representatives and fishers. It has initiated action for the central institute of coastal engineering for Fishery, Bengaluru's scientific study of the project by cutting open the river mouth."" While preparing the feasibility report, the issues will be discussed in a public hearing, Saheb added.

Besides, the Forest Department has been approached for protection of mangrove vegetation at Mullodai River, added the project officer. However Chandrasekhar maintained that this will not

stand as a valid reason for violating laws and Supreme Court judgements, CRZ norms, and rules regarding the protection of sand dunes.

According to the guild president, ""With no alternatives, just that quoting 'people' demand such unsustainable projects is irresponsible."" The fact that the proposed port will take away livelihoods is being hidden from fishers, he added.

He urged the L-G, the Ministry of Environment, Central Institute of Coastal Engineering and Fishery, Bengaluru to protect farmers' livelihoods and their land. The project is in complete violation of rules that exist for protection of the environment and ground water, Chandrasekhar said."

### **Tamil Nadu and Kerala: Efforts on to bring back fishermen held in Indonesia, Seychelles: EAM**

<https://www.dtnext.in/national/2022/04/24/efforts-on-to-bring-back-fishermen-held-in-indonesia-seychelles-eam>

"Indian Missions in Indonesia and Seychelles are closely following with the local authorities the issue of detention of 13 Indian fishermen in those countries and making efforts for their repatriation, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said.

In a letter to Lok Sabha MP from Kerala, Adoor Prakash, the Minister said eight Indian fishermen, five from Tamil Nadu and three from Kerala detained on the night of March 7-8 by Marine Police of Aceh, for fishing in Indonesian waters. Officials from Indian Consulate General have met the fishermen and they were found to be in good health. Jaishankar said 56 fishermen (except the five captains of the five fishing boats) have been released by Seychelles government on March 22."

### **Tamil Nadu: PM's Matsya Sampada Yojana programme to help set up seaweed park**

<https://weather.com/en-IN/india/news/news/2022-04-18-seaweed-park-in-tamil-nadu>

A seaweed park will be set up in Tamil Nadu once the state government allots the necessary land, said Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying L. Murugan on Saturday.

Speaking to reporters in Tiruchendur in the Thoothukudi district, Murugan said that a seaweed park would be set up in Tamil Nadu for the first time in the country to improve the livelihood of fishers.

According to Murugan, the Tamil Nadu government has been requested to set aside space for a Special Economic Zone for seaweed farming. The work will commence after the state government selects the site.

He also said a project would be implemented under the Prime Minister's Matsya Sampada Yojana to increase fish stocks in Rameswaram and Mandapam areas.

Murugan said about Rs 20,000 crore is to be invested in the state for fisheries projects such as cold storage, fish processing plants, and deep-sea aquaculture."

### **Tamil Nadu: To form exclusive bank for fishermen**

<https://www.canindia.com/tn-to-form-exclusive-bank-for-fishermen/>

"The Tamil Nadu fisheries department is in the process of constituting a bank exclusively for fishermen. Sources in the department told IANS that a committee has been constituted to study the feasibility of forming fisheries cooperative credit societies.

A meeting of high-level officers of the fisheries department was held recently to identify a financial institution for this. Tamil Nadu minister for fisheries and animal husbandry, Anita R. Radhakrishnan on Wednesday informed the state legislative Assembly that the department is to form an exclusive bank for the fishermen in the state.

The minister said the Chief Minister is keen that a primary cooperative bank be formed exclusively for the fishermen and that this has been a long-pending demand of lakhs of fishermen in the state.

Sources in the government told IANS that the Chief Minister had in interaction with the leaders of the fishermen association during his travel across coastal regions of the state come to know that the fishermen are in dire straits due to overdependence on private lenders. It may be noted that many nationalised banks do not provide loans to fishermen who have to approach them for the purchase of fishing nets, outboard engines, and other materials required for professional mechanised fishing.

With the nationalised banks refusing to provide loans, most of the fishermen find themselves trapped in the loans provided by private lenders. Tamil Nadu fishermen association leader, J. Jesuadasan while speaking to IANS said, "The government announcing an exclusive bank for fishermen is welcome. The government must initiate proceedings at a faster pace and commence the operations at the earliest. This will be of huge help to the battered fishermen of Tamil Nadu who are in dire straits having fallen prey to the powerful finance sharks and it is turning into an ever ending trap."

Eighty-four fishermen from Tamil Nadu are languishing in Sri Lankan jails after they were apprehended by the Sri Lankan Naval authorities for crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) and venturing into the island nation's waters. The custody of fishermen and their mechanised vessels has led to the families of fishermen falling easy prey to the financial sharks and the announcement of the government of a fishermen's bank is being looked upon in a positive light by the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu."

### **Tamil Nadu: Annual fishing ban for east coast from April 15**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/annual-fishing-ban-for-east-coast-from-april-15/article65312234.ece>

"With the annual fishing ban for the east coast announced for a duration of 61 days from April 15 to June 14, the Fisheries Department has directed all mechanised boats on this side to return to the shore.

Sources in the department said that in Kasimedu, there were 914 mechanised boats that fish using trawl and gill nets and they have been asked to return by 11.50 p.m. on April 13 or otherwise be charge-sheeted for returning late.

"If they come in late, a fine will be imposed or their diesel subsidy be cut," an official explained. Mechanised boats that are supposed to be of length between 12 metres and 24 metres, get a diesel subsidy for 1,800 litres a month."

### **Tamil Nadu: Ennore is a case study in climate recklessness and environmental casteism**

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/tamil-nadu-s-ennore-case-study-climate-recklessness-and-environmental-casteism-162728>

"On April 12, the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) is scheduled to conduct a public hearing for state-owned electricity utility TANGEDCO's proposal to set up the Ennore Thermal Power Station (ETPS), a 660 MW coal-fired thermal power plant in Ennore in north Chennai. Coming up in a state where the government is talking up its commitment to combating climate change and social injustice, its insistence on pushing ETPS in an already over-polluted region exposes the yawning gap that the government needs to span to actually walk its talk on both counts. Here's why.

Even after the racial epithet "Black Town" in reference to north Chennai was dropped post-independence, this predominantly working class region remains a site of structural environmental and social discrimination. The proposed power plant falls within the Ennore-Manali industrial

area, a patchwork of localised toxic hotspots within north Chennai's polluted airshed. Ennore's cluster of thermal power plants has 3,300 MW of coal-burning capacity; of this, TANGEDCO operates 1,800 MW and NTPC-owned NTECL Vallur operates 1,500 MW.

Two more TANGEDCO projects totalling 2,120 MW are at an advanced state of completion, and two projects of 1,320 MW capacity are in the pre-licensing stage. TANGEDCO's ETPS (expansion) is one of the latter two; ETPS (replacement) is the other. If all plans materialise despite local opposition, the Ennore cluster will be home to 7,740 MW of coal-burning power plants. Then, Chennai will have the dubious distinction of hosting the largest capacity of carbon-spewing coal power plants among any metropolitan region in the world.

That is not all. North Chennai is home to a 10 million tonne/year oil refinery, 36 large, red category petrochemical and other factories, and the city's largest garbage dump. Taken together, the Ennore-Manali region contains the densest concentration of fossil-fuel industries in south India.

Demographically, north Chennai is also home to the densest concentration of marginalised communities in the Metropolitan area. According to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report for the ETPS (expansion) project, more than 37% of the population in the study area is from Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe or Most Backward Communities. It is no coincidence that such a high concentration of dirty industries is located in this region. This is modern untouchability, or as social scientist MSS Pandian puts it "caste by other means".

Industries in north Chennai operate in a regulatory vacuum. In November 2020, Chennai Climate Action Group, a youth-led initiative, published a report titled 'Poison in the Air' that analysed real-time emission data from the smokestacks of six large polluting industries, including TANGEDCO's North Chennai Thermal Power Station (NCTPS), NTECL, CPCL's oil refinery, Madras Fertilisers Ltd, Tamil Nadu Petroproducts Ltd and Madras Petrochemical Ltd. Taken together, the six were operating in violation of prescribed air pollution norms for nearly 60% of the year in 2019. The fact that the data was available with and sourced from the TNPCB using Right to Information exposes the agency's ineptitude as a regulator.

The report triggered suo motu action by the National Green Tribunal, which constituted a Joint Committee comprising senior officials of the Union environment ministry, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and TNPCB, and a scientist from Anna University. Buried in the report are two key findings:

1. Ground-level Particulate Matter (PM) pollution due to emissions from NCTPS' Stage I power plant alone exceeded the carrying capacity of the area in the vicinity of the plant.

2. Ground-level sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) pollution from emissions from CPCL's oil refinery exceeded the carrying capacity of the area in the vicinity of the plant.

The carrying capacity of an airshed for an air pollutant, say PM 10 or SO<sub>2</sub>, is the maximum emission (or the natural limit) of that air pollutant that can be released from all sources into the airshed such that these emissions do not lead to concentrations of that pollutant in excess of local ambient air quality standards.

The Joint Committee's report finds that the carrying capacity for PM 10 has been exhausted just from the emissions from NCTPS's Stage I, and for SO<sub>2</sub>/NO<sub>2</sub> by emissions from CPCL. The cumulative impact of pollution from other industries or the movement of heavy vehicles to and from the port and factories was not even considered.

TNPCB claims to have issued notices demanding "environmental compensation" of more than Rs 8 crore from the six industries. But none has paid up. Even if they do, the compensation will not reach the victims of the pollution. Rather it will be paid to the account of TNPCB that allowed the pollution in the first place.

SO<sub>2</sub> and dust or PM pollution are serious health hazards. SO<sub>2</sub> is an acidic gas that irritates the lining of the nose, throat and lungs, and can worsen existing respiratory illnesses, and heart disease. PM pollution is linked to various kinds of cancers, reduced lung function, cardiovascular and respiratory disorders, and an overall reduction in life expectancy.

Curiously, TANGEDCO's EIA for the proposed ETPS plant also confirms the over-polluted state of the local airshed. According to the EIA, PM 10 levels recorded in all seven residential areas – Ennore, Athipattu, Sivagami Nagar, Vallur, Ponniamman Nagar, Ernavur village and Manali New Town, and 2 industrial sites, including within the proposed ETPS site – exceeded safe levels.

Earlier this month, a report of a Joint Experts Committee (JEC) set up by the National Green Tribunal (SZ) in a case (OA 8 of 2016) filed by an Ennore fisherman appeared on the tribunal's website. This committee looked into the pollution – particularly coal ash leaks – caused by TANGEDCO's NCTPS. The high-level committee included Santha Sheela Nair, IAS (retd) as chairperson, senior officials from the CPCB and TNPCB, Dr Balaji Narasimhan, hydrologist, IIT-Madras, Dr Indumathi Nambi, environmental scientist, IIT-Madras, eminent botanist Dr D Narasimhan, restoration ecologist Dr Jayashree Vencatesan, and Dr Deepak Samuel, a marine biologist from the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management.

The report's findings reveal the depth of the pollution and health crisis already underway in

north Chennai. Unlike the detached and often substandard reports submitted by committees dominated by regulatory authorities, the JEC's report relies on and narrates the experiences of members during field visits and interactions with local residents, and draws from detailed investigations by scientific members of the committee.

A sample of extracts from the JEC's observations from the field visit, public consultation and findings are reproduced below:

From the Site Visit: The JEC visited the ash-contaminated sites by road on 30.12.2021. A site visit report is annexed. [Annexure 3] However, we also wish to register our observations not merely as unemotional observers, but also at a human level.

“The visit brought home to all committee members the harsh reality of the life of local residents. The committee's exposure to ash-choked neighbourhood, though brief, was distressful. Visibility was poor due to the dust in the air. Many committee members experienced breathing difficulty after some time there and eye irritation. The sheer physical discomfort in the brief period the committee spent there deeply impacted us as it made us realise that this is a 24/7 phenomenon for people living here.”

“The committee's own observations that polluters have polluted and continue to pollute with impunity were repeated by members of the public who were openly cynical of this committee and voiced their fears of this also being just another “eye-wash.”

“Pollution is reported to be the main cause of illness in the region. NCTPS was identified as a major cause of air pollution, and the region is a hotspot of pollution due to the concentration of power plants and other polluting industries. Children and women are particularly affected, and gynaecological problems were particularly reported by respondents. . . They expressed concern that more and more polluting industries are proposed to be located in Ennore unmindful of the prevailing health crisis.” Adults face a high cancer and non-cancer risk due to cadmium and lead exposure.

Cancer and non-cancer risk for children is much higher due to exposure to cadmium, lead and copper. Compared to an acceptable cancer risk norm of 1 in a million, cancer risk for children due to exposure to these pollutants is a 1000 times higher. Wetlands choked, contaminated by coal ash More than 56 lakh tonnes of coal ash is spread over the riverbed, with flyash deposits ranging in depth from 1 ft to 8 ft. Natural drainage patterns have been considerably altered due to fly ash pond construction and ash contamination. This will have an impact on local hydrology and flooding.

Surface sediments are heavily contaminated with levels of cadmium, chromium, copper, lead, nickel and zinc well in excess of safe levels as per Canadian sediment quality guideline for protection of aquatic life. Loss of wetlands The Ennore wetlands studied by JEC has shrunk from 855.69 ha in 1996 to 277.92 ha in 2022. Meanwhile,

Several fish species have either disappeared or diminished. These include: White prawn, black prawn, sand prawn, tiger prawn, green crab (*Scylla serrata*), *Flotosus canius*, *Mugil cephalus*, Silver Biddy (*Gerres* sp.), sand whiting (*Sillago sihama*), *Terrapon jarbua*, sea bass (*Lates calcarifer*), and other fishes locally called Kalavan, Udupathi, Panna, Oodan.

Damage to the river and reduction in fish catch has drastically affected fisher livelihoods, including of women fishers from SC/ST community who hand-pick shrimp and crab from the river bed.

The impacts of pollution on livelihoods and health has eroded the economic status of affected people due to lost income, lost work days and increased health care

On April 4, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) third Working Group released a report that unequivocally declared that no new coal plants can be built anywhere in the world if we are to have any hope of keeping global temperature rise below 1.5 degree Celsius. This is the threshold beyond which the costs of adapting to climate change will become prohibitively expensive and yield diminishing returns. The window of opportunity to keep climate disasters within manageable limits is closing fast, and will have closed completely by 2030 – just 8 years away.

IPCC's reports – this one on mitigation and the earlier one on adaptation – spotlight the increased risk exposure of marginalised communities and the poor. Both between nations and within countries, it is the poorer nations and people – those that contributed the least to the climate crisis – who will be worst affected by the effects of climate change. The report's prescriptions for Climate Resilient Development situate equity and social justice concerns at the centre of all interventions, and warn that measures taken either in the name of development or climate adaptation that aggravate inequity and injustice will defeat global efforts to contain runaway climate change and meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Climate change manifests itself in the form of rising sea levels, increased heat stress, intense rain events and droughts, salinity intrusion and ocean desertification due to warming seas. Coastal wetlands like the Ennore estuary and Kosasthalai's backwaters are natural shock absorbers that mitigate flooding during heavy rains or tidal surges, check salinity intrusion and keep the oceans healthy by restocking it with fish. ETPS will aggravate the already degraded state of the Ennore wetlands and nearshore seas.

The ETPS project envisages a coal ash dump inside the river, and a coal conveyor corridor cutting through the already degraded estuary and mangrove-fringed islands.

Each day, more than 170 million (17 crore) litres of seawater will be drawn using giant pumps that will suck in marine life along with water. What life does not get killed by getting trapped by the filters fitted at the pipe-heads will be killed by dousing with biocides in the intake water storage tanks.

More than 120 million litres of hot wastewater will be discharged daily into the ocean. Marine organisms are hypersensitive to temperature changes. Such discharge in an already warming ocean will create localised marine deserts in the nearshore waters, and further hurt the artisanal fisher economy.

For all the controversy it has generated, ETPS does not even address an electricity shortage. In 2019-20, all state-run thermal power plants operated at a plant load factor of 56%, according to the government's submission to the state Assembly. That means the existing plants remained idle for the equivalent of 160 out of 365 days\*.

The ETPS project is a reckless proposal because of its global climate implications and because of what it does to local communities. Just in Ennore and between the two power plants under construction and the two that are in pre-licensing stage, the state government is investing Rs 30,000 crore in climate-changing, inequity-aggravating activities. Meanwhile, for all of Tamil Nadu, the government has announced a Rs 500 crore climate mission and a Rs 100 crore wetland mission. For Tamil Nadu to stay true to its declared commitment to social justice and combating climate change, this imbalance has to be rapidly set right. Abandoning the ETPS proposal and investing in improving local health, health care and the health of the wetlands would be a step in that direction.

### **Tamil Nadu: Mechanised boat fishermen association members seek repatriation**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2022/apr/08/mechanised-boat-fishermenassociation-members-in-tamil-nadu-seek-repatriation-2439372.html>

"Mechanised boat fishermen association members on Thursday demanded the Union and State governments to take appropriate measures to release the 12 fishermen, whose judicial custody was extended to May 12 by a Sri Lankan court.

""We thought the fishers will be released today, but the Kilinochchi Court has extended their custody and sought Rs 1 crore surety for providing bail,"" said P Jesuraja, president of the association. The association has decided to stage a protest on April 19 if the governments fail to take steps to bring back the fishermen from the island nation."

## **Tamil Nadu: Plea in SC seeks directions to permit use of purse seine nets by TN fishermen within 5K radius**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2022/mar/30/plea-in-sc-seeks-directions-to-permit-use-of-purse-seine-nets-by-tn-fishermen-within-5k-radius-2435959.html>

"A plea has been moved in the Supreme Court seeking directions to the Centre and the state government to permit fishermen of Tamil Nadu to catch fish using purse seine nets within 5K radius and for no action or disturbance to those catching fish using purse seine nets beyond the restricted area or above 12 nautical miles.

“Petitioners and their family members across the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu have been affected by the ban on the use of purse seine nets by the fisheries department. Especially from Cuddalore, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam, entire fishermen families are starving and they were urging the government many times to roll back the ban which is affecting their livelihood. Purse-seine fishing in open water is generally considered to be an efficient form of fishing. It has no contact with the seabed and can have low levels of by catch. Purse seines can also be used to catch fish congregating around fish aggregating devices. This fishing method can result in higher levels of It has been submitted by the petitioner Gnanasekar and others that the Ministry of Agriculture had appointed a committee to review the duration of the ban period and suggest further measures to strengthen conservation and management aspects. The technical committee submitted their report in 2014.

They have contended that the report of the technical committee to review the duration of the ban period had recommended that ""Considering the quantum of investment in purse seines and the lack of alternate gears to catch small pelagics, a total ban on purse seines may not be economically advisable. Added to this, the two gears are relatively energy efficient and leave a low carbon foot-print.”

The petitioners state that other coastal states have not banned the use of purse seine nets except some restrictions. ""Traditional fishermen of the fishing community of Tamil Nadu have been deprived of catching the pelagic fish as such their earnings becomes a meager level by which they have been suffering from maintaining their livelihood and also they have failed to provide their children education, nutrition and any economic interest and development,"" they added.

## **Tamil Nadu: With fuel prices on boil, seafood prices surge by 50pc at Kasimedu**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/City/2022/03/28043513/1360116/With-fuel-prices-on-boil-seafood-prices-surge-by-50pc-vpf>

"With the surge in diesel prices and less than 20 trawlers venturing into the sea, the rates of seafood has doubled at Kasimedu fishing harbour on Sunday with big demand and supply gap. Fishermen noted that at least Rs 2 lakh was spent on the maintenance and fuel, yet they face a loss.

"With the annual fishing ban to begin from April 15, only less than 50 per cent of boats went for fishing, of which around 20 trawlers returned on Sunday. We caught at least 30 tonnes of seafood, so the prices doubled," said M Rajan, a fisherman and wholesale trader at Kasimedu fishing harbour.

Fishermen with no proper catch in Tamil Nadu, go to Andaman and Orissa for fishing. Nowadays, the trawlers venture only once in a month while it was twice or thrice in a month and earlier.

"We didn't have brisk sales as the prices increased by 50 per cent. Generally, the retailers in the city purchase at least 50 kg of fish per head every weekend. But with the price surge, they bought only 25 kg of seafood. Also, the fish markets in South Chennai receive fish from various districts and states so the prices would be cheaper compared to here. So, the customers buy fish there. We spend at least two - three lakh on the maintenance, yet we don't make any profit," said Prabhakaran R, another wholesale trader at the market.

Seer fish (vangiram) was sold for Rs 800 - Rs 900 per kg, red snapper (Sankara) and anchovy (nethili) for Rs 400 - Rs 450 per kg, black pomfret Rs 400 per kg, prawns Rs 500 per kg, and squid Rs 350 - Rs 400 per kg."

**Tamil Nadu: Centre to take up dredging in Pulicat lake to facilitate the local fishermen at a cost of 48 crore**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/amaravati/centre-to-take-up-dredging-in-pulicat-lake/articleshowprint/90412481.cms>

"Centre has agreed to take up dredging in Pulicat lake to facilitate the local fishermen at a cost of 48 crore. Union fisheries minister Purushottam Rupala on Wednesday told a delegation of YSRC MPs that Centre will extend all possible support to the state. MPs requested the minister to grant financial assistance for construction of fishing harbours. They submitted a representation to the union minister with nine demands.

Speaking to the media in New Delhi, MP Mopidevi Venkata Ramana said they have requested the Centre to extend financial assistance for construction of nine fishing harbours taken up by the state government. He said the state government has taken up harbours works at 1,509 crore. He

said the Union minister had positively responded to their request to set up Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA) to provide support to the marine exports from the state.

He said the state government is willing to allocate land to set up CIBA in AP. He added they have requested the minister to introduce special insurance policy for aqua farmers as three lakh farmers are dependent on the aquaculture. He said that 2.16 lakh hectares are under aquaculture in AP. ""While entire country earned 43,000 crore through foreign exchange through marine exports, AP alone contributed 16,000 crore per year. AP is one of the biggest producers of marine products helping the Centre earn huge profits,"" said Mopidevi."

### **Tamil Nadu: Potential offshore wind project in the Gulf of Mannar leaves fishers anxious**

<https://india.mongabay.com/2022/03/potential-offshore-wind-project-in-the-gulf-of-mannar-leaves-fishers-anxious/>

"A protected geographical location between the southern tip of India and the west coast of Sri Lanka, the Gulf of Mannar is a sensitive ecological zone as it is home to rare species of flora and fauna. The area is, however, also the spot where offshore wind power projects are being planned – a move that has sparked concerns among the local community which depends on fishing for its livelihood.

The northern sector of GoM is the first marine biosphere reserve of India. According to the Tamil Nadu government, the Gulf of Mannar has about 4,223 species of flora and fauna. The world-renowned pearl oyster banks in the region supplement the rich marine biodiversity and continue to draw the attention of not only conservationists, but also tourists, researchers, and historians. To imagine giant turbines in this seascape is hard for the fishers of the region.

In February 2022, the National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE) issued a tender for the supply and installation of a floating LiDAR buoy which will collect data such as the wind speed and direction, sea surface temperatures and wave heights and directions for the Gulf of Mannar. The offshore wind project, however, will take some time as it is expected to be installed only once the data collection is done and required impact assessment studies are complete.

At present, wind power accounts for 40.12 gigawatts (GW) of the 106.3 GW installed capacity of renewable energy in India. By 2030, of the estimated 450 GW installed capacity, 140 GW is expected from wind power projects. However, with land increasingly becoming a scarce commodity, offshore wind projects are expected to play a crucial part in India's clean energy transition plans.

Though India is yet to establish an offshore wind power project, the global installed capacity of

offshore wind energy projects is about 35 GW and by 2030 it is expected to be about 270 GW, according to the Global Offshore Wind Report 2021. India has a target of 30 GW of offshore wind installations by 2030.

According to the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), more than 95 percent of commercially exploitable wind resources are concentrated in seven states – Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.

To add offshore wind projects to India's renewable energy mix, a knowledge hub called the Centre of Excellence for Offshore Wind and Renewable Energy, was recently set up by India and Denmark. This joint initiative between the Indian government's MNRE and the Danish Energy Agency (DEA) is aimed to create an enabling environment for offshore wind farms in India. Thus, it is no surprise that the Gulf of Mannar in Tamil Nadu has been chosen by this Centre as one of the most attractive and economically viable site areas for offshore wind in India. But before Tamil Nadu leads the offshore wind revolution it must face a fair share of challenges.

For generations, the fishers living in Dhanushkodi and the villages near the Gulf of Mannar have been practicing traditional fishing and pearl oyster collection. But their lives will change drastically in one way or another, very soon.

The local people fear that there are going to be huge cranes, heavy machinery and big turbines interrupting their occupation, even if it's temporary. "Ports are relatively smaller in size; need significant modification efforts for readiness to OWF (Offshore Wind Farm) installation," reads an important recommendation for Tamil Nadu from the Global Wind Energy which means that there is going to be a huge infrastructure change. However, the fishers believe that the wind turbines would mean permanent electricity for the area.

The fisherfolk of Dhanushkodi live close to the sea in huts owing to their occupation but have brick houses a few kilometres away. Over the past few years, most of them have installed solar panels over their huts and are now used to meeting their energy needs with a clean source. Although the knowledge that offshore wind is a clean energy resource gives them happiness, they fear that it might threaten their occupation.

"Solar energy has been very useful for us. If solar technologies are improved, we will get to run more appliances and that will be enough. Our children are able to study with the lights we have, and we feel secure. However, there are complications with the wind turbines. We can't tell yet, how it will alter the seascape and where the turbines are going to be installed. It could get really challenging when we are pursuing an already difficult profession," M. Kodikumar, a fisherman

from Dhanushkodi, told Mongabay-India, as his wife Eeswari, displayed the TV and lights run by solar power in their hut...

### **Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu: Help resolve fishermen conflict**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/amaravati/help-resolve-andhra-pradesh-and-tamil-nadu-fishermen-conflict-mp-m-gurumoorthy/articleshow/90316083.cms>

"Tirupati MP M Gurumoorthy has sought the Centre's intervention to end the perennial conflicts between the fishermen communities of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu over fishing related activities in the Bay of Bengal in Nellore district bordering the neighbouring state.

Gurumoorthy, who accompanied representatives of the fishermen community and inspected fishing spots near Rayadaruvu village recently, has written a letter to Union fisheries minister Parshottam Rupala, pointing out that the Centre's inaction is leading to conflicts between the fishermen communities of the two states which is the second largest brackish water lagoon in the country after Chilka lake in Odisha, is located on the east coast with an extent of 461 sq km, out of which 400 sq km fall in AP. There are about 20 fishermen habitations in the state and about 24 fishermen colonies in Tamil Nadu, who all depend on fishing in Pulicat lake.

While the southern portion of the lake, which fall in Tamil Nadu, is deep with abundant water throughout the year, the northern side of the lake in AP is shallow and the water dries up due to sandbar formation. The conflicts usually happen between March and June every year when AP fishermen venture into Tamil Nadu side to fish.

Following an appeal by the AP government to the Centre to initiate steps to open the sea mouth near Rayadaruvu village, a central committee was constituted by the Central Water Commission with members from the CWC, the National Institute of Ocean Technology in Chennai and the Integrated Coastal & Marine Area Management in Chennai to conduct relevant studies and submit a detailed project report.

But despite the report suggesting the sea mouth at Rayadaruvu village to be opened by taking up dredging activities, no concrete measures have been taken up by the Centre so far, Gurumoorthy rued, adding that the Centre's inaction is hurting the livelihood of thousands of AP fishermen.

### **Tamil Nadu: From fish waste to community wealth**

<https://hakaimagazine.com/article-short/from-fish-waste-to-community-wealth>

"Under the simmering heat of the morning sun, fishers in Kasimedu harbor in Chennai, the capital of India's southeastern state of Tamil Nadu, busily sort their haul caught early that morning. They put aside the best fish to sell at the nearby market and toss anything rotten or unwanted onto the beach. Just up the lane, muscular butchers prepare the fish for market, chopping away inedible parts, periodically scraping clean their bloody butcher blocks into nearby plastic crates, which are dumped on the beach so the rising tide can do the cleanup.

As the stalls open and the crowds descend, the volume in the Kasimedu market—Chennai’s largest and one of the country’s oldest fish markets—rises. Vendors try to outshout one another as they vie for customers. The noise increases and so does the heat and stench of the fish waste cast onto the shoreline with its attendant mosquitoes, flies, and stray dogs.

The fishers and vendors at Kasimedu are not alone in their tactic to dispose of unwanted fish. Leaving fish waste to rot on the beach to be dealt with by scavengers and the rising tide is tradition in many of India’s fishing communities. The problem is, it rarely works. Rotten fish parts stay afloat only to be deposited again ashore, says Kennit Raj, a local fisher. “The deposits rot further to impart a stink,” he says, “and [this] contributes to the stigma associated with fisher communities in India.”

A large population, an increasing demand for fish, a warm (and warming) climate, and the lack of action by local pollution control boards has led to an overflow of fish debris along India’s 7,500-kilometer-long coastline. To tackle the problem, the country’s Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA) under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has teamed up with local people to turn this waste into wealth.

“Fish waste is of major concern in a densely populated country like India,” says Debasis De, a principal scientist and team leader of the fish waste to wealth program at CIBA. “It renders the coast unhygienic and uninhabitable for fisher communities.” Under the Swachh Bharat (Clean India) campaign, CIBA approached fishers near Kasimedu with a plan to use the agency’s innovative technology to convert fish waste into fertilizer products.

Kennit and his wife, Velangani, both in their 40s, signed up along with 150 other fishers from across the country. CIBA provided training and the equipment to convert fish debris into two value-added products: PlanktonPlus, used in aquaculture to boost healthy plankton, and HortiPlus, organic manure for horticulture. The training and equipment were provided to the Rajas free of charge since they were deemed to be from a marginalized community. (CIBA offers the training free to anyone, but charges US \$750 for the equipment to those who can afford it.) CIBA works most directly with aquaculture farmers, but saw the waste to wealth program as a way to benefit local people, clean up the local environment, and help boost aquaculture efforts. “We deal in aquaculture,” says Mahalakshmi. P, principal scientist and a member of the core team at CIBA, “but also closely work with welfare activities for fishers in Kasimedu.”

The fish-processing units provided by CIBA are affordable and easy to operate and clean, explains Mahalakshmi, providing access to fishers from low-income families who cannot afford fancy equipment nor interpret complicated instruction manuals. CIBA also provides a patented

enzyme, which they say is more efficient than similar products in use. “We achieve 100 percent utilization with nil wastage,” says Debasis, one of the innovators of the technology, explaining that, unlike other products, CIBA’s “proteolytic enzyme” also digests bones and fat.

Once the Rajs received their training and equipment in 2018 and found a place to set up the unit, they were ready to launch their enterprise. First step? Collect the fish waste. Although private entrepreneurs gather fish waste from beaches to recycle it into fish meal and dog food, there’s still no shortage of waste. There is tonnes of debris around fish markets and shores, explains Kennit, as he dons blue gloves and a mask and prepares to collect fish waste along with Murugan, a fisherman who is doubling as his driver. “This additional income helps in running my family,” says Murugan. The pair often work together, collecting fish waste in plastic crates, sometimes in an autorickshaw and other times in a mini truck.

“We collect fish waste from 10 or more fish markets in a 20-kilometers radius around Kasimedu fish market,” says Kennit. For each kilogram of fish waste collected, he pays Murugan \$0.07 [five rupees] and covers the cost of fuel.

They deliver the fish to Kennit’s processing unit near Kasimedu harbor and fire it up. The unit resembles an oversized funnel and operates something like a large food processor. The fish waste is ground through the sharp metal blades and emerges as a dark-brown mushy concentrate that is mixed in huge tubs with the CIBA enzyme solution. Then we seal the lids tightly, says Kennit, and leave it to settle and ferment for three or four days.

The final stage is to filter the slurry and separate it into the two end products: the liquid fertilizer, PlanktonPlus, which needs no further treatment; and the solid, HortiPlus, which is sun-dried to obtain odorless manure. About 50 kilograms of fish waste yields around 40 kilograms of liquid fertilizer and one kilogram of powdered manure, explains Velangani. The products are then packaged and sold to retailers.

When they first started with the project in 2018, Kennit and Velangani worked a fish-waste processing unit as part of a 15-member team put together with assistance from the Nambikkai Fish Farmers Group, of which they are members. For the past three years, they’ve operated their own unit near their home in Nambikkai Nagar. This has greatly helped in cleaning up the nearby beach and fish markets that would otherwise stink of rotten fish and has helped supplement the incomes of other fisher families like Murugan’s.

Kennit and Velangani’s work benefits them and their community, and it has not gone unnoticed by the government, which recently gave them an award for their efforts to curb coastal pollution and to create jobs in coastal communities. Inspired, with CIBA’s assistance, Kennit and

Velangani customized a larger and more efficient processing unit that can grind up to 1,000 kilograms of fish waste within a couple of hours, unlike the smaller units that grind just 100 kilograms in about the same amount of time. And to accommodate it, they moved into a bigger space in Kasimedu fishing harbor, 10 kilometers from their original location, and employed a small team to help them.

“We used to collect approximately 250 to 350 kilograms of fish waste during weekdays, and 800 to 1,000 kilograms on weekends,” Kennit says, “and then we realized a need to customize the plant to accommodate larger quantities of fish waste in less time.”

The move away from a residential area was welcomed by local people. “Our neighbors started complaining about the intolerable smell,” says Velangani, an ironic situation given that beaches polluted with rotting fish instigated the project.

Along with the odor concerns, another challenge for fishers keen to participate is that each processing unit requires at least 75 square meters of space to operate efficiently, and there are storage requirements for the drums of finished fertilizer. This sort of space is a luxury in many parts of India, yet CIBA still sees the technology as a win-win. Debasis roots for the project, saying that it has helped clean up fish markets across the country and provides alternative livelihoods to coastal communities. It’s “a concept of the circular economy,” he says.

Kennit agrees and has seen firsthand the benefits of the small business and the end products. “HortiPlus has boosted the growth of coconut and okra back in my village,” he says, adding that “regular users of these fertilizers are happy with [their] quality and results.”

The pandemic and intermittent lockdowns in India curbed aquaculture and fishing, and thus the production of fish-waste fertilizer. Many members of Kennit’s team left to take odd jobs elsewhere when fishing came to a standstill, leaving him with just seven people and a surplus of unsold stock. But he remains optimistic and has plans to install a few more processing units along the coast of Tamil Nadu, providing additional income to others in the fishing community. He vouches for the prospects of the enterprise and the monetary security it’s brought his family, which includes two teenage daughters. “The sea has been our source of living and we are nothing without it,” says Kennit. “My wife and I are determined to leave it clean for future generations.”

**Tamil Nadu: Thoothukudi fishermen seek nod for ‘stay fishing’**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/thoothukudi-fishermen-seek-nod-for-stay-fishing/article65217440.ece>

"Demanding the Union and State governments to immediately accord permission for 'stay fishing,' fishermen, along with their family members, resorted to a sit-in strike here on Saturday. Police and fisheries officials arrived at the spot and pacified them and asked them to disperse. However, after an hour-long persuasion, the fishermen agreed to give up the stir after the officials promised to take up their grievance with the government through the district administration.

Speaking to reporters, Mechanised Boat Owners Welfare Association president Xavier Vaaz said that there were 250 fishermen in Thoothukudi. When the government had given permission for boatowners and fishermen in other coastal districts for 'stay fishing,' it had not been extended to fishermen in Thoothukudi.

With 'stay fishing,' the fishermen could save money spent on fuel. Every time they ventured into the sea, they spent at least 1,000 litres of diesel. Instead of returning the same evening, overnight stay in the sea would help them catch more fish, he said and added that only when a boat had a catch worth over ₹1.25 lakh, the fishermen would stand to benefit. For reasons not known, the governments were hesitant to allow 'stay fishing.' In almost every other place, the fishermen who used to venture into the sea on a particular day would return ashore the next day evening.

However, in Thoothukudi, the mechanised boats were forced to return the same evening. There is consternation among Thoothukudi fishermen over this bias as it limits their earning capacity, another fishermen leader said. The Fisheries Department officials assured the agitators that that they would take up their grievance with the government and come back with a favourable solution following which they dispersed. Thoothukudi Town DSP Ganesh and team ensured that there was no untoward incident."

### **Tamil Nadu: Artisanal fishing takes toll on coral reef conservation efforts**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2022/mar/11/artisanal-fishing-takes-toll-on-coral-reef-conservation-efforts-2428805.html>

"Artisanal fishing activities that are linked to livelihood of fishermen have rendered little success to the conservation efforts of coral reefs at the Gulf of Mannar. An analysis of fishing practices of Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve conducted by Thoothukudi Fisheries College and Research Institute (FC&RI) reveals that coastline along the bay has witnessed an increase of 34 per cent of population, which translates to 57 per cent increase in the number of mechanised trawlers and 71 per cent increase in vallam (motorised country boat) since 1990's. Many farmers and palm climbers have also turned into fishing, the report says.

Marine researchers told TNIE after two of the 21 islets of Gulf of Mannar - Vallanguchalli and

Poovarasampatti - submerged, the conservation projects have technically been enhanced. Moreover, 29 per cent of the reef area has been degraded due to various anthropogenic and natural factors. Nearly 20 per cent of the seagrass beds spanning to an extent of 152 square kilometres in the Gulf of Mannar region, have been damaged so far, they said. ""The population of dugong, also called as sea cow, an umbrella species of the region, that relies on the seagrass meadows has drastically declined owing to the destruction of seagrass,"" they pointed out. Among many of the artisanal fishing practices in vogue is the shore seine operation (kara valai), in which a group of nearly 20 fishermen manually bottom trawl from the shore. Along with fishes, it sweeps the sea grasses, dead corals, and juvenile fish away and disturbs all benthic flora and fauna.

A marine researcher, K Diraviam Raj, in his study published in 'Indian Journal of Marine Sciences' said an average of 67.76 per cent of the catch using shore seine nets are found to be juveniles. Similar to the shore seine operation is the push-net operation that is practised off the shore, he added. The conch diving that is practised only in Thoothukudi causes damage to the sea bed, as the divers dig the bed haphazardly for sunken chunks which has good market value in the fancy industry, the researchers say.

The researchers said the promotion of *Kappaphycus alvarezii* along the calm waters of Gulf of Mannar is becoming a grave threat to the coral reefs. *Kappaphycus alvarezii* spreads over the water surface and hinders photosynthesis process in seagrasses. It also leads to coral mortality. These consequences damage fish habitat that result in migration of fishes. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) had categorised *Kappaphycus alvarezii* in the 'red list', he said.

Referring to a study conducted on the bio-invasion of the *Kappaphycus alvarezii* in Krusadai island, the marine biologists said it destroyed over 1.2 square kilometres of coral colonies within two years. The researchers said the dependence of the people on the resources should be reduced through alternative income generation and livelihood security programmes, so that conservation efforts could bear fruit.

State secretary of fishermen association attached to AITUC, CR Senthilvel, said such pre-historic practices exist only in the Gulf of Mannar region. The damages caused are low when compared to the magnitude of the bottom trawling by mechanised vessels, he said. These fishermen remain poor because they have little access to advanced technology. ""So, the government should help them find alternative livelihood programmes related to the fishing industry,"" he said.

Seeking anonymity, an official of Gulf of Mannar Forest Biosphere told TNIE trap fishing has

greatly reduced after 2016. ""The government is promoting alternative livelihood programmes including palmyra value added products, manufacturing fish pickle, karupatti for fishermen through village marine conservation and eco-development committees being operated from 252 villages and 271 women self help groups functioning in coastal villages. These committees were provided a fund of `6 crore during the fiscal 2021-22,"" he said adding these alternative livelihood measures will yield good results in another few years.

Shore seine fishing, Trap fishing, Spear fishing, Conch diving, Push-net operation, Poaching of ornamental fish, Cultivation of exotic weeds such as *Kappaphycus alvarezii*."

### **Kerala and Tamil Nadu: 41 fishermen detained in Seychelles, Indonesia**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2022/mar/10/41-indian-fishermendetained-in-seychelles-indonesia-2428461.html>

"As many as 41 fishermen, from Kanniyakumari district and other states, were detained in Seychelles and Indonesia on Monday. Sources said 33 fishermen from Kanniyakumari, Kerala and other states, in three boats, had ventured into the sea from Kochi harbour on February 22. They were detained in Seychelles. "The fishermen were in three boats- *Dono*, *Infant Jesus* and *St Snabaga Arulappar*. The owners of the boats were from Chinnathurai and Poothurai in Kanniyakumari district," said International Fishermen Development Trust President P Justin Antony.

Justin said due to bad weather their boats had drifted away from the international borders and they were detained by Seychelles authorities on March 7. The fishermen were kept on the boats and the captains of the boats were taken to the police station for questioning. He urged the Indian authorities and the Indian embassy in Seychelles to take efforts for their release. In this regard, Justin sent a memorandum to Indian authorities, including the Minister for External Affairs and Indian Embassy in Seychelles on Wednesday.

Following his memorandum, Indian Embassy in Seychelles authorities replied, "High Commission of India in Mahe, Seychelles is providing assistance to the fishermen from 07 March 2022. Seychelles authorities are giving food and water to the fishermen in presence of our Consular Staff. We are also assisting the fishermen with communication. Official procedure/investigation by the Seychelles authority has been initiated".

Meanwhile, South Asian Fishermen Fraternity (SAFF) general secretary Father Churchil said 8 fishermen from Tamil Nadu and Kerala were detained by Indonesian authorities. He said they had gone for deep-sea fishing in a mechanized boat 'Blessing' from Port Blair Fisheries Harbour. They were arrested by Indonesian authorities on March 7 for crossing the Indonesian sea border

and for fishing in Rusa Island, Andaman. The fishermen were detained for legal proceedings. SAFF sent a memorandum to the Indian authorities to take steps for their release."

### **Tamil Nadu: Unseasonal rain fishing ban drowns hopes of fishermen**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2022/mar/04/tamil-nadu-unseasonal-rain-fishing-ban-drowns-hopes-of-fishermen-2426280.html>

"The ban on fishing for four days due to a rare weather event in March has affected fishermen in the coastal delta at a "critical juncture." Tamil nadAfter the Meteorological Department issued alerts about the depression in the Bay of Bengal and resultant rain over the next four days, the Fisheries Department prevented all fishermen in the coastal delta from venturing into the sea and told them to berth all boats at harbours and fish landing centres.

Traditional fishermen in Vedaranyam, who had to regularly deal with the Sri Lankan Navy conflict, have been thrown off the momentum. K Saravanan, a fisherman from Kodiyakarai, said, "The season of abundance in Palk Strait is just weeks from getting over. We were getting sardines which have good demand. Stopping us now for a few days will have a huge impact on our livelihood."

S Amirthalingam, a fisherman from Arukatuthurai, said, "This is the time we usually start travelling towards the east, from the shore. We were getting mackerels, which fetch a decent price. The rains are now stopping us from getting even that meagre business."

The unseasonal rain has equally affected mechanised boat fishermen. Trawlers and deep-sea fishing boats have been asked to stay put at harbours like Nagapattinam, Karaikal, Poompuhar and Pazhaiyar from March 3 to 6. The two-month annual fishing ban for mechanised boats is scheduled to start on April 15. So, taking away four days of fishing activity has also affected them.

"Our men would be busy in March before we call it a year in April. This month is the only time we get a decent amount of business, before the two-month fishing holiday. So, every day is important for us. The rains are affecting us in such a critical juncture," said K Ananthavelu, a mechanised boat owner from Akkaraipeetai."

### **Tamil Nadu: Nagapattinam-Tuticorin four-laning project to accord fillip to fish processing sector**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/nagapattinam-tuticorin-four-laning-project-to-accord-fillip-to-fish-processing-sector/article65056486.ece>

"The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) project to link Nagapattinam with Tuticorin under the 'Bharatmala' scheme of the Central government has raised much expectations among a section of fishers interested in value-addition and export of marine products. The Detailed Project Report is under preparation for four-laning of the stretch to a length of 330 km. The alignment for which land acquisition has to be carried out for 85% of the total requirement will begin once the DPR is approved, a senior NHAI official said. The project envisages connecting major sea ports. The connectivity to Tuticorin will be strengthened for fishers intending to derive better returns from value addition as travel time will be halved. Along the existing two-lane alignment that has several bends, the normal speed is 40 km per hour. Once the four-lane stretch is readied, travel speed could be accelerated to the extent of 100 km per hour, the official said. In all likelihood, the land acquisition could be carried out in a year's time and the first phase of the project to a length of about 100 km till Rameswaram from Tuticorin could be initiated during the next financial year, the sources said.

"The four-laning project will, no doubt, accord a thrust for fish processing activities in the region, V. Ramachandiran, president of Nagapattinam District, Small and Tiny Industries' Association, said. The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) has been exhorting fishers to go for value addition and exports, citing the global market potential. During 2020-21, India exported 11,49,510 metric tonnes of sea food worth 5.96 billion US Dollars. The Annual Report of MPEDA 2020-21 states that out of 30 different sea/air/land ports, Tuticorin Port's share of marine exports from the country was 4.11 percent in terms of tonnage, and 5.52 percent in terms of value during 2020-21. There are 44 manufacturer exporters and 46 merchant exporters under the purview of sub region division of MPEDA Tuticorin. Frozen Marine Products, Canned Marine Products, Freeze Dried Marine Products Live Marine Products, Dried Marine Products and Chilled Marine Products are exported from the Tuticorin Port.

### **Tamil Nadu: The never-ending problem of fishermen**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/explained-the-never-ending-problem-of-tamil-nadus-fishermen/article65048644.ece>

"The vexatious fisheries conflict in the Palk Bay between India and Sri Lanka, especially between Tamil Nadu and Northern Province, has again acquired intensity with the Sri Lankan Navy arresting 12 fishermen of Rameswaram and impounding two boats on Saturday on the charge of poaching in the territorial waters of Sri Lanka. On hearing this, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. K. Stalin wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday, pointing out that this was the "third such incident in two weeks and 41 fishermen and six fishing boats are in the custody of the Sri Lankan Navy". What are the factors that have led to the present round of the problem? More than illegal fishing, the method of fishing, as practised by the fishermen of Tamil Nadu, is the problem.

The fishermen of the southern State of India have been used to mechanised bottom trawling for long whereas the fisherfolk of the Northern Province, which has been extremely hit by a civil war that lasted more than 25 years, still adheres to conventional fishing. Besides, bottom trawling is banned in Sri Lanka. The last couple of weeks saw heightened tension in the region with the reported death of two Jaffna fishermen following “mid-sea clashes with their Tamil Nadu counterparts” on January 27 and 29 and the subsequent protest by scores of northern Sri Lankan fishermen. How many Tamil Nadu fishermen are still in Sri Lanka? Apart from 41 fishermen arrested this year, 47 fishermen, who were rounded up along with 21 others in December, are waiting for repatriation, despite having been released from custody. Unlike the set of 21 fishermen who had returned to Tamil Nadu, the 47 persons could not be repatriated as they had tested positive for COVID-19 and, since then, completed their mandatory quarantine period. What are the new dimensions to the problem? The move by the Sri Lankan authorities to go ahead with the reported auctioning of 140 impounded boats a week ago caused surprise and concern to the State government and the fishing folk alike.

This was because a team from Tamil Nadu, comprising officials of the State Fisheries Department and representatives of fishermen’s representatives, was supposed to go anytime now to Sri Lanka for finalising modalities on the disposal of 125 unsalvageable boats, which were said to have been berthed at Kiranchi, Karainagar, Kankesanthurai, Trincomalee and Thalaimannar naval bases. Due to the first two rounds of the COVID-19 pandemic, the visit could not take place earlier. In December 2021, the State government issued a revised order, approving the visit of the team.

The Ministry of External Affairs too had consented to the visit. When there were reports in sections of the media about the auction, the Indian High Commission in Colombo, in a release last week, referred to an existing bilateral understanding between the two governments on the matter and sought again “necessary clearance” from the Sri Lankan government for the visit by the team from Tamil Nadu. To confound the situation further, the Sri Lankan authorities have decided not to allow fishermen-devotees from Tamil Nadu to attend the annual festival of St. Antony’s Church, Katchatheevu, citing the pandemic as the reason. Mr. Stalin has written to External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, requesting him to urge Sri Lanka to enable the participation of the fishermen, who had been going to Katchatheevu for the festival for years. Sri Lanka’s Fisheries Minister Douglas Devananda, in an interview to this newspaper on February 9, said he had also requested President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to allow fishermen to take part in the festival as a “goodwill gesture.”

However, Mr. Devananda, who hails from the Northern Province, defended the decision of auctioning the boats as India had not yet provided assistance promised to the fishermen of the Province. At a virtual interaction arranged by the Sri Lankan Deputy High Commission in Chennai a week ago, the Minister discussed the problem with eight fishermen of Rameswaram

and Nagapattinam. What is the way forward? Deep-sea fishing, projected as an alternative method to the Palk Bay fishermen, is yet to gain currency among the intended beneficiaries in a big way. If the Centre gives additional incentives and concessions, there may be more takers than in the past. In the meantime, as suggested by Mr. Stalin in his latest letter to Mr. Modi, the Joint Working Group's meeting, at the level of officials of the two countries, and talks, at the level of fishermen, can find solutions to the long- pending problem that has been consuming energy and resources of the two countries.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishers hit as supply from other states goes up**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/City/2022/02/13021833/1343442/Fishers-hit-as-supply-from-other-states-goes-up.vpf>

"More supply coming in from neighbouring states and fall in footfall at the fishing harbour market affected fishermen in Kasimedu, who were hoping to earn a tidy profit during the weekend sale on Saturday. After almost a year, the market received 40 tonnes of seafood and witnessed brisk sale last week, which enthused the fishermen and traders alike. However, even though more than 100 boats ventured into the sea, the catch was only about 20 tonnes this time around, they rued. "We were expecting good business on the weekend. But more seafood stock arriving from Kerala and Andhra Pradesh impacted our sale," said Rajan K, a fisherman and wholesale trader at Kasimedu fishing harbour.

Meanwhile, the number of customers was also less during the day, which led to higher wastage that in turn prompted traders to increase the price. "The price of seafood surged by 20 per cent, and are likely to remain the same even on Sunday," he added. Seer fish (vanjuram) was sold for Rs 600 per kg, black pomfret Rs 650, white pomfret Rs 800 - Rs 900, red snapper (Sankara) Rs 550 -Rs 650, crab Rs 300, prawns Rs 350, and anchovy (nethili) Rs 350 - Rs 400. In the past two days, more than 500 boats have gone for fishing. Hence, the market is expected to receive more seafood than usual in the coming few days. This may bring down the prices, said traders. Meanwhile, the prices in retail shops in the city went up by double. "As the business was brisk last week, we expected the same today and stocked more seafood. But we received less than 50 per cent customers leading to more wastage. So, we are forced to double the prices to make up for the loss," said Vivek M, a retailer in Anna Nagar.

### **Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu: Integrated flood warning system developed for Mumbai, Chennai**

<https://www.freepressjournal.in/mumbai/integrated-flood-warning-system-developed-for-mumbai-chennai>

"Integrated Flood Warning System (I-Flows) has been developed for two coastal cities (Chennai and Mumbai) to disseminate information on flood vulnerability in the event of heavy

rains to the state government through India Meteorological Department (IMD) for mitigation actions, the Parliament was told on Thursday. The National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), an attached office of the Ministry of Earth Sciences, has also undertaken vulnerability studies due to sea erosion at selected locations along the Indian coast, Earth Sciences Minister Dr Jitendra Singh told the Rajya Sabha in a written reply, adding that extreme rainfall and associated flooding pose a threat to the coastal communities including fishermen. Along with the I-Flows, the NCCR has also developed a mobile application viz. 'Thoondil', along with Tamil Nadu's Department of Fisheries to disseminate information to the coastal fishermen in the event of hazards. In addition, the information on shoreline vulnerability due to erosion has been made available by NCCR to all coastal states for devising the appropriate mitigating measures to protect the coastline, he said. The Ministry had successfully demonstrated the coastal erosion mitigation measures at Puducherry and Kadalur Periyakuppam village in Tamil Nadu. Coastal stakeholders like fishermen and local administration/government bodies were consulted during the development of tools like flood warning system and Android-based app for fishing community while implementing preventive measures, the Minister added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Decks cleared for Rs.100-crore Vellapallam fishing harbour project**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/decks-cleared-for-100-crore-vellapallam-fishing-harbour-project/article38408411.ece>

"Decks have been cleared for construction of the Rs. 100-crore Fishing Harbour at Vellapallam in Nagapattinam district by the Central Institute of Coastal Engineering for Fishery (CICEF), Bengaluru. The project for which the foundation was laid during September 2019 remained static for two years due to COVID-19 pandemic, even after Environment Clearance and Coastal Regulation Zone Clearance were obtained by the Fisheries Department from the State-level Environment Impact Assessment Authority. Environment Impact Assessment study was carried out by a consultant accredited by National Accreditation Board for Education and Training (NABET) , one of the statutory board of Quality Council of India (QCI). The Techno Economic Feasibility study was carried out between 2015-2018 and administrative sanction was accorded under Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF), based on a Detailed Project Report for construction of the fishing harbour with modern facilities. Accompanied by Collector A. Arun Thamburaj, the Director of CICEF, Venkatesh Prasad, and Joint Director Belliappa on Wednesday inspected the project site where work on construction of breakwater has been carried out partially.

The inspection was mandatory for further fund flow for the project, which had witnessed only 15 per cent completion so far. V. Raju, Chief Engineer, Fishing Harbour Project Circle, and M. Arul Bosco, Executive Director (infra), National Fisheries Development Board, Hyderabad, took part in a discussion convened by the CICEF team. The team was apprised of various aspects of the

project, including waves impact, littoral drift, and formation of sand dunes. The project entailing infrastructure for berthing of 100 mechanised fishing vessels and 1,000 fibre-reinforced crafts, and state-of-art handling of catches, was expected to encourage deep-sea fishing among the fishers of Vellapallam, Pushpavanam, Vizhunthamavadi, Vanavanmahadevi and a few other contiguous hamlets, an official of Fisheries Department said. From the time of start, the project could take up to two years for completion. So far, breakwater structures have been created on the northern and southern sides to the extent of 325 metres and 450 metres respectively against the total planned lengths of 1,100 metres and 1,320 metres respectively, official sources said. Though there is now a requirement of berthing facilities for 45 mechanised fishing vessels and 600 fibre-reinforced crafts, the project has been conceived to meet requirements for the next 20 years. The fishers in these villages have been berthing their boats in Nagapattinam harbour and Jegadapattinam harbour in Pudukottai district.

**Tamil Nadu: Kasimedu fishing harbour likely to be spruced up at Rs 100 crore**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/kasimedu-fishing-harbour-likely-to-be-spruced-at-100-cr/articleshow/89374945.cms>

"The Kasimedu fishing harbour is set to be spruced up with more facilities like fresh water, drainage with a clean environment and a new ship repair unit. A proposal to this effect has been prepared by the fisheries department and Chennai Port Trust and sent to the Union shipping ministry for approval and funding. Sharing details with TOI, Chennai Port Trust chairman Sunil Paliwal said a proposal to modernise half a dozen fishing harbours in the country was announced in the last Union budget. It included the harbour. Initially, a proposal was made for Rs 150 crore with additional space to anchor boats to decongest the harbour. However, it was later reduced to Rs.100 crore as a 'tuna fishing harbour' is coming up near Tiruvottiyur. Once this facility is ready a good number of deep-sea fishing boats will move in there, he said. The modernization work includes a mechanised fish handling complex.

This place will have facilities for exporting fish as well as taking up repair work of boats mechanically. Another feature will be a cold storage and CCTV camera surveillance. A perimeter wall will be constructed covering the entire harbor. A trawler wharf with a fish handling shed on the southern side and an additional landing wharf on the northern part of the harbor are some of the other facilities that will form a part of the modernization work, he said. A chain link gate at the exit point of the harbor will come up to stop the entry of boats/trawlers into the sea in case of any cyclone warning or inclement weather.

**Tamil Nadu: Banks reluctant to lend under Kisan Credit Card, say fishers**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/banks-reluctant-to-lend-under-kisan-credit-card-say-fishers/article38389126.ece>

"Fishing boat owners, who have applied for loans under the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme, say that certain banks were not entertaining their application forms. "Some banks, especially a section of nationalised banks, do not want to give us loans. They want to give only Rs.20,000 as loan, which is hardly enough for us to buy nets, boats or engines," said Kabaddi Maran, a community leader. A retired official of the Fisheries Department said that this problem was mainly seen in urban areas where in most cases fishermen did not come under the control of the fishing hamlet's panchayat.

"Nationalised banks are hesitating because under the deep sea fishing scheme, repayment has not been proper. Many have ended up as NPAs. They are afraid that these fishermen too would not repay expecting a loan waiver," he said. In rural areas such as in Tiruvallur district, the village panchayats take the responsibility of repaying the loans. "One village, Periya Mangodu, has been so good at repaying that the previous batch of 60 persons have paid the amount and now 80 men want loans. If one man does not repay, the others will ensure that he does," said another source. Sources in the department said the requirements vary from person to person. Some want to purchase boats, nets, while others want to repair boats and yet others need the loan for working capital. "The banks and the department have worked out the loan amounts for various requirements. For country craft, the working capital can be Rs.60,000 and the investment amount up to Rs.1 lakh. For daily boats, working capital would be Rs.75,000. Similarly, crafts that travel for 2-5 days and multi-day boats too have an amount fixed," he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: How a fisherman-run radio station in south India is changing lives**

<https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/how-a-fisherman-run-radio-station-in-south-india-is-changing-lives-54338>

"Community-run Kadal Osai FM has helped inform inhabitants of Pamban, a small island in Tamil Nadu, and raise social and environmental awareness in the process. On Pamban, a small island inhabited by over 100,000 people in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu, Kadal Osai 90.4 FM is not merely a radio station. It is a life line. Run by a dozen odd fishermen to empower their community - one which makes up 80 percent of the island's population - the radio station is the first community-driven media initiative in India exclusively for fisherfolk by fisherfolk. Started by a fisherman, Armstrong Fernando, around five years ago, Radio Kadal Osai (Sound of the Sea) is now a team of 12 members, researching, presenting and disseminating news to the people of the island. On Pamban, people rely heavily on the sea.

They either indulge in fishing or cater to the tourism sector by running small hotels and driving taxis. The 24/7 channel provides timely weather updates for those braving deep waters to fish in the sea, cautions them about harsh weather and also helps them identify potential fishing zones.

The community radio station has also helped create alternate livelihoods and raise awareness about societal issues and marine conservation. "Our work is to protect the sea for the people," says Lenin, who works as the station's programming coordinator. "People here are very simple and hardworking. Initially when we started the radio, there was a lot of resistance to the idea. People were apprehensive of us. But now as they have started reaping benefits of a community-driven media, they themselves come to our radio station and want to share their experiences," he told TRT World.

Before the inception of Kadal Osai, people in Pamban could only listen to the weak frequencies of Sri Lankan-based Ceylon radio, due to its proximity. India's national public broadcaster All India Radio didn't have proper reach either. Sabeer, 40, who has been working as a fisherman for the last two decades, feels the introduction of Kadal Osai has transformed the lives of the people on the island. "They share the latest information relevant to us (fishermen). We used to be oblivious of such things earlier. Important government schemes and vacancies are shared, along with other information like location of local vaccination camps," Sabeer told TRT World. Initially the radio station used to broadcast for a few hours a day, but as its popularity rose, programmes had to be aired round the clock. Lenin believes people experience a sense of authenticity when information is aired through the airwaves. "The radio has a great influence in the lives of the people who listen to it [compared to] TV, social media or word of mouth. People acknowledge that there is little possibility of being misinformed on this medium." Helping marine conservation. Apart from announcements related to fisherman welfare and playing traditional music, the community radio also shares useful information to protect and conserve the ocean's resources, pointing out endangered species like sea turtles and asking fishermen to save them if they are caught in their nets.

When fishermen in Pamban put out their nets, turtles would often get entangled along with the fish. Turtle meat was commonly consumed, thus endangering the rare species. In a special initiative, Radio Kadal Osai started to award fishermen INR 1,000 (\$13.35) if they released trapped turtles to the ocean while capturing the moment on their phones. "This became a huge success. A lot of fishermen sent us videos of them releasing turtles to the sea. We give them cash rewards and also announce their names on the radio. This also helped to create awareness about the conservation of sea turtles," says Gayathri Usman, the station head of Kadal Osai. The station and its awareness campaigns have also helped curb open defecation on the island, provided sustainable fish-catching practises, and educated fishermen about environmental pollution.

"People now don't take plastic bags to the sea. They are cautious and aware that polluting the sea would directly affect their livelihood," adds Usman. Programmes on climate change, women's empowerment and about loans and subsidies available to fishermen have also been quite popular. During the current coronavirus pandemic, the radio is also working hard to

educate people about pressing issues like vaccine hesitancy, testing and physical distancing. "Earlier people used to discriminate if anyone got infected with the virus. It was like a taboo. A lot of fake news had crept into the minds of people and we had to work a lot on fact-checking for them. Ultimately we succeeded in providing people a correct perspective," says Usman. The struggle for a sustainable model While a host of such community-driven media initiatives have been undertaken in the country, a very few have matched the success of Kadal Osai.

It's largely because of a sustainable economic model adopted by the radio station. "Our trust has a building which has around 12 shops. We [are sustained by] rent income and donations by our trust members and various fishermen men associations," says Usman. "We also get projects from various international organisations like UNICEF and the Ministry of Culture and Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) that help us to continuously grow in a bid to continue work," she adds. This unfortunately hasn't been the case with many such local radio stations in the country. Experts say that licence fraud has hampered the prospects of a thriving community radio ecosystem in India. "Ideally speaking a community radio should be owned by a community," says Danish Iqbal, a radio expert and professor at the Mass Communication Research Centre (MCRC) in Delhi. "Unfortunately in India most community radios are sanctioned to educational institutions which are government-owned.

A lot of licences have also been brought by private educational institutions in the name of educational NGOs."

### **Tamil Nadu: Nagai farmers, fishers pin hopes on Union budget**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2022/feb/01/nagai-farmers-fishers-pin-hopes-on-union-budget-2413853.html>

"Farmers, fishermen and salt producers have urged the Centre to address their demands through the Union budget which will be presented on Tuesday. Small scale salt producers in Vedaranyam are expecting an automatic renewal of the 20-year lease period of their salterns, which expired in 2021. The salt producers had submitted a petition to the Madras High Court in this regard, which was dismissed on December 22, 2021. Salt producers are facing ouster from the salterns and a fresh auction of lands. "We are being driven out of our livelihood by the Union government decision and the High Court order. Over a thousand salt manufacturers and 25,000 salt production workers in Tamil Nadu will lose income. Our families were producing salt for generations before the government leased it. We urge the Centre to reverse the decision to auction our lands and also request renewal of our licences," V Senthil, secretary of Vedaranyam Salt Scale Salt Manufacturers Federation, said.

Fishermen representatives are seeking funds for the construction of fishing harbours, fish landing centres, net-mending shelters, auction halls and dry fish preparation platforms in the Union

budget. The projects are yet to be approved owing to fund allotment. Fishermen have also sought for an increase in subsidies for the construction of fishing boats and reduction in the cost of fuel, which has skyrocketed over the past year. “We request the Centre to provide tax-free diesel and also reduce the existing rates to make the fuel affordable for fishermen. We want schemes with strong fund support to encourage entrepreneurship among fishermen. We also want funds to be allotted for creating necessary infrastructure,” RMP Rajendra Nattar, a fishermen representative from Nagapattinam, said. Meanwhile, farmers have sought for a separate Union farm budget to address their needs.

“The Centre should fix the minimum support price as per the recommendations of National Farmers Commission. It should provide incentive for tenant farmers like it has been giving small and marginal farmers. The Centre should allot funds for the restoration of dead waterways by connecting with live waterways,” ‘Cauvery’ V Dhanabalan, a farmer representative from Nagapattinam, said. ‘Arupathi’ P Kalyanam, a farmer representative of Self-Sustaining Green Villages Movement, said, “The allocation for farmers in the Union budget should be on a par with the allocation for defence sector to address the needs of agriculture. We request the Centre to provide interest-free crop loans up to `3 lakh to all needy farmers. The Union and State governments should take the initiative to create ‘self-sustaining green villages’ by creating infrastructure in each village for value addition and storage of produce.”

### **Tamil Nadu: Pulicat fishermen stage protest**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/pulicat-fishermen-stage-protest/article38356590.ece>

"Fishermen from 15 villages of Pulicat, on Monday, blocked the way to the private port in Kattupalli, seeking permanent jobs and pay hike for the 250 villagers working in the port. Around 2,000 people sat on the road leading to the port, shouting slogans demanding better facilities for the staff. “We get only Rs. 436 per day as pay, which is a dismal amount. We cannot run our families with this income. We were promised jobs, since we lost our livelihood due to the construction of the port. A large population has lost its livelihood since the fish population has dwindled considerably in the Pulicat lake, the Ennore Creek and the backwaters running between these waterbodies,” said C. Paranthaman, a local leader. Raja of Ennore said that the Puzhuthivakkam Koda and the Kattupalli Koda, fishing grounds in the sea, have been made inaccessible to fishermen due to the two ports — Kamarajar, and the Adani port at Kattupalli. “All the power stations and ports have either filled up waterbodies with dredging soil or fly ash or constructed bridges and coal-carrying belts that criss-cross the backwaters. This has led to blocking of the water flow and massive reduction in fish. In such a situation we can only depend on the government to help us,” he also explained Appeal to government Fishermen

have been, time and again, urging the State government to stop the proposed expansion of the Adani port and ensure permanent employment for them. “The port has not kept its word to provide employment and other facilities that it had earlier promised,” said a resident of Pulicat.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen seek waiver of GST bill on diesel subsidy**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishermen-seek-waiver-of-gst-bill-on-diesel-subsidy/article38346153.ece>

"Chennai Fishermen have urged the State government to provide diesel subsidy to new boats without insisting upon GST bills for engines and boats. “Fishermen, who purchase catamarans, have to additionally shell out Rs.7,000 and those buying larger fishing boats have to pay Rs.20,000 if they pay GST. At a time when fish catch is down, it is unfair to insist upon GST bills,” said Varadan, a community leader. Diesel prices were high and many owners had not sent their boats on voyages. “In such a situation, denying diesel subsidy is unfair. Even if one boat gets a GST bill, the owner has to wait for some more time since Fisheries Department officials say that verification can be done only if there are a certain number of boats. Ultimately, it is the fishermen, who stand to lose,” said Nanjil Ravi of Akhila India Meenavar Sangam. Officials that submission of GST bills was a must for subsidy. “Irrespective of GST bills, we register the boat. Sometimes, owners misplace GST bills. We wait for them to get copies. We verify boats as and when they are brought in,” said an official. Meanwhile, at Thengaipattinam fishermen have complained that of the 750-odd mechanised boats, only 350 got diesel subsidy. Sesadima of Thoothur near Thengaipattinam said they save Rs.25,000 per 1,000 litres of diesel, which was a considerable amount. “The officials refuse to give us diesel passbooks citing various reasons. They want to verify boats once in two months which is not possible. In other places verification is done during fishing ban period. Our boats fish off the coast of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala. If we are to bring back boats from Maharashtra, we would have to spend close to Rs.1.5 lakh, which is too steep an amount,” he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Forest Department to take up mitigation measures in Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/tn-forest-dept-to-take-up-mitigation-measures-in-gulf-of-mannarmarine-national-park/article38332994.ece>

"Permission has been granted for the establishment of two thermal power plants about six km away; the Forest Dept intends to collect data on marina flora and fauna as a first step. The Tamil Nadu Forest Department will take up mitigation measures and put up a strict monitoring regime to negate any impact on corals, and the marine eco-system, in the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park, by the proposed thermal power plants. The Coastal Regulation Zone clearance for the development for the proposed 2 X 500 MW Thermal Power Plants was granted by the

Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. The wildlife clearance for the plants was issued by the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL), but with conditions. The NBWL Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal in view of the distance of more than 6 km of the project from the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park.

However, laying down conditions while granting the Environmental Clearance, the Committee said the cost of the mitigation measures would have to be borne by the Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC), the project proponent. The committee said the monitoring set-up must be in place within one year from the date of remittance. The measure suggested by the Forest Department addressing the issues identified as an impact on biodiversity as a result of the monitoring, should be adopted by the project proponent scrupulously. Accordingly, the Neyveli Lignite Corporation Power Limited remitted ₹1 crore with the Forest Department.

Now, the government has released ₹18 lakh in the first phase to take up work on mitigation measures. Initially, the Forest Department will conduct a detailed baseline data collection on the marine flora and fauna including ecologically-sensitive habitats (corals and sea grasses) and fish population, and will compare this data with baseline data collected during the Environment Impact Assessment study prior to the start of the project. The Department will also be monitoring temperature and salinity (both surface and bottom water) once in 15 days (fortnightly), for a total of 24 times in a year.

### **Sri Lanka: Government to auction 105 boats seized from Tamil Nadu fishermen**

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/sri-lankan-govt-auction-105-boats-seized-tn-fishermen-160169>

"The fisheries and aquatic department of Sri Lanka will be auctioning 105 fishing boats seized from Tamil Nadu fishermen over the years. The department has already issued advertisements in newspapers in the island nation calling for bidders to participate in the auction. The advertisement stated that 65 boats would be auctioned on February 7 at Karaignagar in Jaffna district. Five boats will be auctioned on February 8 at Kangesanthurai in Jaffna district, 24 boats to be auctioned at Kiranchi in Killinoi district on February 9, nine boats at Thalaimannar in Mannar district on February 10, and two boats would be auctioned at Kalpitiya in Puttalam district on February 11. In total 105 boats are to be auctioned. Officials of the Tamil Nadu fisheries department said that the Sri Lankan government would be selling the fishing boat for scrap value as most of the boats would have rusted for not being properly maintained during the period of custody.

It may be noted that the Sri Lankan naval personnel had arrested several fishermen from Ramanathapuram, Nagapattinam, Mandapam, Pudukottai, Myladuthurai, and Thanjavur areas of Tamil Nadu along with their fishing boats for crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line

(IMBL). B. Balamurugan, President, Jegathapattinam Fisher's association while speaking to IANS said, ""The auctioning to be conducted by the Sri Lankan government must be stopped and government of India must intervene as early as it could. The auctioning would kill the hopes of hundreds of fishermen who want their boats back. This would kill the livelihood of fishermen and the government will not be able to compensate. Immediate intervention by the Government of India is the need of the hour."" PMK leader Dr S. Ramadoss condemned the decision of the Sri Lankan government to auction the livelihood of fishermen and said that the island nation does not have any right to auction the boats. He said that this was an insult to India which had sought the release of the boats taken into custody along with the fishermen.

### **Tamil Nadu: Stop port expansion, Pulicat fishermen urge CM**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/stop-port-expansion-pulicat-fishermen-urge-cm/article38311311.ece>

"Fishermen of Pulicat have urged Chief Minister M.K. Stalin to take steps to stop the proposed expansion of a private port in Tiruvallur district. They said the proposal will lead to loss of livelihood to over one lakh persons in the area and also hasten coastal erosion. C. Paranthaman of the Meenava Kootamaippu said that residents had planned to pass a resolution on January 26 during the gram sabha. "If in case due to COVID-19 restrictions, the gram sabha meeting does not happen, we have sent letters to the Chief Minister and the Tiruvallur Collector two days ago. We are only reminding Mr. Stalin that he had opposed the proposal when he was Leader of Opposition," he said. Fishermen said they were rumours of 700 acres of land being handed over to the port authorities and that has made them to write to the Chief Minister again. The local MLA too supported the fishermen in this endeavour, he added. Residents of Pulicat, who are already facing issues due to silting up of the lake and closing of the estuary, have been against this proposal.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen want more compensation for boats seized by Sri Lankan Navy**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/mixed-reaction-to-cms-announcement-on-compensation-for-boats-seized-by-sl-navy/article38314273.ece>

"There has been a mixed reaction from fishermen associations to the announcement by Chief Minister M. K. Stalin that the State government will give Rs.5 lakh for mechanised boats and Rs.1.5 Lakh for country craft seized by Sri Lankan Navy. While the Rameswaram All Mechanised Boat Fishermen's Association has thanked the Chief Minister, the District Country Craft Fishermen Welfare Association has demanded an increase in compensation for their boats to Rs.5 lakh. Representatives of the mechanised fishermen association had met the Chief Minister in Chennai recently in the presence of MLA Kadhar Batcha Muthuramalingam and Minister for Fisheries Anitha R. Radhakrishnan. The association demanded compensation for

mechanised boats seized by the Sri Lankan Navy but could not be salvaged back to India. It also sought relief for a mechanised boat belonging to Vasthiyan of Thangachimadam that sank in high seas after it was hit by a Sri Lankan Naval ship on Friday. Besides, it wanted the bank loan obtained by fishermen to buy deep sea fishing boats waived off.

Meanwhile, country craft fishermen association president S.P. Rayappan handed over a memorandum to Thoothukudi MP K. Kanimozhi on Saturday. The association thanked the State government for announcement of compensation. It said the cost of the boat, motor, fishing net and other paraphernalia was around ₹10 lakh to Rs.15 lakh depending upon the size of the craft. Hence, the compensation announced by the Chief Minister for country craft should be increased to ₹5 lakh. Mr. Rayappan said the association members wanted to meet the Chief Minister to impress upon him their demands.

### **Tamil Nadu: Seven Rameswaram fishermen rescued after Lankan navy vessel rams their fishing boats**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/seven-rameswaram-fishermen-rescued-after-lankan-navy-vessel-attack-their-vessel/articleshow/89020000.cms>

"Seven fishermen from Rameswaram were rescued alive by fishermen from another fishing vessel after the mechanised fishing boat on which the fishermen were engaged in fishing in the Sri Lankan water was hit by a Sri Lankan navy vessel in the late hours of Wednesday. While the boat was destroyed and sunk in the sea, the rescued men reached the shore in the other fishing vessel in the early hours of Thursday. Owner of the boat (IND TN 10 MM 745) S P Vasthiyan of Thangachimadam village in Rameswaram told reporters that seven fishermen – S Michale Sandhya alias Daniel (32) the boat driver, F Breesmen (22), M Jayabalan (24), A Surendran (30), D Akash (21), R Titus (23) and M Ramanatha Sethupathy alias Sethuraman Murugan (20) all from – went fishing with hundreds of fishermen on other boats on Wednesday.

The boats had crossed the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) late in the evening. "We were fishing in our traditional fishing grounds (in Sri Lanka) near Katchatheevu around 10.30 in the night when a Sri Lankan Navy vessel charged at us and collided with my boat. As sea water started seeping into the boat the navy vessel left the place without taking any effort to rescue our fishermen in distress," Vasthiyan said. Even as the boat was sinking the fishermen managed to alert another fishing vessel using the wireless device. "My fishermen got help from another fishing vessel (IND TN 10 MM 254) that was fishing nearby and managed to reach the shore with injuries, my boat was completely destroyed and sank to the sea bed," he said after lodging a complaint with the assistant director of fisheries, Rameswaram. Vasthiyan alleged that the Sri Lankan navy has resorted to such brutal use of force with the intention of killing the fishermen and instilling fear in their minds.

“The government should take steps to put an end to such attacks on our fishermen and boats and also give me relief to compensate for the loss incurred in the incident,” he added. All the seven men were lucky to escape with minor injuries. Deputy Director of fisheries for Ramanathapuram district E Kathavarayan told TOI that they have forwarded the petition to the fisheries commissioner. “Since the incident took place in Sri Lankan waters we cannot do anything about the boat. We are conducting an inquiry with the seven fishermen on the turn of events and will submit a detailed report to the department for initiating further course of action,” he said.

Rajya Sabha MP and PMK youth wing leader Anbumani Ramadoss condemned the inhuman and illegal hit and run by the Sri Lankan navy on Wednesday night. He tweeted holding the government of India responsible for continuance of the firing and attack on Tamil Nadu fishermen and hitting their boats by emboldening Sri Lanka without dealing with such incidents with an iron hand. Anbumani said that the Government of India should summon the Sri Lankan high commission and warn them against such attacks and also take steps for release of the 68 Tamil Nadu fishermen who are arrested from December 18 to 20 and are languishing in prison in the island nation. This incident took place exactly a year after a Sri Lankan navy vessel hit and sank a mechanised fishing boat from Pudukottai with four fishermen from Ramanathapuram district on board. All the four fishermen – A Mesiya (30), V Nagaraj (52), N Sam (28) and S Senthil Kumar (32) – were killed in the incident on January 18, 2021. Their bodies were retrieved and sent to India.

**Tamil Nadu: Living with sewage: Fishing hamlets in Chennai’s Kottivakkam see no end to drainage woes**

<https://chennai.citizenmatters.in/chennai-kottivakkam-kuppam-drainage-sewage-woes-beach-pollution-37348>

"As one takes a left turn from the East Coast Road or the ECR, as it’s popularly known in Chennai, into the Kuppam road in Kottivakkam, which leads to the Kottivakkam beach, a sense of calm sets in. A complete contrast from the bustling main road, which is just a few metres away. This sense of calm can also be seen in the residents of the Kottivakkam kuppam (Tamil for hamlet), most of whom you will find unwinding on a weekday evening. The women folk, after having finished their day’s work of selling fish are huddled in one corner of the road adjacent to the beach on bamboo mats, intent on a game of dice, while the older men form their own groups, playing a game of cards. They wait for their sons to come back from the sea with the catch to be sold the next morning. Yet this relaxed setting and the apparent picture of joy, bonhomie and contentment belies a persistent problem that they have been facing for years now, something that has become a part of their daily life – open gutters with overflowing sewage water and week-old garbage strewn across the beach and their homes, causing a severe stench and serious health hazards.

“We have been living with this stench for years now, and it has become a part of our lives,” says 41-year-old Selvakumar with a sad smile. The reason for this, as cited by most of the other residents in the village, is the lack of a drainage system, not just in Kottivakkam but also in the other coastal villages along the ECR like Palavakkam, Neelankarai and Uthandi. Problems faced by the residents over the years, the residents of the hamlet have had to make their own drainage trench or open gutters outside their homes to let out their semi solid or liquid waste from the kitchen and toilets. These gutters are cleaned only at irregular intervals by the authorities, so that there is a pile up of sewage most of the time. This starts to cause a severe stench and creates a breeding ground for mosquitoes. The situation gets worse during the monsoon, when the sewage water overflows and enters their homes.

The helplessness was stark in the words of 36-year-old Velappan who said that several journalists have come to their village in the past to cover the issue but nothing has come out of it. “Reporters will come, speak to us, get their story and go but we get nothing out of it,” says Velappan, a fisherman whose family has been living in Kottivakkam beach for the past many generations. The only way in which citizens have voiced their grievances is by complaining to the workers from the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB), when they come by to supply water, or to the workers from the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) who come once in a couple of months to collect the garbage. It is not known whether these complaints have reached senior authorities at all.

“The only time when authorities even acknowledge our existence is when elections are around the corner. Otherwise nobody bothers to listen to us and we also don’t know whom to complain to?” says 75-year-old Pavanamma. There is a sewage gutter right in front of Pavanamma’s house, which is closed with cement slabs, which is hardly enough as there are still gaps where the sewage flows into their house when it gets full. “Usually when our gutters get clogged, we ourselves have to bring a stick or a pole, or sometimes even use our bare hands, to unclog it,” says 40-year-old Omiya. But clogged or not, the houses have no option but to let out their sewage water straight into the beach, which is also where they set up stalls to sell fish, food and other items for the public.

Ecological impact and health hazard in coastal areas like this, the effects of a lack of proper drainage system can go beyond bad odour and unhygienic living conditions. The impact it can have on the people and the communities nearby are multifold, according to TD Babu, a marine biologist.

1. Habitat destruction as the sewage water from the gutter flows into the beach, the sand has started to erode causing a small pit like structure. “When there is high tide, the waves come deeper into the shores. So, from one side, you have the sea coming into the land, and from the other side, there is the water (sewage water from the open gutters) going into the beach. This

accelerates the process of coastal erosion. So when there are storms or heavy tides, there are high chances of a man-made disaster resulting in habitat destruction in the hamlet,” says TD Babu.

2. Health hazards Most of the activities of the fishing communities and even of those from the non-fishing communities residing nearby take place on the beach. Sometimes, people from other places also visit the beach for recreational activities. People dip their feet in the sea, which is mixed with sewage water from the gutter. This can cause various kinds of skin disease. Children play in the sand which the polluted water flows into, after which they go have food from the nearby stalls without washing their hands. The food from these stalls are also likely to be contaminated, given that toxic water often flows into these stalls and could come into contact with the food, causing diarrhoea and other infections among those who consume it.

3. Groundwater pollution Due to the high permeability of sandy beaches and as a result of the erosion caused due to the high tides and sewage water, the thickness of the sandbed gets reduced, thus polluting the groundwater table. “When a filtering medium becomes thin, it won’t be able to hold on to huge amounts of water and breaks easily,” adds Babu. ‘Govt must take responsibility’ In places like the Foreshore estate, which is another fisher settlement along Chennai’s Marina beach, the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board had constructed several apartment complexes for the fishermen families who used to live in makeshift homes earlier. Because of this, Babu feels that there is uniformity among the dwelling units in that area and proper systems. But in the fishing hamlets like Kottivakkam kuppam along the ECR, the resident families had themselves constructed the buildings generations ago, in a haphazard manner, which makes it difficult for maintenance.

“Government should come forward and provide proper housing for the fishing communities along the ECR as well, so that it will streamline many issues like sewage disposal, water connection, electricity connection and even garbage clearance,” adds the marine biologist. However, KP Kosalaraman, Zonal President of Sholinganallur (East), Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, says that the successive governments in the state have turned a blind eye towards the fishing hamlets of Kottivakkam, Palavakkam and Uthandi. “When it comes to Kottivakkam, the primary focus of the government is to provide facilities for the comparatively well-off sections of society, which means the socially and economically privileged sections,” says Kosalaraman. He adds that the fishermen of the kuppam are ‘mere statistics’ in the larger list of voters for politicians.

Citizen Matters tried reaching out to officials of the GCC and CMWSSB to find out why the drainage issue has not been solved for years, and what it would take to change the situation. A senior zonal officer from the GCC said that he was unaware about the issue itself and stated that he would study the matter. However, there was no response from CMWSSB. Demands of the community According to Kosalaraman, most of the coastal areas that fall under the GCC, after

Thiruvannamiyur towards the ECR road, do not have proper connection to a piped drainage network. In 2018, during the tenure of the AIADMK government, the Chennai Corporation had started the construction of storm water drains in the coastal areas of Kottivakkam, Palavakkam, Neelankarai and Uthandi. However, following severe opposition from the residents of these coastal areas, the Madras HC in 2020 stayed the construction of the stormwater drains.

“From Kottivakkam to Uthandi, around 12 tunnels were constructed for the storm water drains. These were all connected to the sea. But given that there were no separate sewage connections or network, when it rains, the rain water mixed with sewage from the roads would flow through these tunnels into the sea, polluting it. That’s why it was objected to,” says Kosalaraman. In December last year, Kosalaraman, who is also from the fishermen community of Kottivakkam, and various representatives from the coastal areas and members of the Communist party handed over a memorandum to Aravind Ramesh, MLA of Sholinganallur assembly constituency with a list of their demands, which included:

1. Sewage lines to be constructed and linked to the drainage network in nearby Thiruvalluvar Nagar.
2. Until such a link is established, widening of the existing sewage canals and proper cleaning once a week to maintain hygiene and safety
3. All houses must have access to clean water from the Nemmeli desalination plant.

Speaking to Citizen Matters, S Aravind Ramesh MLA said that he had discussed the issue with Chief Minister MK Stalin and that funds have been allocated for the purpose of setting up the drainage system. “We are in the tender process now and once the work starts, it will take a minimum of 5 years for it to be completed and ready for use,” he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen yet to get paid for flood relief, rescue work**

<https://www.thestatesman.com/india/fishermen-tn-yet-get-paid-flood-relief-rescue-work-1503039669.html>

"Fishermen in Tamil Nadu who had rescued people stranded during the floods in October, November 2021, are yet to receive the compensation they were promised. Fisheries department officials, while speaking to IANS said that the compensation was delayed due to some minor glitches in tallying according to the government norms. Owners of fishing boats who had arranged men for rescue missions along with boats are waiting for the promised compensation. M. Karuppuswamy, a fishing boat owner who had arranged and sent 31 boats for rescue operations is one among them. While speaking to IANS, he said: “I am waiting for the compensation as the fishermen who had gone for the rescue mission is expecting money and we thought that they will settle it before Pongal but it did not happen.

However I am not disappointed, the government will definitely honour the commitment soon.” While the fishing season was hit due to heavy rains and warnings from the meteorological

department, the fishermen were expecting the compensation promised by the government before the Pongal. Around 250 fishermen were deployed for the rescue operation and fisheries department sources told IANS that they were yet to sanction the amount as Greater Chennai Corporation has to transfer the compensation money which they have not. However, Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) officials told IANS that they had paid advance money of Rs 2.5 lakh per village before the fishermen were engaged and that the rest of the amount would be paid after the final settlement bill is received from the fisheries department. Fisheries department officials said that the bill amount is approximately around 1.25 crore and that the final payment would be dispatched to the respective district headquarters for distribution once they get a clearance from the Greater Chennai Corporation.

### **Tamil Nadu: High Court dismisses a plea moved for using purse seine fishing nets in traditional waters**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2022/01/19155228/1339467/High-Court-dismisses-a-plea-moved-for-using-purse-vpf>

"The first bench comprising the Acting Chief Justice Munishwar Nath Bhandari and Justice PD Audikesavalu dismissed the petition moved by Poompuhar Traditional Fishermen Welfare Association represented by Jambulingam Kabadikunju. The petitioner prayed for a direction to the State to allow the traditional fishermen of Tamil Nadu to carry the purse seine net in their country crafts and the mechanized vessels for marine fishing within the traditional waters and Tamil Nadu and behind the traditional waters within the exclusive economic zones. The petitioner's counsel J Sushilkumar submitted that there is a prohibition is placed by the Tamil Nadu government restricting the Tamil Nadu traditional fishermen from using the purse seine net. "The State should lift the prohibition and ban on the purse seine net in the country crafts and mechanized vessels for marine fishing in the sub-rule 7 of rule 17 of the Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Rules, 1983 and GO number 36, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and Fisheries dated 17.02.2020," the counsel argued.

However, P Muthukumar, Government Pleader, submitted that the State government has not put any fresh restrictions and a ban has been in place since 2000. "The State government has not issued any fresh restrictions and it has been following the fishing regulations passed in 2000. The Supreme Court also recognized the regulations issued in 2000. The petitioner has not challenged the same in 2000 and he is just challenging certain guidelines which were added later," Muthukumar noted. On recording the submissions made by the GP, the bench dismissed the petition.

### **Tamil Nadu: Mechanised boat owners seek withdrawal of Sunday lockdown**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2022/01/19071422/1339393/Mechanised-boat-owners-seek-withdrawal-of-Sunday-lockdown.vpf>

"The fishermen association demanded the state to reconsider the Sunday lockdown as it affects the fishing by mechanised boats and a representation in this regard was sent to the Chief Minister on Tuesday. The executive committee meeting of Tamil Nadu Fishermen Peravai chaired by the General Secretary A Thajudeen was held in Thanjavur on Tuesday in which it was resolved that the Sunday lockdown has left the mechanised boats stay off shore as they are allowed by the officials to venture on Saturdays while other days are for country boat owners.

**Tamil Nadu: Fishermen along Nagapattinam-Mayiladuthurai coastline prefer to go in for deep sea fishing**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/fishermen-prefer-deep-sea-fishing/article38182619.ece>

"Against the backdrop of mid-sea attack by Sri Lankan Navy at Palk Bay at periodic intervals, fishermen along Nagapattinam-Mayiladuthurai coastline seem to be inclined to avail themselves of the government scheme for deep sea fishing. The Fisheries Department has sought to reach out to potential beneficiaries in the two districts with its 50 percent subsidy scheme for purchase of tuna liner-cum- gill netter fishing vessel. The scheme for purchase of a such a boat that entails 50 per cent subsidy to a maximum of Rs. 30 lakh requires the beneficiaries to contribute the remaining 50 percent of the cost. Fishermen could apply for the scheme in a group of six, or as cooperatives or as individuals. Factoring in readiness of fishermen in the districts to switch over to deep sea fishing to avoid mid-sea conflicts with Sri Lankan Navy, the Government must broaden the ambit of the 50 percent subsidy scheme to enlist fishermen in large numbers, Mohandas, a fisher representative of Akkaraipettai emphasised.

Only through scaling up the number of beneficiaries can the positive impact of deep sea fishing that would, in the long run, reflect in recouping of fisheries resources in Palk Bay, be determined, said Mahendran, a representative of Kilinjalmedu hamlet in Karaikal district, said. According to a senior official of the Fisheries Department in Nagapattinam district, the scheme has been implemented for beneficiaries at the State-level on seniority basis, and, as such, there was no specific allotment per district. So far, over the last few years 13 boats have been sanctioned in Nagapattinam district under the scheme, he said. While they were game for deep sea fishing, the prospective beneficiaries have desired that their views must also be considered in right earnest by the government before finalising the design of the boat, as per the specifications of Naval architect that is a mandatory requirement.

The fishermen in Nagapattinam-Mayiladuthurai belt also emphasised that the same scheme under Central funding was not impressive at the implementation level. Funding under the Central scheme for construction of large deep sea tuna long liners covers a project cost of Rs. .80 lakh per vessel with 50% Central subsidy assistance. But, availing the scheme has become a tough proposition due to the stringent norms in identifying the potential beneficiaries, Mr. Mohandas said. Government must broaden the ambit of the 50 per cent subsidy scheme to enlist fishermen in large numbers Mohandas Fisherman representative of Akkaraipettai.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish market at Kasimedu harbour to be shut on Sunday**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/fish-market-at-kasimedu-harbour-to-be-shut-on-sunday/articleshow/88765618.cms>

"There won't be retail sale of fish at Kasimedu harbour this Sunday owing to the lockdown. The state fisheries department has informed fishermen out at sea to return to shores by Saturday night. "There will not be retail sale of fish on Sunday morning. The harbour will be closed for visitors and buyers," said a fisheries department official. There are seven entry and exit points to the harbour. Of this, only four will remain open on Sunday. "This is being done mainly to restrict the entry of public to the harbour, the official said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen oppose amendments to Coastal Regulation Zone notification, cite damage to ecosystem, community displacement**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2022/jan/06/fishermen-oppose-amendments-to-coastal-regulation-zone-notificationcite-damage-to-ecosystem-commu-2403722.html>

"The fisherfolk have strongly objected to the draft notification issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) on November 1 to make amendments into the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2019. The ministry had proposed eight amendments to CRZ notification, 2019 seeking to delegate powers of giving CRZ clearance to the State Coastal Management Zone Management Authority, exempting statutory CRZ clearance for the exploratory drilling operations, and removal of sand bars from the shoreline, acting on representations given by the state governments and Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) channelled through Director General of HydroCarbons (DGH). The National Coastal Zone Management Authority (NCZMA) had also recommended in favour of these amendments during its 42nd meeting held on March 23, 2021.

National Fishworkers' Forum's youth representative Jones Thomas Spartagus told TNIE the amendments are intended to dilute the restrictions on oil, gas and hydrocarbon extraction projects

in the Ecological Sensitive Area (ESA) and territorial waters that encapsulates mangroves, swamps, lagoons and traditional fishing grounds. Most of the oil reserves and explorations are carried out in territorial waters that extend up to 12 nautical miles from the shoreline, he said. On the amendment delegating powers to the union government for granting CRZ clearance proposed at the CRZ-1 and CRZ-IV areas, Jone contended that the union is taking the rights of the State government as CRZ-1 and CRZ-IV areas fall under the control of state governments. "It is a transgression on state sovereignty", he pointed out. The fishermen leaders said exempting oil and gas exploration projects from obtaining prior CRZ clearance, show its least concern towards the livelihood of the fishermen.

As the previous experiences of exploratory drilling operations have proved to be disastrous in the coastal areas, the projects must undergo the CRZ clearance process, they said. Another controversy is the amendment to remove the sandbars from the coast which are formed naturally along the intertidal areas. The fishermen say the sand bars function as eco-barriers that prevent the fishing hamlets from extreme events, besides maintaining the ecological balance. Such an amendment would open floodgates for the illegal sand miners, they said. "Removal of the sand bars lead to rapid coastal erosion and threaten nesting of seashore birds and endangered turtles which are protected under schedules of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972", said a fisherman from Vembar. Vangakadal Meen Thozhilalar Sangam General Secretary Dr Kumaravelu said the offshore oil extraction projects extend up to 18 nautical miles, which will devastate the fishing resources. Pointing out the fact that oil exploration companies had proposed more projects off shore, Kumaravelu said the former government had cleverly declared the Cauvery delta district as Protected Special Agriculture Zone (PSAZ) only to gain political mileage among the farmers, disregarding the fishermen.

"The present DMK government, which seconded the PSAZ back then, should include the area of terrestrial waters into the PSAZ fold, as fishing is part of agriculture to prevent these dangerous projects," he requested. In view of the welfare of the fishermen and state sovereignty, the fishermen had demanded immediate withdrawal of the draft amendments made to the CRZ Notification 2019, to prevent further damage to the ecosystem and displacement of coastal communities. As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Vedanta Limited (Cairn Oil & Gas) had proposed to drill 40 and 274 exploratory wells respectively. Explorations involve use of environmentally dangerous techniques like seismic surveys and fracking. It may be recalled that in an order dated January 16, 2020, the union environment ministry exempted on-shore and off-shore oil and gas exploration drilling projects from requirement of prior environmental clearance subtly in a response to the request by the oil majors.

**Tamil Nadu: 'Prevent mechanised boat operators from violating norms'**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/prevent-mechanised-boat-operators-from-violating-norms/article38104135.ece>

"Stating that a majority of mechanised boat operators violate the norms while fishing in Palk Bay, the Country Boat Fishermen Association led by the CITU (Kadal Thozhilalargal Sangam) has asked the Fisheries Department to put an end to the violation immediately. Submitting a detailed petition to Collector Shankar Lal Kumawat at the Collectorate during the weekly grievances meeting held on Monday, the CITU-led delegation said that mechanised boat fishermen in Mandapam violated the norms and indulged in fishing within five nautical miles. Apart from this, the delegation said that many mechanised boat operators damaged the natural reserves in the sea from Mandapam to Yerwadi. The forest department should conduct surveillance and punish the boat operators, they added. The memorandum also claimed that many Thoothukudi based boat operators fitted high horse-power motors, which were permitted only for deep-sea fishing boats, and engaged in fishing in Valinokkam, Mundal, Mariyur, Naripayur and Mookaiyur region.

Likewise, many of the mechanised boat operators obtained permission for fishing three days in a week but clandestinely fished for the remaining days also without getting tokens. The members also said that many mechanised boat operators from Rameswaram, Pamban and Mandapam had set off to the sea from Monday and were carrying banned fishnets. Later, speaking to reporters, CITU district secretary M. Karunamoorthy said that the district administration should conduct fishermen grievance meeting every month, which was being conducted by Collectors in Kanniyakumari and Thoothukudi. About three years ago, citing some vague reasons, the then Collector had suspended the meeting, he pointed out.

**Tamil Nadu: Indian coast guard operations save seven fishermen stranded at high seas**

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/indian-coast-guard-operations-save-seven-fishermen-stranded-at-high-seas-1895445-2022-01-03>

"The Indian Coast Guard successfully coordinated and rescued seven stranded fishermen of IFB SREE 190 nautical miles away from Chennai on January 2, 2022. The rescue operations began on December 31, 2021. Indian Coast Guard Dornier aircraft identified and located the boat. The fishing boat was reportedly adrift due to engine failure. It is presently being towed by another fishing boat back to Chennai.

**Tamil Nadu: Govt firm builds 'illegal' road in Kosasthalaiyar river**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2022/jan/02/govt-firm-builds-illegal-road-in-kosasthalaiyar-2402147.html>

"The Tamil Nadu Transmission Corporation Limited (Tantransco) has started building a temporary road inside the main channel of the Kosasthalaiyar River for erecting transmission towers. The road, being allegedly built by dumping tonnes of debris and dredged sea sand, is coming up where floodwaters from Thiruvottiyur, Manali and Ponneri taluk (Araniyar-Kosasthalai River) enter the sea. This may aggravate the flood situation in the city, say environmentalists pointing to the inundation caused by rain in November. As per official records, the corporation had obtained Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearance from the Union Environment Ministry for erecting transmission tower and transmission line of 765KV from North Chennai Thermal Power Station Stage-3 to North Chennai Pooling Station in Ennore. In 15 out of 20 places, the tower foundation work has been completed and 13 transmission towers have been erected. According to Ennore fishermen, most of temporary roads built to deploy heavy machinery for construction are still intact.

According to CRZ rules, the area must be restored to its original shape after the completion of construction. The work on remaining seven towers was halted after fishermen from eight villages, Nettu Kuppam, Thazhan Kuppam, Kattukuppam, Ennore kuppam, Mugathuvarakuppam, Sivanpadaiveethi Kuppam, Periyakuppam and Chinnakupam, protested in last June. Tiruvallur collector organized a meeting between fishermen and corporation officials and allowed the work to resume in November. According to Ravi Maran, a fisherman, the permission for erecting transmission towers was given for survey numbers 178/B and 255 of Ennore village, but 15 days ago, the corporation began illegal reclamation work by dumping dredged sea sand into the Kosasthalai River in survey numbers 1556 and 1557 of Vallur revenue village.

"This location does not feature in any permission including the CRZ clearance obtained by the corporation," he said. Maran also said the work has encroached two fishing grounds at Lock Munai Paadu, and affected fish catch at three more fishing grounds, Signal Paadu, Samuthira Munai and Bridge Tharai Paadu. Dumping of dredged sand is also illegal as a committee set up by the National Green Tribunal in a case related to the Kamarajar Port's encroachment of Ennore backwaters found that dredged sand is highly contaminated, and advised against using it for reclaiming water bodies. An official of the transmission corporation said the towers will not affect the passage of boats and concerns of fishermen about their livelihood being affected by them were untenable. The official also refuted the allegations on CRZ clearance violation.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen call off proposed rail blockade**

<https://theprint.in/india/tn-fishermen-call-off-proposed-rail-blockade/791757/>

"Fishermen associations which had announced a rail blockade on January 1 called off the protest on Thursday after senior government officials led by the district collector held talks with them. The associations had announced the blockade protesting against the recent arrest of 63 Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan navy, allegedly for violating the International Maritime Boundary

Line (IMBL) and fishing in its territorial waters. On Thursday, Ramanathapuram Collector Shankarlal Kumawat, district police chief E Karthik and Fisheries department officials held talks with representatives of fishermen associations including Devaraj, Sesuraja and Emerit. They told the fishermen associations talks were on to secure the release of the fishers as well as the boats that were under the Lankan custody. Subsequently, they decided to call off the protest and also resume fishing activities, since suspended, from January 3.

### **Tamil Nadu: 15% addl seats for kids of fishers in TNJFU**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/15-addl-seats-for-kids-of-fishers-in-tnjfu/articleshow/88600674.cms>

"Tamil Nadu government has issued an order allowing 15% additional reservation (over and above the existing allocation) to the wards of fishermen in the admissions to the BFSc degree programme in Tamil Nadu Dr J Jayalalithaa Fisheries University (TNJFU). As per the order, the total number of students' strengths would go up to 160 from 120, the notification said. Bachelor of Fisheries Science course (BFSc) is being offered at three constituent colleges of Tamil Nadu Dr J Jayalalithaa Fisheries University in Nagapattinam (Fisheries College and Research Institute, Tuticorin, Dr MGR Fisheries College and Research Institute, Ponneri and Dr MGR Fisheries College and Research Institute in Thalainayeru). As such, 5% of the seats in BFSc admission is allocated to fishermen's wards in the state. The students from the fishermen community admitted in this allocation of 5% of the seats (six seats as of 2020-21) are fully sponsored by the Tamil Nadu Fishermen Welfare Board and their tuition fees and hostel fees are fully met out by the board. Meanwhile, the government has issued the order based on the orders of the chief minister M K Stalin for an additional allocation of 15% of the seats to the children of active fishermen.

### **Tamil Nadu: Close or shift thermal power plants, say Ennore fisherfolk**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/close-or-shift-thermal-power-plants-say-ennore-fisherfolk/article38073140.ece>

"Fisherfolk of 32 hamlets in Ennore on Thursday called for shutting down or shifting the polluting thermal power stations that spread harmful fly ash in their area for over four decades now. They questioned the rationale behind allowing their area to be polluted by the power stations while generating power for the development of the rest of the State. "The fly ash is everywhere, in the air we breathe, the water we drink and even on the food we consume. When we dry fish outside, the ash forms a layer on it. When we return home from work, our people are covered with fly ash and even when it rains, the water washes down as a dark slurry due to ash deposited everywhere.

Knowingly, we are feeding poison to our children,” said Rajathi of Sivanpadaiveedu while urging the government to provide them with safe drinking water. The residents were expressing their anguish at a public hearing convened by members of a joint expert committee constituted by the Southern Bench of the National Green Tribunal to prepare a detailed project report for remediation of fly ash from Ennore and to prepare a report detailing damages caused to the river basin. A resident of Kattupalli panchayat said that each time a project was proposed in the area, including the ports and thermal power plants, local people were always promised jobs and that their environment would be safeguarded. “They make this promise before the District Collector. But we do not get any jobs and our ecosystem is damaged. We keep filing cases and saying no to projects during public hearings.

However, our voices remain unheard,” she said. Fisherfolk leader Ko. Su. Mani said they had been protesting since the 1990s. “People used to be affluent in Ennore and the prawns caught here used to be exported. However, now with hot water and fly ash let into the water, the fishermen are not able to net anything for their own consumption,” he said. Patient hearing Members of the committee, headed by Santha Sheela Nair, comprising Balaji Narasimhan and Indumathi Nambi, Department of Civil Engineering, IIT- Madras; D. Narasimhan, Madras Christian College, and Jayashree Venkatesan of Care Earth, heard the residents patiently. Ms. Nair said the committee had been formed to look at the possibilities of remediation of fly ash. She welcomed suggestions from residents regarding how fly ash can be dealt with and said a fair report would be submitted to the NGT.

### **Tamil Nadu: Thrust on freshwater prawn culture in ponds**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/thrust-on-freshwater-prawn-culture-in-ponds/article38062488.ece>

"The Nagapattinam and Mayiladuthurai districts have accorded a thrust on freshwater prawn culture in ponds, under the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture. Subsidies are being provided to those who undertake freshwater prawn culture in ponds. Subsidy to the extent of 40% is being provided for creation of small ponds for rearing shrimps, as per a recent call made by the authorities to promote fresh water prawn culture. According to Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, aquaculture production of giant freshwater prawn, *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* in India has shown a phenomenal increase in recent years. Aquaculture has created enthusiasm among entrepreneurs especially for shrimp farming in coastal areas.

Although India has vast freshwater resources they are not fully exploited except for carp culture in limited scale. Fresh water fish culture employing composite fish culture technology has become popular for use in large number of tanks and ponds in the country, studies state. The hatchery and nursery is located inland where there is ample supply of good freshwater, and saline water required for larval development is transported and mixed with freshwater to attain the

desired salinity. The soil conditions for freshwater prawn culture: clay-silt mixture or sandy loam comprising of 60% sand and 40% silt with good water retention capacity, is ideal for inland freshwater prawn culture in the Nagapattinam-Mayiladuthurai coastal belt, according to officials. The ponds are usually dug up in farms where the soil is fertile, as this will reduce the need and costs of fertilisation. Freshwater prawn ponds are constructed on soil, which has good water retention characteristics or where suitable materials can be economically brought onto the site to improve water retention, according to the TNAU advisory.

### **Tamil Nadu: No irregularities in fishing harbour tenders, Madras High Court told**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/12/30041120/1336384/No-irregularities-in-fishing-harbour-tenders-Madras-vpf>

"There were no irregularities in issuing tenders for establishing two fishing harbours in Kancheepuram and Villupuram districts, the Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Department said in a counter-affidavit before the Madras High Court. V Raju, chief engineer, Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare Department, submitted the affidavit against the petition filed by P Manivannan, a Chennai-based senior engineering contractor, who had sought the court to quash two tender notifications dated February 27 for the construction of the fishing harbour in Alamparaikuppam in Kancheepuram and Kaluveli waters in Villupuram. The petitioner had alleged that the respondents were trying to defraud the government funds in a novel way – in addition to the usual manner of tender frauds – which would enrich them and the officials and cause a loss of Rs 22.46 crore to the government.

"The respondents are in connivance of authorities responsible for the preparation for the estimation in utter violation of the rules," Manivannan added. However, the department said in its counter-affidavit that the allegations were false and malicious. "Since the petitioner could not win the tender, he is levelling baseless allegations against the government. The tenders were issued last year and the petitioner is wilfully challenging this now," the chief engineer said in the counter. Raju also submitted that the construction works are under way after commencing it in February. "There is no irregularity in the tender process. The tenders were awarded to the concerns which have won the bid. The petitioner also participated in the bid but he was not qualified at the stage of pre-qualification," the official added. The court would soon hear the matter.

### **Tamil Nadu: The importance of protecting Pulicat Lake**

<https://frontline.thehindu.com/environment/conservation/photo-essay-the-importance-of-protecting-pulicat-lake/article38011059.ece>

"Pulicat Lake is a unique waterbody that is situated along the east coast of India and sprawls across Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. More than 600 years old, the lake has a strong

association with the cultural heritage and socio-economic status of both States. Its water spread area is 720 square kilometres during the monsoon. The lake is about 60 km in length, and its breadth varies from 200 metres to 17.5 km. Buckingham Canal traverses in a north to the south direction at the lake's eastern edge, along Sriharikota Island. The canal is a 419-km-long navigation channel the British dug in the early 19th century that extends from Pedda Ganjam in Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh, southwards through Chennai and to Marakanam, Chengalpattu district, Tamil Nadu. The problem of siltation and the advent of the railway along the coast after the canal was constructed gradually saw it fall into disuse.

The rivers Swarnamukhi and Kalangi in the north and the Arani and the Korttalaiyar (as the Kosasthalaiyar is referred to in old British era documents) in the south drain into Pulicat Lake during the monsoon. In the dry season, water is generally present only in the southern areas and near the lake's two inlets. The other areas of the lake receive inflows from the Bay of Bengal during spring tides and when there are strong winds. The lake receives fresh water through the rivers and canals draining into it and marine water through the inlet mouth connected to the Bay of Bengal. The lake has a spatial and temporal salinity gradient that gives rise to a multitude of niches inhabited by a large diversity of plant and animal species. About a lakh people living in 200 villages around Pulicat Lake depend directly on its highly productive lagoon ecosystem with its rich fishery resources for their livelihood. This large and fragile wetland ecosystem has hardly survived the pressures of human activities in the area.

Among the most significant threats identified so far are the historical destruction (and fragmentation) of the mangrove ecosystem, commercial cultivation of shrimps and farming, over-exploitation of hydro-biological resources, inappropriate extraction activities (with impacts on fauna), deforestation and conversion of neighbouring forests, and pollution by waste water and pesticides from adjacent agricultural lands. To address these problems, which are accelerating the destruction of this unique ecosystem, the respective State governments must establish a development authority for the lake along the lines of the Chilika Development Authority in Odisha. Such a body can help develop an integrated management initiative for the entire lake ecosystem, with the support of the governments of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

Key aspects of the process should include a community-based planning and management scheme (e.g. active participation of stakeholders and resource users), an integrated approach (that involves the entire ecosystem and not only the protected area), a zoning programme for land-use planning, clear conservation objectives, identification and mitigation of key impacts and, finally, a solid technical base for the project's implementation and monitoring. Threatened habitats The historical backdrop of our knowledge on early wetlands comes from maps and documents that survived the ages. For many centuries, mankind viewed wetlands as places that had to be drained and converted for agriculture. Today, wetlands are one of the most threatened habitats of the

world. Lakes and coastal wetlands play a vital role in global ecosystems in the maintenance of biodiversity, ecology and hydrology and for recreational purposes.

They provide a habitat for a wide variety of flora and fauna and help maintain the life cycle of many species. Many of the world's lakes and coastal wetlands have deteriorated because of exploitative use and improper management, causing irreparable damage to ecosystems and the life and culture of people living around them. Increased demands for drainage of wetlands have been accommodated by channelisation, resulting in a further loss of stream habitats, which has led to increasing numbers of aquatic organisms becoming extinct or imperilled and to the impairment of the many beneficial uses of the water, including drinking, swimming and fishing. Indeed, freshwater deterioration and scarcity have been threatening many forms of life and have serious consequences for humans.

Region-wise initiatives such as the Asian Wetland Inventory and the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy 2001-2005 have already been started in recognition of the ongoing and impending threats to the lakes and wetlands in the Asian region. However, it has been recognised that the human and financial resources currently allocated to the conservation and wise use of lakes and wetlands in the Asian region are not sufficient and need to be strengthened.

Successful conservation of lakes and wetlands depends on the proper management of their watersheds, but there are conflicting interests in the use of their resources. Therefore, it is important to involve all stakeholders in the process of restoration, conservation and management of lakes and coastal wetlands. And there is an urgent need to promote regional linkages, develop strategic partnerships and follow good practices in the conservation and management of lakes and coastal wetlands. It is also essential to establish new or strengthen ongoing regional and international cooperation linkages and strategic partnerships between governments, international agencies, universities, research institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local communities, the private sector and individuals. There are several international and national level organisations working towards conservation of nature and natural resources and interest in the preservation of wetlands has increased as their value to society has become more fully understood. In 1971, a significant United Nations convention on wetlands took place in Ramsar, Iran.

The Ramsar Convention, as it is widely known, is an international environmental treaty with the mission of conservation and wise use of wetlands through local, regional and national action and international cooperation and to contribute towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world. The convention plays an important role in deepening the world's consciousness of the importance of protecting wetlands, and that is why Pulicat Lake needs to be designated as one of India's important wetlands. Biodiversity hotspot Pulicat Lake is a

biodiversity hotspot that shelters several endemic and endangered species included in the red list of threatened species of the International Union for Conservation of Nature. It is an avian paradise for several migratory birds and, during the peak migratory season, hosts around 250 species of birds, 50 of which are intercontinental species. In 2010, the Global Nature Fund, an organisation based in Germany, declared Pulicat Lake a “threatened lake”. However, there is still no proposal to get the lake added to the list in the Montreux Record. If a wetland is threatened, it must first be included in the Montreux Record.

Later, it will be brought to the Ramsar List. Owing to the ecological threats it is facing, the lake has to be included in the Montreux Record. Further, emerging issues such as global warming, climate change and their impacts on coastal zone ecosystem need to be addressed. People do not realise the preciousness of Pulicat. It was considered useless and not important enough to be protected. Therefore, the Central and respective State governments must consider getting it included under the Ramsar Convention. A wide area of Pulicat has been destroyed, and now there are several development projects planned that will have an impact on the lake: expansion of the Dugarajapatnam port and a proposed Adani port, among other projects. Local governments should stop the lime shell mining that local people carry out at Pulicat Lake as it destroys mudflat habitats. Local governments should also devise a way to protect these habitats such as designation of the tidal flats as important for birds and proceed with the process of getting the lake registered in the Ramsar List. The public should commit itself with deep consciousness to protect Pulicat Lake. In an overpopulated country like India with few job opportunities, people in power often make development plans that the public are unaware of and without a sufficient environmental assessment.

The promotion of projects in and around the lake will lead to its destruction. Besides the strategies for biodiversity conservation of Pulicat Lake, ecotourism development, community participation, integrated watershed management, hydrological monitoring and modelling activities need to be undertaken in collaboration with various national and international institutions. One of the major interventions needed after intensive scientific studies and consultations with all stakeholders is desilting of the channel connecting the lagoon to the sea and the opening of a new mouth to restore the natural flow of water and salinity levels. The local community has been asking for this for the past two decades. The intervention could result in the improvement of the lake ecosystem with a phenomenal increase in fish yield and the reduction in freshwater invasive species.

Other measures should include management of the catchment in a participatory manner as the plan for restoration of the lake must be based on a river basin approach; protection of bird habitats and of bird species with the active involvement of the community; economic incentives for the local population to stop poaching of birds; measures to improve the socio-economic conditions, such as orientation training to facilitate community-based ecotourism; provision of

solar street lights for island villages; development of a ferry service for isolated island villages; development of landing facilities for fisherfolk; networking of NGOs and community-based organisations; and carrying out education and environmental awareness activities. Good environmental practices that facilitate poverty alleviation of the community can lead to self-initiated participatory processes for conservation and sustainable use of the resources of the Pulicat Lake through the community adopting good practices and having a sense of local ownership.

This in turn could increase the productivity level of both the wetland and the watershed. The Chilika lagoon is a striking example of how the restoration of the ecological characteristics of a site results not only in improvement of the lagoon ecosystem but also benefits the community depending on the wetland: the average annual income of each family increased by more than Rs.50,000 (around \$1,040). The restoration of the Chilika lagoon derives its uniqueness from the strong participation of local communities, linkage with various national and international institutions, and intensive monitoring and assessment systems. And these are the attributes any development authority set up for Pulicat Lake should adopt.

The case of the Chilika lagoon is a perfect example of how the listing of a site on the Montreux Record can be used to promote measures to correct the changes in the ecological character of a site and to improve the socio-economic conditions of the population living in and around it. If the measures taken for the restoration of the lake result in a considerable improvement of its fishery resources and water quality and have a positive impact on the biodiversity of the lake, this can significantly contribute towards the increase in the per capita income of the community that depends on the lake for its livelihood.

As a major portion of the lake is in Andhra Pradesh (84 per cent), a question of jurisdictional issues may arise with respect to the location of the development authority if it is successfully set up. Before this the respective State governments and their Forest Departments should prepare a collaborative plan for the authority, which should be tasked with the following objectives: restoring the lake; funding research and educational and conservation projects; setting up an interpretation centre, a GIS cell and people's participatory, ecotourism and development programmes; managing the fish resources (in consultation with the Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture and the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute); carrying out dredging interventions; monitoring water chemistry and quality; and eradicating invasive species.

A team of biologists will be required to prepare an adaptive ecological plan for the lake and to carry out regular monitoring of the lake ecosystem. The ecosystem approach is the only way to manage the resources sustainably. In addition, the design of an integrated management area that includes coastal-marine, forests and transitional lands will improve resource management and

minimise impacts. Finally, if ecotourism and craftsmanship initiatives can be developed, they will be as complementary sources of income to reinforce sustainable resource use and will contribute to more sustainable lifestyles. Pulicat Lake could be a significant subject to indicate the future course of wetland protection and, if successful, could serve as an international model for development and protection.

### **Tamil Nadu: Big ships at Ennore cut nets: Fishermen**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/City/2021/12/27060132/1335902/Big-ships-at-Ennore-cut-nets-Fishermen.vpf>

"Fishermen in the northern parts of the city are facing a rampant problem of big vessels destroying their nets. In the last 30 days, fishermen nets worth more than Rs 1 lakh were destroyed by big ships entering Ennore Port. "Ever since the construction of Ennore Port commenced, we have been claiming that our properties will be destroyed by bigger ships and now the incidents of ships damaging our nets have increased. The damage incurred by fishermen runs into several thousands of rupees which causes a heavy dent on the livelihood of fishermen," K Bharathi, president, South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association, told DT Next. Fishermen of more than 20 fishing hamlets in and around Ennore go for fishing near the Ennore Port during the nights.

They spread their nets and collect their catch in the early hours, but ships coming in and out of Ennore Port run over their nets causing damage to it. Despite repeated complaints, fishermen claim that no action has been taken. Selvamani, a boat owner from Kasivisalkshipuram, a fishing hamlet in Tiruvottiyur, is one of the recent victims of the atrocities of the ships as his nets worth Rs 80,000 were damaged by a ship that entered Ennore Port. "If fishermen are present in the boats and see the ships entering the Ennore Port fishermen will leave the way for the ships, but the nets could not be moved as they get caught in the propellers of the ship resulting in damages," said Selvamani. Bharathi said that fishermen do not face the trouble from ships entering Chennai Port as the entry and exit of boats are regulated by the Port officials, but the problem exists only in Ennore Port as the port officials do not give any signal to the fishermen and there is no specific timing for the entry and exit of the ships. When asked about the incidents, a senior official attached to the Fisheries Department, on request of anonymity, replied that a letter has been written to the Ennore Port officials about the damage incurred to the fishing nets and compensation of Rs 80,000 has been demanded from them.

### **Tamil Nadu: Tough to find wards of fishers for training programme**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/exam/article38031437.ece>

"Fisheries Department is in the midst of executing a challenging task of identifying wards of fishers fulfilling eligibility conditions for the free coaching for UPSC examinations offered by

All India Civil Services Coaching Centre run under the auspices of the Government of Tamil Nadu. Across the State, 20 wards of fishers whose parents (one of them) hold membership in Tamil Nadu Fishermen Welfare Board are eligible to undergo the free training programme for which the candidates are chosen based on an entrance examination to be conducted on January 23, 2022 at 22 centres across the State. The free training is provided under Corporate Social Responsibility of Tamil Nadu Fisheries Development Corporation. Though the applicants are required to be graduates of post-graduates, the requirement for them to have secured 80 % in Plus Two has made the task a tough proposition for the Fisheries Department, according to sources in the education department.

Last year, three candidates from Nagapattinam district underwent the training programme and appeared for the UPSC examination but none could go to the next level. Across the State, fishers in Kanyakumari area are known to accord importance to education for the next generation and are able to derive the utility of the scheme, sources said. While the All India Civil Services Coaching Centre Chennai, accepts 225 aspirants for full time residential programme and 100 part-time aspirants. The Anna Centenary Civil Services Coaching Academies, Coimbatore and Madurai accept 100 aspirants each for full time residential programme Anna Institute of Management, Chennai, has prepared the syllabus for the Civil Services Examination screening test. Eligible candidates will have to appear for a two-hour competitive entrance examination conducted by the department. The examination will have objective type questions on history of India and Indian national movement, Indian and world geography, Indian polity and governance, economic and social development, general issues on environmental ecology, bio-diversity and climate change.

### **Tamil Nadu: Rameswaram fishermen to continue with stir**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/rameswaram-fishermen-to-continue-with-stir/article38043621.ece>

"Thanking Chief Minister M.K. Stalin and the State government for taking their plight to the Centre for release of jailed fishermen and retrieval of vessels seized by Sri Lanka Navy on December 18-19, fishermen associations here on Sunday said they would continue with their agitation. Fisheries Minister Anitha Radhakrishnan had a meeting with association leaders at Rameswaram and assured them that he would soon lead a delegation to New Delhi to meet External Affairs Minister Jaishankar. Speaking to The Hindu, fishermen association leader Jesu Raja said they were highly moved by the State government's initiative. "We will take a call on withdrawal of the strike after return from New Delhi." He added that the Sri Lankan government had announced that they would not release the vessels. Such unilateral decisions by the Sri Lankan government and authorities resulted in the fishermen staying away from fishing. "What else can we do other than fishing if our boats are withheld by the Sri Lankan authorities," he

asked. In the past too, such seizures had resulted in public auction in Sri Lanka and the fishermen had ended up with huge losses, Mr Jesu Raja recalled. The agitation to block the train at Thangachimadam on the evening of January 1, 2022 by fishermen was resolved at a meeting hurriedly convened here on Sunday. Though some fishermen in Mandapam and Pamban had planned to withdraw the stir and go to the seas, they withdrew the plan, the fishermen leaders said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishing vessel hit by cargo ship back at sea after undergoing repair**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/tn-fishing-vessel-hit-by-cargo-ship-back-at-sea-after-undergoing-repair/articleshow/88447217.cms>

"Sijumon,' a mechanised trawler boat from Colachel in Kanyakumari district that suffered severe damage when it was hit by the Panama flagged M V Navios Venus on October 22, is back at the after undergoing . But the 17 fishermen who were on board the mechanised boat are in wait for compensation from the shipping firm. The boat that left Colachel harbour on October 22 was hit by the cargo vessel 19 nautical miles off the Colachel harbour the same night. The front of the boat was damaged. All the crew members inside the boat's cabin were thrown away in the impact. They survived. Two injured fishermen were rushed to the hospital in an ICG ship. Others with minor injuries reached the shore with the battered boat with help from two other boats. Boat owner P Rajamani of Colachel moved the Madras high court bench in Madurai.

On November 11, the court directed the shipping firm to hand over a compensation of Rs 70 lakh for the damage caused to the boat. The firm also gave a bank guarantee of Rs 50 lakh to hold talks and settle the compensation for the fishermen who were on the boat, following which the ship was released from the Mumbai port. Two months after the tragedy, the boat has been fixed with the compensation and has been released in the sea. "It will be taken for fishing after Christmas," Rajamani told TOI. However, fishermen are yet to get the compensation from the shipping firm as fruitful talks for the same are yet to be held. They lamented that they had suffered injuries, underwent mental agony and also suffered economically due to the incident. As an ad hoc measure, the boat owner has financially supported the families with a portion of the relief he got from the shipping firm.

### **Tamil Nadu: Mechanised boat fishermen, family members observe fast**

<http://www.uniindia.com/~//mechanised-boat-fishermen-family-members-observe-fast/States/news/2599980.html>

"More than 2,000 fishermen and their family members from coastal hamlets of Ramanathapuram district observed a day-long fast at Thangachimadam here on Wednesday demanding the immediate and unconditional release of 68 fishermen from Tamil Nadu arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy for allegedly poaching in their territorial waters. The call to observe the

fast was given by leaders of 11 fishermen associations in Rameswaram. N.J.Bose, President of Rameswaram Port Mechanized Boat Fishermen Association, said the Indian government should take concrete steps to ensure the traditional fishing rights of Tamil Nadu fishermen. The Sri Lankan Navy has been continuously harassing the fishermen in the Palk Bay under the guise of cross border fishing. The fishermen associations have been demanding to form a joint working group of the fishermen from Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka to solve the issues. The fishermen associations have also decided to resort to block the Chennai Express train at Thangachimadam on January one, if all the arrested fishermen were not released by December 31.

A delegation comprising fishermen leaders and families of arrested fishermen will be going to New Delhi to meet External Affairs Minister S.Jaishankar and Fisheries Minister Parshottam Rupala to submit a memorandum, demanding to put an end to the frequent arrest of fishermen by the Lankan Navy. The Sri Lankan Navy has arrested 68 fishermen hailing from Rameswaram, Mandapam and Jegadhapattinam in Tamil Nadu and confiscated 10 fishing trawlers in three separate incidents on December 18, 19 and 20. Chief Minister M K Stalin had already taken up the matter with the External Affairs Minister seeking his intervention to secure the release of the fishermen. In a letter to Dr Jaishankar, which was handed over to him by DMK MPs in New Delhi, the Chief Minister referred to the three incidents of arrest of 68 fishermen and urged the Centre to prevail upon the Sri Lankan government through diplomatic channels to put an end to the intimidatory tactics of the Lankan Navy. "The alarming frequency at which these incidents of apprehension and attacks are happening warrants urgent attention. The lives and livelihoods of our fishermen must be protected when they fish in the traditional waters of Palk Bay," he said.

### **Centre asks Tamil Nadu govt for list of fishermen for India-Sri Lanka talks**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/12/21100510/1335025/Centre-asks-Tamil-Nadu-govt-for-list-of-fishermen-vpf>

"India's Union Ministry of External Affairs has directed the Tamil Nadu government to provide a list of people representing fishermen associations in the state for talks between the Indian side and the Lankan side on the dispute over fishing. The Tamil Nadu government, according to sources, will be soon sending the list of participants after consulting the fishermen associations and leaders. The move assumes significance after the arrest and subsequent prison of 55 Indian fishermen from Rameswaram and Mandapam in Tamil Nadu. The fishermen were arrested on December 19 by the Sri Lankan Navy and according to information they were produced before a Sri Lankan court and subsequently remanded in a Jaffna prison. According to information available, the arrested are remanded in judicial custody till December 31. Eight mechanized fishing boats belonging to the fishermen from India are also in the custody of the Sri Lankan navy.

### **Tamil Nadu: Gulf of Mannar corals to face threat if plan to grow invasive seaweed gets nod**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/dec/22/gulf-of-mannar-corals-to-face-threat-if-plan-to-grow-invasive-seaweed-gets-nod-2398366.html>

"Succumbing to industrial lobby, Union government is reportedly pushing for large-scale commercial cultivation of invasive alien seaweed - *Kappaphycus alvarezii* - inside the eco-sensitive zone of Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park which is one of the world's richest regions for marine biodiversity and coral reefs. Gujarat-based Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (CSIR-CSMCRI) has identified five locations in Gulf of Mannar and two locations in Gulf of Kutch for seaweed cultivation and submitted the proposal for Niti Aayog to initiate pilot-scale cultivation and even received funds. Officials sources confirmed to TNIE Pattinamaruthur and Vellapatti in Ottapidaram block in Thoothukudi; Periyasampuram in Villathikulam block in Thoothukudi, Erwadi in Kadaladi block in Ramanathapuram and Seeni appadharga in Mandapam block in Ramanathapuram are the five locations identified in Gulf of Mannar for *Kappaphycus* cultivation. Sources said the multipurpose seaweed park announced for Tamil Nadu by Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in last budget is being used as gateway to push cultivation of exotic species, rather than promoting native seaweed varieties. *Kappaphycus*, a fast growing alga known to absorb high amount of nutrients from seawater is already under rampant cultivation in Palk Bay region. Indigenous to Indonesia and Philippines, the exotic seaweed was introduced to India in 1995 for cultivation purpose.

The commercial significance of *Kappaphycus* lies in its role in production of an industrially lucrative polymer called Carrageenan. This is highly problematic considering the fact that the global invasive species database maintained by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) placed the *Kappaphycus* in the 'red list'. The Invasive Species Specialist Group of IUCN has described the *Kappaphycus* as ""destructive invasive species and pose a serious danger to the coral reefs"". There are numerous scientific studies and research papers published over the years by Suganthi Devadason Marine Research Institute (SDMRI), Thoothukudi and National Institute of Oceanography, Goa hinting of possible bio-invasion corals of Gulf of Mannar islands by *Kappaphycus*, if left unchecked.

A four-year underwater research study done by SDMRI with the funding support of Union environment ministry, whose results were published in 2018, showed that Shingle, Kurusadai and Mulli islands in Mandapam cluster and Valai island in Kilakarai of Gulf of Mannar were invaded by *Kappaphycus*. Considering the vast impact on corals, the report recommended that the cultivation of exotic seaweed in and around Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park and Marine Biosphere Reserve areas should be completely stopped. ""Government should not grant permission to introduce any alien species in Gulf of Mannar areas including for experimental proposes, as they are capable of altering the ecological balance as well as depleting the health and community structure of key resources like coral reefs and its eco services, and thereby the livelihood of dependent fisher community,"" the report said. In fact, there is a 2005 Government

Order that restricts cultivation of the exotic seaweed only to the seawaters north of the Palk Bay and South of Thoothukudi coast.

When contacted, Commissioner of Fisheries KS Palanisamy told TNIE a consultant has been appointed to prepare a detailed project report for the proposed seaweed park. Feasibility studies are being conducted in Thoothukudi, Ramanathapuram, Pudukkottai, Thanjavur, Nagapattinam and Tiruvarur. Palanisamy distanced himself from CSMCRI efforts to promote *Kappaphycus* inside eco-sensitive zone of Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park. "I am not aware of it. We will not promote anything in violation of 2005 GO. Cultivation will be carried out outside the notified area." Chief Wildlife Warden Shekhar Kumar Niraj told TNIE: "Kappaphycus is an invasive species and every year the department carries out manual clean-up of coral reefs in the islands invaded by the exotic seaweed. We don't have any problem, if native seaweed species are cultivated, but at no cost *Kappaphycus* will be allowed to be cultivated inside the Gulf of Mannar. This species can regrow from fragments as small as 0.5 cm making it an extremely difficult to control."

#### **Tamil Nadu: Collector cautions fishermen**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/collector-cautions-fishermen/article38007743.ece>

"The Mayiladuthurai district administration has cautioned fishermen against going beyond five nautical miles, and has issued a set of directives for strict adherence. The fishers must desist from using motors beyond the capacity of 240 horsepower, and must return to the harbours on the same day. The fishers will be required to leave at 5 a.m. and return before 9 p.m., Collector R. Lalitha has said. Citing an order issued in 2000 by the Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Ministry, the Collector said boats powered by engines beyond 240 horsepower would be confiscated. According to the Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Act of 1983, the hole of the fishing nets should not be less than 40 mm. Those found flouting the directives will have to face legal consequences. Under the Regulation Act, boats of those disobeying the directives will be seized and the fish caught with the banned purse seine nets will be auctioned. Also, the benefits they receive under government schemes will be withdrawn, the Collector said.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Nagore Neidhal Park in Nagapattinam to boost tourism, livelihood of fisherfolk, says officials**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/dec/18/nagore-neidhal-park-in-nagapattinam-to-boost-tourism-livelihood-of-fisherfolk-say-officials-2396964.html>

"The creation of Nagore Neidhal Park announced by the State government on Friday is likely to emerge as a major tourist attraction in Nagapattinam district in the coming years. 'Neidhal' is one of the five 'Thinai's' of Sangam literature. It refers to sea, seashore, lives and

livelihoods of people who reside in the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu. According to the government announcement, the park will come up at a cost of Rs 2 crore over an area of three hectares (around 7.3 acres). It will showcase environment, lifestyle, food habits, arts and culture. It will also feature palm huts, bamboo caverns, coral reef models and pearl oysters. The announcement has been received well by residents and public representatives in Nagapattinam. Syed Mohammed Khalifa Sahib, an activist and hereditary seer of Nagore Dargah, said, ""The initiative will increase local tourism and help in the development of Nagore. Pilgrims coming from across the country will be able to spend time at the park and learn about the tradition and culture of Nagapattinam.

Additionally, we request the history of 'Maraicairs', the Muslims who traded through sea to be showcased in the park."" He insisted that the park be set up on global standards. According to sources, the Horticulture Department initiated the idea. It will collaborate with the Fisheries Department in executing the project. An official from the Horticulture Department said, ""The park will help us exhibit our horticulture models to tourists and locals and also help us promote local horticulture."" The departments have chosen poromboke land near Silladi Dargah in Nagore and the site is about 500 metres away from the shoreline. The project is expected to materialise in the coming months, and the construction will be completed in a couple of years, officials said. The park will also feature a lot of recreation aspects, including amusement rides such as playground slides in the children's play area. The design of the amusement structures will resemble fishes, officials added. The park will include a ticket counter, a food court and stalls. Seafood and fish delicacies will be predominantly sold, apart from value-added seafood products. There would be a waterbody made out of a channel in the middle, where people can fish for recreation.

An official from the Fisheries Department said, ""The project will empower livelihoods of locals. Fisherwomen, fish workers, seafood vendors and their likes will greatly benefit from the initiative once the park is opened to the public."" RMP Rajendra Nattar, a fisherfolk representative, said, ""We welcome the announcement. It will help to increase the income of the less-earning section of fishermen community. It will also open a new window for fisheries-based tourism. But the government must ensure that the fishermen community get benefited through the project. The stakeholders from our community should also be consulted to make it achieve its purpose.""

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishing harbour to come up near Kaliveli sanctuary?**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/dec/21/fishing-harbour-to-come-up-near-kaliveli-sanctuary-2397918.html>

"In a contentious decision, Tamil Nadu State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) on November 12 has granted environmental clearance for a modern greenfield fishing

harbour in the Edaiyanthittu estuary in Villupuram district. The estuary is ecologically contiguous with the Kaliveli wetland ecosystem, of which 5,151 hectares was declared a Wetlands Birds Sanctuary just last week. Any large-scale commercial activity in the estuary will directly impact the Kaliveli sanctuary, one of the largest waterfowl congregation sites in TN and a well-known raptor roosting site for species such as the Eastern Imperial Eagle and Red-necked Falcon. The Grey-tailed Tattler, a rare migratory wader, has been spotted only here and in Pulicat, in India.

As per the environment clearance, a copy of which is with TNIE, several infrastructural facilities, including action halls and packing halls, will be built near Alamparaikuppam and Azhagankuppam at a cost of Rs 235 crore to handle an estimated fish quantity of 24,000 tonnes per annum. An area of five hectares of sandbar would be dredged to develop a navigation channel inside the Kaliveli backwaters to dock 110 mechanised boats and 300 motorised boats. To prevent sedimentation of the channel, two training walls are planned on the northern and southern sides of the channel measuring 400 m and 600 m respectively. Domain experts said all of this will destroy seagrass meadows, oyster reefs and salt marshes in the area, besides triggering erosion.

‘Harbour to harm over 20 small coastal villages’ the fisheries officials, however, claim the harbour will improve the socio-economic status of the fishing communities of Chengalpattu and Villupuram districts. Although they claim no issue was raised in the public hearing meeting, there is massive opposition to the project from small-scale and marginalised fishers. M Ravi, ex-president of Kolathur village panchayat, said once the big fishing vessels are allowed to dock inside the backwaters and begin operations, there will be oil spills and discharge of effluents into the waterbody, which would hamper the productivity of nutrient-rich waters. Bhavani, a widow fisher woman from Edaikazhinadu village, said oysters, clams and other shellfish will not grow in polluted waters affecting their livelihood. “Also, if the soil is dredged and the Kaliveli is deepened, we won’t be able to venture into the backwaters.” Saralan, one of the very few graduates from Muttukadu village, alleged that only few big fishing villages like Kadapakkam, Azhangankuppam, and Alamparaikuppam will benefit from the harbour, while over 20 small coastal villages dependent on backwaters will be affected.

“The mechanised and motorised boat fishermen, who already enjoy government subsidies, silenced our voices during the public hearing convened by Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board last January,” he said. A senior forest official in Villupuram told TNIE that the proposed harbour site falls outside the boundary of the sanctuary’s eco-sensitive zone, but acknowledged that any improper discharge of effluents into the estuary will affect the sanctuary. “We are exploring the possibility of declaring Edaiyanthittu estuary as a conservation reserve,” the official said. As per the Fisheries Department submission, the proposed harbour will generate about 30,000 litres of sewage per day and 40 tonnes of biodegradable and 10 tonnes of non-biodegradable solid waste

per annum. Although, SEI AA, in its clearance, imposed several conditions to deal with effluents, activists say compliance to norms has been poor in every fishing harbour.

### **Tamil Nadu: Indian Trawler rams into local fishing boat in Sea of Sri Lanka**

<https://www.newsfirst.lk/2021/12/16/indian-trawler-rams-into-local-fishing-boat-in-sea-of-sri-lanka/>

"Sri Lanka Navy rendered assistance to a local fishing trawler and its fishermen after it got seriously damaged having collided with an Indian poaching vessel in Sri Lankan territorial waters, on 15th December 2021. Sri Lanka Navy has been conducting regular operations to prevent illegal Bottom Trawling fishing practices of Indian poaching vessels, entering Sri Lankan waters. After observing about 200 Indian poaching vessels in Sri Lankan territorial waters off the Kachchativu Island and Kovilam Lighthouse in the evening of 15th December, Sri Lanka Navy mounted a special operation deploying two ships attached to the Northern Naval Command to chase away those poaching vessels from the island waters. These illegal fishing activities by Indian fishermen cause damage not only to the marine environment of Sri Lanka but also to the fishing vessels and equipment of local fishing community. On the night of 15th December, a Sri Lanka Navy ship patrolling in seas south of the Delft Island spotted a local fishing trawler (Reg. No. 1DAY-A-0137-JFN) in distress after an Indian poaching vessel collided with it, causing serious damage to the tiller flat area of the local vessel. Further, its propeller has also been severely damaged with an entanglement of ropes and nets of the Indian poaching vessels. Accordingly, the Navy ship made arrangements to send the distressed fishing vessel and its 02 fishermen ashore with the assistance of another fishing vessel in the vicinity. It is reported that no injuries have been caused to the 02 fishermen in this mid-sea collision. Sri Lanka Navy will continue to patrol island waters with a view to prevent damage to the marine environment of Sri Lanka by Indian poaching vessels through illegal fishing practices and to protect the livelihood of the local fishing community.

### **Tamil Nadu: Reopen Sterlite unit, say villagers, fishers**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/reopen-sterlite-unit-say-villagers-fishers/article37945373.ece>

"Demand for reopening of Sterlite Copper unit became more vociferous as villagers from a few hamlets and fishermen submitted separate petitions during the weekly grievance redress meet held at the Collectorate on Monday. A group of members of the Country Boat Prawn Fishermen Welfare Association, led by its president Sanda, secretary Samsudeen and treasurer Yasir, submitted a petition. They said they had misconceptions about Sterlite Copper due to "wrong information" spread among the people. Since the fishers had now been enlightened that there was no pollution by the unit, which would accelerate the development of Thoothukudi by

providing employment opportunities to the unemployed youth and through community development programmes, they wanted its reopening, they said. A group of villagers from Saminatham, Sillanatham, Madathur, Sankaraperi and Rajavinkovil too submitted separate petitions in support of the demand. "Besides giving our children employment, Sterlite Copper had bailed out our children by providing them scholarships to pursue their education. The three-and-a-half-year closure of the copper smelting unit has left hundreds of people from villages around the unit jobless, and their families are struggling to even feed their children. Hence, the State government should give permission for its reopening," the villagers said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Seafood high on export menu**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/seafood-high-on-export-menu/articleshow/88243711.cms>

"Braving the choppy waters the sector faced globally, seafood exporters in Tamil Nadu had a decent haul in the first seven months of this fiscal. They earned \$758 million in exports, nearly 80% of the \$973 million export target set for 2021-22 by the Centre. This despite the Covid-inflicted troubles that had hit production, the steep increase in freight cost, the non-availability of refrigerated containers on time due to cartelisation by shipping lines, not to mention China conducting nucleic tests on seafood imports from India. It's a labour-intensive industry, employing mostly women – the 40-odd seafood exporters in Tamil Nadu employ more than 30,000 people. But despite a 1,076km coastline, Tamil Nadu accounts for a mere 15% of the total \$7.8 billion Indian seafood exports targeted for this fiscal.

"The new DMK-led government in Tamil Nadu is proactive. It has identified seafood exports as one of the 'champion' sectors for boosting exports and helping the state achieve its \$1 trillion economy target by 2030. We made a detailed presentation to finance minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan. He and fisheries minister Anitha Radhakrishnan have promised all support for us," says K V V Mohanan, Tamil Nadu president of the Indian Seafood Exporters' Association. Tamil Nadu's 15% share of seafood exports includes transfers from Andhra Pradesh through the Chennai port. Aquaculture (mostly shrimp) contributes almost 70% of the export kitty, with capture fisheries accounting for the rest. Aquaculture production in TN has been dropping for the last few years, while other states such as Andhra Pradesh have upped output. The hatcheries sector, which originated in Chennai, has fallen victim to extortion by anti-socials with political support. As a result, the industry went virtually into hibernation over the past 10 years in the state, the industry delegation told the ministers.

"This government is keen to develop the marine seafood industry. I have asked the associations for hatcheries and aquaculture farmers to come forward and draw an action plan along with the

exporters to enable the industry to tap its vast potential. As such, the problems for the industry are not with the government, but with local miscreants turned extortionists,"" says Elias Sait, secretary general, Indian Seafood Exporters' Association. He cites a recent case, where a seafood exporter received all necessary approvals in one month from this government to establish a factory near Arambakkam, close to the TN-AP border to process fish. But a few miscreants created a furore and the exporter is now forced to approach a court, despite local officials coming out in his support, to begin operations. Seafood exports can surge if Tamil Nadu can add another 8,000 acres for aquaculture in the next three years, allotting land to poorer sections, especially the fishermen community, say industry experts. The government should also help them get loans and offer subsidies to help them adopt the latest techniques in aquaculture. This can boost shrimp production to 50,000 tonnes per annum, from last year's 20,000 tonnes. ""Andhra Pradesh (Seemandhra) has effectively put to use almost 95% of land identified as suitable for aquaculture.

In Tamil Nadu, a mere 16% of the available land is being used. The potential for growth is huge,"" says Mohanan. Industry experts say that marine product exports from Tamil Nadu can touch rs 15,000 crore and more in the next five years from the Rs 9,000 crore expected this year. ""But we are facing problems on twin fronts. High diesel prices, despite state government subsidy, have limited the number of boats venturing into sea and continuing depletion of marine resources has cut the catch by half,"" says D B Ravi Reddy, treasurer, Seafood Exporters Association of India. He says indiscriminate fishing, which hauls in juvenile fish too, has contributed to the depletion of the catch. The cost of power to run cold storages in Tamil Nadu is also five times more than in some other coastal states. The industry has to overcome this 'double whammy' to sustain exports at existing levels. It has urged the state to introduce aquaculture parks, offer latest tuna fishing technology and encourage cage culture and sea ranching to replenish the catch.

### **Andhra Pradesh: Fishermen harrassed by Tamil Nadu mechanical boat operartors**

<https://www.thehansindia.com/andhra-pradesh/ap-fishermen-harrassed-by-tamil-nadu-mechanical-boat-operartors-719459>

"Urging the government to intervene, the fishermen from coastal districts of Nellore, Prakasam and Guntur districts on Sunday said that the mechanised boats and trawlers from Talmil Nadu are attacking and damaging boats their boats. The fishermen from these districts also alleged that the mechanised boats from Tamil Nadu are damaging their nets, boats and even attacking them personally. They are demanding the State government to implement the Andhra Pradesh Marine Fishing (regulation) Act, 1995 in true spirit and protect them from the atrocities of the fishermen syndicate of the Tamil Nadu. The Andhra Pradesh government announced up to 8 kilometres of the sea as the reserved zone for traditional crafts, and any authorised officer can

seize mechanized fishing trawlers or vessels. Also, the mechanized vessels of length 15 meters and above, with weight more than 25 tonnes also should not fish in the reserved waters. But the heavy mechanised boats with powerful engines from Union Territory Puducherry, Cuddalore, Nagapatnam, Tutukudi and other places of Tamil Nadu are venturing into the reserved zone for the traditional wood crafts in the Andhra Pradesh area and are damaging the boats and nets, alleged the fishermen leaders. The leaders of the 'Samudratheera Matsyakara Karmika Union' from the Nellore, Prakasam and Guntur districts, including their president M Jakraiah, vice president G Demudu, treasurer Avula Venkataramana explained that the traditional fishermen from the coastal villages are fishing in the sea with the country crafts and boats made by wood for generations. They said that they used to have a good rapport with the fishermen community in Tamil Nadu also and they used to cooperate with one another.

However, for the last few years, the fishing companies in southern Tamil Nadu brought fishing trawlers of length more than 15 meters and run with 500HP motors to fish along the coastal line of south India. Venkataramana said that as the traditional fishermen, they lay nets of length about 100 meters by tying between two boats or using floats in the evening and bringing the catch in the mornings. But, the heavy trawlers from Tamil Nadu are damaging the nets and taking away the catch, he complained. He said that the local fishermen are facing threats from the Tamil Nadu boat drivers and fishermen and they even tried to run over the boats. He explained that they are spending lakhs of rupees on boats and nets, and will lose livelihood for weeks and even months until they are repaired or brought new ones after the Tamil Nadu boats damage them. Venkataramana and others said that the local fishermen are vexed by the steel made heavy and powerful fishing trawlers fishing in the Andhra Pradesh region, and no official has resolved their complaints for months.

They said that the Kerala state, in which fishing and consumption of marine products is high, is strictly implementing and penalising the Tamil Nadu trawlers, and that is why they are venturing into the Andhra Pradesh region. They demanded the government to strictly implement the AP MFR Act and see no mechanized boat, even from Andhra Pradesh, fish in the reserved region. They demanded the government to equip the marine police and coastguard with speed boats so that they could patrol on the sea and stop the Tamil Nadu boats from venturing into the AP region. The fishermen from the Nellore, Prakasam and Guntur districts are assembling at the Dr BR Ambedkar Bhavan in Ongole on Monday to discuss their further course of action and invited the local fishing officials also to the meeting. The fishermen leaders are of the opinion that when the government is not able to protect them and listen to their pleas, they may also not respect its instructions like paying registration charges for the boats, taking voluntary breaks from fishing, etc.

**Tamil Nadu: All the fishermen protested against the construction of the desalination plant**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/dec/10/desal-plant-quenches-thirst-of-city-but-leaves-village-parched-2393840.html>

"Many of us would have consumed seawater accidentally while playing in the beach and scoffed at the salty aftertaste. Now, imagine having to drink seawater every day, for lack of proper drinking water in your locality. That is the situation facing the villagers of Suleri Kattukuppam, located right beside the Nemmeli desalination plant. The Nemmeli plant, located around 35 km south of Chennai along the East Coast Road, has a capacity to supply 100 million litres of drinking water per day. This is to cater mainly to the city's southern suburbs including Sholinganallur, Neelangerai, Thoraipakkam, Thiruvanniyur, Velachery, Taramani, Adyar and Besant Nagar. However, while it has quenched the city's thirst, it has left the residents of Suleri Kattukuppam with parched throats. The 250 houses in the area were built by the Rotary Club for the fishermen community after the 2004 tsunami. Their problems began in 2013, right after the desalination plant was proposed. During the plant's construction phase, invaluable groundwater was pumped out continuously to lay its deep foundations, resulting in rapid depletion of the hamlet's primary drinking water resource.

This groundwater eventually got replaced with intruding saltwater from the sea. This reporter was given water by the villagers to sample it and it tasted like saltwater mixed with chemicals. "All the fishermen protested against the construction of the desalination plant. From the then Collector of Kancheepuram to several top officials from the Fisheries Department, everyone assured that it was safe. Moreover, every household was promised one job. But little did we know then that everything was a lie," said R Muthukrishnan, a resident of the village. The residents claim only 80 of them got jobs. "This too was on contract basis when the plant was under construction. Two years later, their contract ended and many were rendered jobless again. Adding to it, we don't even have proper water to drink," added Muthukrishnan. Recently, the government laid a row of rocks to prevent the mixing of seawater with groundwater. However, nothing changed.

"During the rains, water tastes worse. We only use the water to clean vessels and clothes. There is a burning sensation all over the body if we go out in the sun after taking bath with this water. The saltiness of water decreased after rocks were laid, but it still is not safe for consumption," said G Ruben, another resident. The residents spend at least Rs 450 for water per household each month. But fishermen say incomes are declining because the marine resources in and around Nemmeli have taken a hit due to the plant. Fishermen claim they used to earn around Rs 800 per day earlier when the winds co-operated, but now earning even Rs 200 has become a daunting task. Janarthanan Perumal, president of the fishermen co-operative in the area, explained that a few species of fish including Kilanga and Kaala that were sold in the market for Rs 600 per kg completely disappeared. There had been a 50 per cent decline in business. Officials of the

Fisheries Department said the fishermen were not happy with the jobs they were offered. Ample measures are being taken to address the situation in the hamlet, they added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Govt asked to submit DPR for setting up of seaweed park: Centre in Lok Sabha**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/12/07165853/1332689/TN-govt-asked-to-submit-DPR-for-setting-up-of-seaweed-vpf>

"Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Parshottam Rupala, in his written reply to the Lok Sabha, said, "Yes, Sir. A Multipurpose Seaweed Park has been proposed in Tamil Nadu to promote the seaweed cultivation under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)." The Tamil Nadu government has submitted a project proposal. The state government has been asked to submit a Detailed Project Report with cost estimates. Further, the minister informed the Lower House that implementation of the PMMSY has commenced during the middle of 2020-21 and the cumulative number of beneficiaries supported under PMMSY so far is 9,42, 761. The Centre has approved project proposals worth Rs 5,336.96 crores with a central share of Rs 1,823.50 crores to states and union territories and other implementing agencies. Out of which, an amount of Rs 1,223.96 crore has been released during 2020-21 and 2021-22 (till date), the minister added. The objective of the PMMSY is to bring about sustainable and responsible development of the fisheries sector in India for a period of five years with effect from the financial year 2020-21 to 2024-25 on all states. The scheme intends to address the critical gaps in fish production and productivity and quality, in the technology being used in post-harvest infrastructure and management, in modernization and strengthening of the value chain, and in establishing a robust fisheries management framework and fishermen's welfare.

### **Tamil Nadu: Plastic-oil-fueled boats deplete the government's coffers**

<https://www.thehansindia.com/tamilnadu/plastic-oil-fueled-boats-deplete-the-governments-coffers-in-tamil-nadu-718741>

"The district's fishing economy is mostly unaffected by the soaring price of diesel, which is affecting the transportation sector. The explanation is that most of the fishermen have shifted to readily available Waste Plastic Pyrolysis Oil (WPPO), also known as plastic oil, which is sold as

biodiesel. According to the fishermen, the insufficient supply of subsidised fuel and the rising price of diesel have led the owners of fishing vessels to turn to the less expensive plastic oil. Fishermen who use mechanised vessels claimed they usually fish 50 nautical miles off the shore, which requires at least 1,500 litres of diesel each day, which costs about Rs 1.4 lakh. However, the 1,800 gallons of tax-free fuel provided by the government for a month is just enough for one day of fishing. They claimed that because fuel costs account for a large amount of their pay, the readily available plastic oil has proven to be a viable alternative to traditional diesel. The State government offers 4,000 litres of Tax Exempted High-Speed Diesel to every other of the 1,445 diesel cardholders between motorised country craft boat owners and 18,000 litres to 369 mechanised vessel owners of the Thoothukudi, Tharuvaikulam, and Vembar fishing harbours each year, saving them between Rs 15 and Rs 16 per litre.

Furthermore, 1,275 kerosene cardholders will receive subsidised kerosene worth 3,400 litres each country boat at a rate of Rs 25 per litre. With diesel costs reaching new highs and fishing supplies depleting, the mechanised vessel operators of Thoothukudi fishing harbour have decided to decrease their sailing to three days per week instead of the usual six. Each day, a minimum of 120 vessels leave the Thoothukudi fishing harbour, which is home to a number of more than 250 mechanised vessels. The plastic oil charges Rs 70 per litre, whereas high-speed diesel is tax-free and costs roughly Rs 80 per litre. Over 1.5 lakh gallons of plastic oil are smuggled into Thoothukudi from Sankagiri, Atur in Salem district, and Coimbatore and Erode districts to fuel over 100 mechanised vessels due to high demand. Plastic oil, according to the head of a mechanised fishing vessel owners' group, saves at least Rs 15,000 while sailing and is thus establishing an alternative fuel for the fishing business.

According to sources, the plastic oil is brought into Thoothukudi each day in tankers disguised as motor spirit. Small trucks transport the oil in 200-litre barrels from warehouses to fishing ports. The distribution takes place at seven godowns notably two at Fisheries College, two near Mapilaiyoorani diversion on Ettayapuram road, one each at Madathur arch, Harbour Express Highway, and Maravanmadam. Meanwhile, an IOCL officer said that the State government has not given permission to anyone to market bio-diesel, yet various fake oil products and contaminated diesel that are being sold on the black market to the fishing industry.

### **Tamil Nadu: Sri Lankan Navy 'hurled stones, bottles' to shoo us away: Fishermen**

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/sri-lankan-navy-hurled-stones-bottles-to-shoo-us-away-fishermen-121120500355\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/sri-lankan-navy-hurled-stones-bottles-to-shoo-us-away-fishermen-121120500355_1.html)

"Sri Lankan Navy personnel threw stones and bottles to drive them away while they were fishing near Katchatheevu, leading to some damage to more than 10 boats, fishermen who returned here following the incident alleged on Sunday. About 4,000 fishermen from here set out for fishing on December 4 in over 500 boats and while they were fishing off Katchatheevu

island, Sri Lankan Naval personnel arrived in four boats and hurled stones and bottles at them, Rameswaram Fishermen Association president Devadoss said. Over 10 boats suffered damage to some extent after being hit with stones, the association leader said, adding that the fishermen returned to shore following the incident. A complaint in this regard was lodged with Tamil Nadu fisheries authorities, he added. The fishermen had gone for fishing near Katchatheevu after a long time and the continuing attacks have created a sense of deep fear among them, the leader said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Supply shortage surged seafood prices by 15 percent at Kasimedu market**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/City/2021/12/05154426/1332379/Supply-shortage-surged-seafood-prices-by-15-percent-.vpf>

"Traders said that after a month the demand has raised at the market, till next month the rates would remain high even though there is no supply shortage. "Compared to last two weeks, the market saw double the crowd where more than 1,000 customers and retail vendors came to purchase. Also, after a warning issued for fishermen not to venture into the sea, only a few boats went for fishing, and they didn't go in the deep sea for catching seafood so we saw at least 30 percent of supply shortage," said Vishnu MP, a wholesale trader at Kasimedu fishing harbor. "As people didn't buy fish for almost a month due to the rainfall, today the demand was high so the price increased by 15 percent. All the seafood was sold before noon," he added. On Sunday, Seer fish (vanjiram) sold for Rs 700 – Rs 850 per kg, prawns Rs 300 – Rs 900 per kg, black pomfret Rs 450 – Rs 500 per kg, sea bass (koduva) Rs 500 per kg, anchovy (nethili) Rs 300 per kg, Bluefin Travelly (para) Rs 400 per kg, red snapper (sankara) Rs 300 per kg. "Post-pandemic our sale went down drastically due to increase in fuel price and rainfall, but hereafter, due to the festival seasons, the prices will double up till next month. Though there is supply shortage or not the rates will be high than usual," said Sivashankar K, another wholesale trader.

### **Tamil Nadu: Story of Adyar – River pollution & floods in India [Documentary]**

<https://youtu.be/WbcdFQ7iypQ>

"The Story of Adyar is documenting the difficulties faced by the local communities of fishermen living next to the river. They are being encroached by building sites and skyscrapers while the bad sewage management threatens their livelihood by destroying the ecosystem of the river. In the same locations, where they used to catch a variety of fish in the past, they are now struggling to survive in between plastic bottles and waste. Several interviews with the community, experts, and environmentalists draw a picture of the causes for the depletion of the river Adyar. Badly planned city development has not only left the river a public health risk but also increased the occurrence of floods that affect the whole urban area of Chennai. The documentary includes footage from the calamity that struck the capital of Tamil Nadu in 2015 -

the Chennai floods. Produced by Siddharth Muralidharan In corporation with the Goethe Institute & the Chennai Water Forum Further Information: [www.thatworksmedia.com](http://www.thatworksmedia.com).

### **Tamil Nadu: ‘Rights of traditional fishermen should be protected’**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/rights-of-traditional-fishermen-will-be-protected/article37757904.ece>

"A large number of fishermen leaders from various associations across Tamil Nadu participated in the Fisheries Day celebrations held in New Delhi last week. Fishermen leader Jesu Raja from Rameswaram, who was part of the delegation, on return from New Delhi said that they had an exclusive meeting with the Union Fisheries Minister Parshottam Rupala and discussed various issues including the problems with Sri Lankan Navy personnel, diesel subsidy and enhancement of central subsidy for deep sea fishing boat and among others. Speaking to The Hindu on Monday, he said that after the visit of the Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka to Rameswaram last week, they had high hopes of resolving issues between the fishermen in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka. Utilising the opportunity to be part of the National Fisheries Day celebrations at New Delhi, the delegation briefed the Minister and senior officials about the need for direct dialogue with the fishermen in Sri Lanka, which alone, they said, would bring in a permanent solution for fishing in Palk Bay. Union Minister Mr. Rupala, who heard the fishermen from different States for well over two hours, has assured to visit Rameswaram soon, Mr Jesu Raja said and added that they had jointly presented a 12-point charter of demands which included the impact the Indian Marine Fisheries Bill 2021 will have on fishermen, to declare traditional fishermen as tribes and to recognise them as traditional fishermen, to provide better infrastructure for fishermen at the fish landing centre and enhance financial assistance during the annual ban period.

### **Tamil Nadu: 18 fishers held by Sri Lanka Navy repatriated**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/18-fishers-held-by-sl-navy-repatriated/article37729634.ece>

"Eighteen of the 23 fishermen from Nagapattinam and Mayiladuthurai districts, arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy on October 13, returned home on Saturday. Fisheries Department sources said 17 fishermen from the coastal villages of Nagapattinam district and six from Mayiladuthurai district had set sail on two mechanised boats, and were arrested on charges of

straying into Sri Lankan waters. The arrested were reportedly taken to the Karainagar Fishing Harbour, before being remanded in judicial custody. Upon completion of the judicial formalities, 18 of the arrested fishermen were repatriated, and they arrived in Chennai by flight on Saturday morning, Fisheries Department sources said. The fishermen reached their homes by road, later in the evening, and were accorded an emotional welcome by their respective families and other fishermen. The sources said the other five fishermen had reportedly tested positive for COVID-19, and were expected to be repatriated after their quarantine ends.

**Tamil Nadu: No ante mortem injuries on the body of fisherman, High Court Bench told**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fisher/article37712189.ece>

"The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court was on Friday informed that the body of the Pudukkottai fisherman who died at sea following a collision with a Sri Lankan naval vessel had no ante mortem injuries. Justice G.R. Swaminathan was told that the re-post mortem was conducted on the body of Raj Kiran pursuant to the court's direction. However, advocate Henri Tiphagne representing the petitioner, R. Brundha, wife of Raj Kiran, submitted that the body of the fisherman was left unstitched after the first autopsy that was conducted at Jaffna Medical College Hospital in Sri Lanka. The body was covered in an old bedsheet. It was placed in a plastic cover and then placed in the coffin. The body was in a distorted condition. The Standard International Protocol and Procedures were not followed, he said. Taking note of the submission, the court suo motu impleaded the Consulate General of India, Jaffna, and the Ministry of External Affairs and adjourned the hearing in the case. The court was hearing the petition filed by Brundha, the wife of Raj Kiran. She sought a probe into the death of her husband.

On October 18, Raj Kiran, along with S. Suganthan and A. Xavier, ventured into the sea in a boat owned by Suresh Kumar. They were intercepted by a Sri Lankan naval vessel and were told they had crossed the International Maritime Boundary Line and were in Sri Lankan waters. The fishermen tried to escape from the authorities. It was said that the Sri Lankan vessel collided with the boat accidentally and Raj Kiran fell into the sea and drowned. However, Brundha said a few fishermen who were only two nautical miles away on other boats said that Raj Kiran was shot by the Sri Lankan authorities. The body of Raj Kiran was recovered and a postmortem was conducted at the Jaffna Medical College Hospital in Sri Lanka. Later, the body was handed over to the Indian authorities. The body was brought to Kottaipattinam port by the Indian authorities and handed over to the family members.

**Tamil Nadu and Puducherry: 'Thunderstorm with heavy to very heavy rain' predicted**

<https://www.timesnownews.com/india/article/tamil-nadu-puducherry-weather-today-thunderstorm-with-heavy-to-very-heavy-rain-predicted-schools-in-chennai-shut-details/836103>

"The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast "thunderstorm with heavy to very heavy rain" at isolated places over Kanyakumari and Tirunelveli districts in Tamil Nadu on Monday. "Thunderstorm with heavy rain is also likely to occur at isolated places over Thoothukudi and Ramanathapuram districts. Thunderstorm with moderate rain is likely to occur at most places over rest Coastal Tamilnadu. Light to moderate rain is also likely to occur at most places over Interior Tamilnadu districts," read the IMD prediction. Chennai's schools and colleges were closed on Monday due to incessant rains and water-logging in several parts of the district. The order was issued by Chennai District Collector Dr Vijayarani. In Puducherry, heavy rains continued to lash the union territory today, impacting normal life. Puducherry recorded 11.2 cm of rain during the last 24 hours ending at 8.30 am on Monday, according to official sources. All schools and colleges in Puducherry and Karaikal regions will be closed on Monday and Tuesday, announced Education Minister A Namassivayam.

The IMD had last week said that isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall will likely take place over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal from 26th November to 29th November. On Sunday, the rain continued to fall in multiple parts of Tamil Nadu and the neighbouring Puducherry, inundating many areas. Several roads and subways also were flooded, affecting people's routines. Aside from inspecting flooded areas such as Tiruverkadu in Tiruvallur District, Chief Minister MK Stalin interacted with local residents as he sipped tea along the roadside and listened to their grievances. He also gave flood relief assistance to over 300 people in a suburban school, as he reviewed the flooding situation with officials. Taking to Twitter, the CM expressed confidence that "we will come out of the aftermath of the heavy rains".

According to the Regional Meteorological Centre, Chennai, Cuddalore, and neighbouring Puducherry experienced moderate to heavy rainfall on Sunday, while scattered, light to moderate rainfall was reported in other parts of the state. Cuddalore-Puducherry belt recorded 7 cm of rainfall until 7.30 pm, whereas Chennai recorded 6 cm (Meenambakkam) and 1 cm (Nungambakkam), respectively, the RMC said. Many reservoirs in the state have received inflows from monsoon showers, and surplus water is being released throughout the state as a result. Residents of low lying areas have been evacuated and shelters have been set up. According to the government, 15,016 people have been sheltered in 188 camps in Kanchipuram, Cuddalore, Tuticorin, Perambalur, Tiruvallur, Chengelpet, Pudukottai, Ramanathapuram, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Ariyalur, Ranipettai, Tiruchirappalli, Tirupattur, Tiruvannamalai and Vellore districts. "In the past 24 hours, two people (one each in Cuddalore and Tuticorin) districts died in rain-related incidents," said the government in a statement. Nearly a lakh packets of food were distributed to more than 1,000 people living in the relief centres here. Rains caused water-logging in and around the coastal town of Cuddalore. A majority of roads in Chennai and the surrounding suburbs were inundated, and several subways were closed while excess water was released from reservoirs. Diversions were enforced at several points here and road users were cautioned with barricades. State-run bus services were disrupted, but suburban

rail services were not affected. There were several roads covered in water in this area, stranding vehicles, mostly two-wheelers. Powerful motor pumps were deployed to remove stagnant water.

### **Tamil Nadu: Shrimp farms cause water, soil pollution on Rameswaram Island**

<https://www.newslick.in/shrimp-farms-cause-water-soil-pollution-rameswaram-island>

"Shrimp farming has become the bane of the villages of Rameswaram island in Tamil Nadu. Shrimp farms cause soil and water pollution, affecting the groundwater table and farming in the villages. Despite the increasing environmental concerns and ecological issues, protests by the villagers against civic bodies and the district administration have fallen on deaf ears. Shrimp farming was introduced in the state in the 1990s by the fisheries department to improve employment prospects and meet food security and nutritional requirements. Shrimp exports contribute significantly to sustaining the industry.

As per the department of fisheries and fishermen welfare website of the government of Tamil Nadu, the state has a brackish water area of 56,000 hectares (ha) of which 14,880 ha is readily available for aquaculture-related activities. Ramanathapuram is one among the 12 maritime districts where shrimp aquaculture is being developed. With 900 ha of brackish water area and 1,385 ha of potential area readily available, plus the island's geographical location, the district is more suitable for shrimp farming. Tiger shrimp and white shrimp are cultured in the shrimp ponds in the state. In the process, the fertile land and rich groundwater table of the island have been severely affected. The discharge of polluted water from the shrimp farms into the farmlands and water bodies is a regular affair in the villages around Rameswaram. "The 46-acre pond in Mangadu village is a water source to around 13 villages and the theerthams (holy ponds/wells) inside the temple.

A farm on the other side of the pond discharges polluted water into it," M Karunamurthy, working president, Tamil Nadu Fisheries and Fish Workers Federation, told Newslick. Panjamma, a resident of Mangadu village, recalled the years when drinking water was available in plenty in wells 25-30-feet deep. "Now, we pay Rs 5 per pot of water. Things changed when the farms started to encroach on our villages," she told Newslick. The residents alleged that shrimp growing ponds are being constructed in violation of laws. "The ground and walls of the pits must be covered by plastic sheets to prevent water absorption. But the farm owners constructed only one pit to convince the inspecting officials, who refuse to take action despite knowing the reality," Karunamurthy said. The residents accuse the farm owners of having constructed the ponds without government approval. According to the fisheries department

website, out of the 2,086 shrimp farms in the 12 coastal districts, only 852 have been approved. The groundwater level has also reduced and the water has become highly polluted.

“The farms require both hard and pure water for the shrimps to hatch. Instead of taking water from the sea, the farm owners dig a borewell for about 300 feet to get hard water. Some borewells are also used to get pure water. The discharge of water from the farms has become a long-term problem for the residents,” said Muniyandi, the village head of Mangadu. The temple and municipal administration have also been accused of violating laws. A road across the pond that leads to the parking area of the temple is under construction. Karunamurthy accused the Hindu Religious & Charitable Endowments department and the municipal administration of violating rules. “The municipality is dumping waste on one side of the pond. They have constructed a parking area on the far end and a road. A road that will pass through the middle of the pond and lead to the parking area is being constructed. This is a violation of the highest order. We suspect bureaucratic and political collusion in such crucial issues,” he said. “We have held several protests against the violation by the farm owners and the administration to save ourselves and the environment.

But the authorities have not taken action,” said Kowsalya, a resident of Mangadu. The 13 villages surrounding the Rameswaram temple were once known for cultivating rainfed crops and cereals. Paulraj, from Ariyankundu village, told Newsclick that he used to cultivate bajra and ragi a couple of decades ago. “The water discharge from the farms has affected the fertility of the soil and farming is not possible now.” The area under farming reduced after the devastating Rameswaram cyclone in 1964, but farmers continued cultivating crops until the shrimp farming boom. The shrimp farms close to the shores of the island are affecting the marine ecosystem as well. “The water from the farms, which contains several chemicals, is discharged back to the sea. The farm owners use several chemical fertilisers to boost the growth of shrimps,” said Arulrai, a member of the fishing community.

“We have seen a lot of resources, including lime blocks, which were once used for whitewashing houses, disappear. Several people were dependent on collecting seashells and pine corns for their livelihood. But all such things have disappeared due to the pollution,” Arulrai added. “If the pollution continues for a few more years, Rameswaram Island will become uninhabitable,” Karunamurthy said. Shrimp farming has become the bane of the villages of Rameswaram Island in Tamil Nadu. Shrimp farms cause soil and water pollution, affecting the groundwater table and farming in the villages. Despite the increasing environmental concerns and ecological issues, protests by the villagers against civic bodies and the district administration have fallen on deaf ears. Shrimp farming was introduced in the state in the 1990s by the fisheries department to improve employment prospects and meet food security and nutritional requirements. Shrimp exports contribute significantly to sustaining the industry.

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### **Tamil Nadu: Wife of fishermen who died in sea, seeks re-autopsy**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/wife-of-fishermen-who-died-in-sea-seeks-re-autopsy/articleshow/87724669.cms>

"Alleging that her husband was shot dead by the Sri Lankan navy, the wife of a fisherman from Pudukottai district has moved the Madras high court seeking to perform a re-postmortem on her husband's body. Justice G R Swaminathan sought the response from the state government on a petition filed by R Brundha, a resident of Kottaipattinam in the district. Brundha stated that her husband R Raj Kiran ventured into sea for fishing along with two other fishermen S Suganthan and A Xavier on October 18. When they were fishing, the Sri Lankan navy intercepted them for crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL). When these three fishermen were trying to escape, a Lankan navy patrol boat accidentally collided with their boat to which the boat sank. As a result of the collision, the boat sank while Kiran fell into the sea and died drowning. The two other fishermen were saved and detained by the Lankan navy. She stated that her husband's body was recovered by the Lankan navy and postmortem was performed at the Jaffna Medical College Hospital on October 22.

However, postmortem certificate was not handed over to the family. Subsequently, the body was brought to Kottaipattinam port in a sealed coffin and was not shown to the family members. It was directly taken to the cemetery and buried within an hour. The petitioner alleged that the photograph of her husband's body clearly indicates that he sustained bullet injuries. Hence, she moved the HC Madurai bench.

### **Tamil Nadu: Grounded traditional boat fishers in Tamil Nadu reeling under monsoon blues**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/nov/12/grounded-traditional-boat-fishers-in-tamil-nadu-reeling-under-monsoon-blues-2382641.html>

"Traditional boat fishers, boat owners and the people in auxiliary livelihoods have been affected by successive restrictions during the monsoon. Fishermen with smaller fibreglass motorised boats, and non-motorised catamarans, fish closer to the shore, earning less than those with mechanised boats. Although every fisherman gets grounded during rough sea days, traditional fishers say they feel the pinch more. ""We do not even go too far, and we fish within five to ten nautical miles. We earn around `500 per day. The State government gives about `6,000 as livelihood assistance. But it is hardly sufficient to manage our daily needs,"" said A Ravi, a fisherman from Kodiyakarai. The State government provides `6,000 as one-time monsoon livelihood assistance in a year for a fishing family with a ration card. Over the past three weeks, the fishermen have been banned from fishing, making them struggle.

A Nachiappan, a fisherman from Arukatuthurai, said, ""We understand the weather is unpredictable but sometimes we are grounded way longer than is necessary. We cannot fish even nearby."" Monsoon months are usually calmer in the Palk Strait compared to Coromandel waters. Those who fancy fishing are equally affected as those who fish in the Coromandel waters. Other livelihoods also dependent on the traditional boat fishers such as engine mechanics, those mending nets, and tractor operators (who move boats to berth position) also get affected during the monsoon. ""Many people in auxiliary jobs or who depend on fishers do not get any government assistance. Their livelihood is completely dependent on the fishermen. They get more affected during this season,"" said M Rajini, a fisherman from Samanthampettai. Fishermen in Nagapattinam district are grounded at the moment as they have been warned about another natural calamity expected to strike soon. An official from the Fisheries Department said, ""We cannot take chances by relaxing the restrictions. We take calls by keeping any upcoming calamities in mind.""

### **Tamil Nadu: Thoothukudi fisherman rescued from mid-sea**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/thoothukudi-fisherman-rescued-from-mid-sea/article37474721.ece>

"Fisheries Minister Anitha R. Radhakrishnan visited a fisherman at a private hospital on Saturday where he is recovering after a fibre boat in which he was fishing reportedly capsized two days ago. Fisheries Department officials said that fishermen Martin (50) and Pilendran (60) of Kombuthurai near Kayalpattinam in Thoothukudi district had ventured into the sea for fishing two days ago. As they were fishing, the fibre boat was suddenly caught in a heavy wind and it capsized. The two fishermen were spotted by another group of fishermen, who were fishing nearby. Fortunately, they rescued Martin but could not trace Pilendran. They rushed Martin to the shore and admitted him to a private hospital in Tiruchendur. Meanwhile, the Coastal

Security Group police and others were informed about the missing fisherman. On the advice of Chief Minister M. K. Stalin, the Minister visited the family members of Pilendran and briefed them about the steps being taken to search for the missing fisherman. He handed over ₹1 lakh to the family members.

The Minister also gave ₹50,000 to Martin, who was recovering in the hospital. Collector K. Senthil Raj, A.D. (Fisheries) Vijayaraghavan were present. In another case, Abdul Majid (42), a fisherman from Kadaladi in Ramanathapuram district, who was living in Tharuvaikulam in Thoothukudi district, was found dead on Saturday. Police said that preliminary inquiries revealed that along with six others, Abdul Majid had ventured into the sea two days ago in a boat owned by Ponnarasan. However, it is alleged that Majid slipped into the sea and could not be traced. Following a complaint, the police conducted a search operation. On Saturday, a body was found near the shores. The police have sent the body for post-mortem and based on the report, further investigation would be conducted, the police said

### **Tamil Nadu: How to save that sinking feeling: Chennai's tryst with seasonal flooding**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2021/nov/15/how-to-save-that-sinking-feeling-chennaistryst-with-seasonal-flooding-2383611.html>

"On a Saturday evening that was briefly saved from the rain events that had us bracing for a repeat of the 2015 nightmare, youth groups — functioning in the area of environmental well-being — found some success for their Umbrella Rally. When asked about the response to the rally, environmental activist Nityanand Jayaraman — under whose aegis the Collective came to being — remarked that he would have considered it a success even if no one (from the public) had showed up; if only for the fact that it brought these young minds together. "Right now, they are saying Enna pannalam? Let's go for the meeting, let's talk about it, let's look at campaign strategies'," he elaborates. Taking all this talk a step closer to action was the Collective's meeting on Friday to discuss 'Chennai Floods & Climate Crisis — Causes & Cures, Unpacking the Pathology of Growth & False Solutions'. Disaster has a pattern the deliberations began with an acknowledgement of the latest expression of our climate concerns — the city's tryst with seasonal flooding.

Climate activists have long since pointed out that having built our homes inside lakes and irrigation tanks, we will be forced to watch it 'fill up' and not flood during every weather episode. While the 'before' and 'after' versions of Kondingayur lake and Velachery Eri have made rounds on social media, Nandhabalan, a class 11 student who (along with 3-4 other students) had set out to look for answers to flooding problems in Kolathur, shared the results of his research on the city's lost waterbodies that accounts for 100 such comparisons. His map shows the complete encroachment of 37 lakes and partial loss of over 64 so far. Puzhal lake was four times its current size; Kondingayur lake had an equal-sized buddy lake whose name is long

forgotten; every area with ‘bakkam’ in its name once had a waterbody — the learnings were aplenty. Too many of these yesteryear waterbodies are now ground for housing complexes, commercial establishments and residential colonies.

The city’s flooding patterns — a constant since its disastrous avatar in 2015 — is quite consistent with Nandhabalan’s map. But, the idea was not just to grieve over lost lakes. For these were among the people facing the present-day consequences of such a development. What followed Nandha’s presentation was a brief video of one of the group’s active members. The recording showed the man, hours after participating in the Umbrella Rally, packing up things in his house and moving it to the bed and higher shelves on the wall. His house was among the many that was flooded during the rains that followed. He and his family had to move to a safer place. Pointing out that this is what they were working with, Karthik of Chennai Climate Action Group (CCAG) pointed out that climate action must also look at social justice. “Climate change is not just for Besant Nagar or Adyar, it is for everybody. I’m here because I’ve started noticing where water drains quickly and where it takes more time.

It clears out in five minutes in Alwarpet but Pulianthope is still waterlogged,” he remarked. To flourish, not flood Bolstering this point of view were representatives from villages in Ennore — Sreenivasan and Ravimaran. “Parry’s is considered an important part of Chennai. Besant Nagar is around 15 km from there. But, Ennore is just 14 km. And yet Ennore is like an Athipatti to most people; they don’t even know where it is,” began Sreenivasan. In the past few decades, the part of north Chennai that is now considered to be outside city limits has lost much. Be it the salt plains, its distinct prawn population and the livelihood it offered, its basic water resources. Now, after TANGEDCO’s many violations, CPCL’s side effects and the doings of several ports that have changed its landscapes, its people are still fighting to fend off newer destructions.

“Imagine how rich and resourceful a place must have been if both fishing and agriculture flourished there. Even in the late 90s, we used to get good water just 20 feet from the shore. Now, the water quality has dropped drastically. In the eight old villages of Ennore, even in low-lying areas, we never had flooding problems. For the fisherfolk knew where water collects and built their houses accordingly. It’s only now that we are seeing more of this flooding problem,” narrated Ravimaran. It’s with the arrival of industries, added Sreenivasan, came a whole host of problems like saltwater intrusion, contamination by fly ash, coal and crude oil, a drastic change to the biodiversity of the waterbodies. With such diverse, complex problems in hand, there’s a need to look beyond the confines of the problem-solution paradigm in its singularity, said Nityanand; for, these complex problems require solutions on multiple levels. The idea is to complicate an issue like flooding for younger people, so that they will look deeper for its answers, whereas the older people tend to look for an easy way out. “The cause for flooding cannot just be corruption or construction or the government; it’s a far more complex problem and it needs to be understood in its complexity. Older people want to deal with simple things, say

‘How do I drain the water?’. If you drain the water, you won’t have drinking water. So, how do I manage the flood problem without causing a drinking water problem? We would like to ask the difficult question,” he suggested. In that spirit, the meeting discussed the many pitfalls within the fight for climate justice, the idea that the beach is a place of recreation and not a place of work for fisherfolk, the farcical oxymoronism of a ‘green buildings’ eating up the remnants of marshlands essential for the city’s natural drainage system, our collective reluctance to look past the temporary truce offered by the capitalist economy and much more.

Having gotten neck deep into the well of causes, the Collective is working on finding the appropriate cures too. Nandhabalan’s map of lost waterbodies has made it to the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board for reparation and restoration wherever possible; in August, TANGEDCO began removing the dredged sand that was dumped illegally in the Kosasthalai backwaters for the Ennore SEZ project’s coal conveyor corridor, thanks to the tireless campaign by local fishers. Members of the Collective are now working towards compiling data and research from Ennore-Pulicat wetlands; they are soon to include other areas of need like Kovalam. And they hope to do this all, one meeting at a time.

### **Tamil Nadu: Four dead as rains lash the state; Chennai continues to be under water**

<https://www.deccanherald.com/national/south/four-dead-as-rains-lash-tamil-nadu-chennai-continues-to-be-under-water-1048367.html>

"Several parts of Chennai were underwater for the second consecutive day on Monday with incessant rains continuing to pound the southern metropolis, making it difficult to drain the water out, even as the MeT department forecast “heavy to very heavy rainfall” till November 11. Four persons lost their lives in rain-related incidents across the state on Monday, while 70 houses have been damaged, the government said. Though the intensity of the rainfall has come down since Sunday – the city recorded only 7.8 cm of rainfall in the last 24 hours ending at 8.30 am on Monday compared to 21 cm of rainfall received in the previous 24 hours – many localities, especially in north Chennai, remained inundated with people remaining indoors or moving to safety.

Visuals of knee-deep water in many localities in Vyasarpadi, Perambur, Kolathur, the home constituency of Chief Minister M K Stalin, in north Chennai and Kodambakkam, West Mambalam, and Valasaravakkam in south Chennai dotted social media. Underpasses and major roads were still waterlogged for the second consecutive day with officials maintaining that the incessant rains are hampering the relief work. A few apartment complexes in upscale Anna Nagar were also flooded prompting the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) to deploy water draining equipment to pump out the floodwater. Revenue Minister Ramachandran said waterlogging was reported from 290 localities in Chennai and the flood water has been completely drained out in 50 of them. “The efforts to drain the floodwater from the remaining

231 localities are in the full swing. Of the 16 underpasses that reported flooding, 14 have been cleared of water. 75 trees that fell have been cleared,” he told a press conference here. The city’s woes seems to be far from over with the MeT department predicting “heavy to very heavy rains” in Chennai, and other parts of the state, including the fertile Cauvery Delta region, on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Anticipating flooding in several low-lying areas and flood-prone zones, the GCC began deploying boats sourced through the Fisheries Department to evacuate people in the event of them getting stranded.

The civic body has set up community kitchens in all 15 zones to prepare three-square meals for distribution among those affected by floods. The GCC also conducted medical camps in all 200 wards even as the Covid-19 vaccination camp was in the full swing. “We need to be very careful from November 9 to November 11 as there is an alert for very heavy rainfall. We are taking all precautionary steps across the state,” Ramachandran said. The government also divided the state into 12 ranges and appointed one senior IPS officer for each zone to monitor the relief work. As rains continue to lash Chennai and its suburbs, the reservoirs that supply drinking water to the metropolis are brimming, forcing the authorities to release excess water.

A total of 10,139 cusecs of water were being released from six reservoirs – Poondi, Chembarambakkam, Sholavaram, Puzhal, Veeranam, and Thervai Kandigai – as of Monday evening. Fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea, even as the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) dispatched two teams to Madurai and one each to Tiruvallur and Chengalpattu districts. Two teams of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) have been sent to Thanjavur and Cuddalore. Stalin, for the second day, visited the rain-affected areas in Chennai, while Opposition Leader Edappadi K Palaniswami also took to the streets charging the DMK government of “under-preparedness” to tackle the North-east Monsoon. In its forecast, the MeT department said Tamil Nadu, especially the northern districts, will continue to receive heavy to very heavy rains under the influence of a low pressure which is likely to form in the southeast Bay of Bengal on Tuesday.

“It is likely to become more marked and move west-northwestwards towards north Tamil Nadu coast during the subsequent 48 hours,” the MeT said, adding that thunderstorm with heavy to very heavy rain is likely to occur at isolated places over Chennai, Villupuram, Cuddalore, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam districts and Puducherry,” it said. Heavy rain is also likely to occur at isolated places over Pudukkottai, Ramanathapuram, Madurai, Theni, Dindigul, Tiruppur, Karur, Tiruchirappalli, Nilgiris, Coimbatore, Kallakurichi and Salem districts, the MeT department added.

## **Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh: Farmers, fishermen alert: IMD predicts extremely heavy rains**

<https://krishijagran.com/news/farmers-fishermen-alert-imd-predicts-extremely-heavy-rains-in-parts-of-tamil-nadu-andhra-pradesh/>

"On November 10 and 11, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted unusually heavy rain in various regions of Tamil Nadu and neighboring Andhra Pradesh. Due to the depression building over the Bay of Bengal, the downpour is predicted to inundate highways and may trigger riverine flooding, according to the warning. "Isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall is probable throughout Tamil Nadu on November 8 and 9 and heavy to very heavy rain in a few spots with isolated extremely heavy showers is very possible on November 10 and 11." the meteorological service stated in a bulletin on Monday. "During the same period, severe to very heavy rain with exceedingly high rains at isolated locations is also probable across south coastal Andhra Pradesh," it added. Rainfall between 64.5 and 115.5 mm is considered heavy, while rainfall between 115.6 and 204.4 mm is considered very heavy, according to IMD norms. Rainfall more than 204.4 mm is considered exceptionally heavy.

Fishermen have also been warned not to venture into the seas ahead of the rains, according to the IMD. Localized landslides, moderate damage to roads, susceptible structures, horticulture, and standing crops are also possible in some locations, according to the report. Meanwhile, in response to the IMD warning, the Tamil Nadu government has declared local vacations for nine districts on November 10 and 11. Chennai, Kancheepuram, Thiruvallur, Chengalpattu, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Thiruvarur, and Mayiladuthurai are the districts in concern. Five people have died as a result of the rains that have been falling in the southern state for the past several days, and 538 hits and four houses have been destroyed. Chennai experienced the highest rainfall in six years with the arrival of northeastern monsoon, bringing back memories of the 2015 floods. It caused flooding in the city's central and northern areas.

## **Tamil Nadu: Fisherman's wife wants husband's body exhumed**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/fishermans-wife-wants-husbands-body-exhumed/articleshow/87517085.cms>

"Raising suspicion that fisherman from Kottaipattinam R Rajkiran, 28, might have died due to the severe bullet injuries or wounds caused in the attack by the Sri Lankan navy, his wife has demanded that his body be exhumed to conduct a postmortem. Submitting a petition to Pudukottai district collector Kavitha Ramu and the district superintendent of police Nisha Parthiban on Tuesday, his wife R Birundha, who was married to him 40 days ago, stated that she was not allowed to identify the body of Rajkiran when it was brought in a sealed coffin to

Kottaipattinam from Sri Lanka on October 23. Rajkiran drowned in the sea after a Sri Lankan navy vessel hit the trawler in which he and two other fishermen, S Sugandhan, 22, and A Xavier, 38, of Kottaipattinam, were allegedly crossing the IMBL on October 18. The two fishermen were arrested by the navy on October 20. The young woman also pointed out that there were no documents such as a death certificate and postmortem report. Postmortem was body was said to have been performed at Jaffna Medical College Hospital on October 22.

“Therefore, it is not correct to assume an autopsy was indeed conducted on Rajkiran’s body,” she said. On seeing the photographs of the body and based on the information collected from the ‘eyewitnesses’ of the incident, Birundha said that Rajkiran sustained bullet injuries on his body. His face has been badly injured. She also stated that fresh blood on his body indicated that Rajkiran had not drowned due to the ‘collision’ as claimed by the Sri Lankan navy. Raking up all the suspicions, she demanded that a criminal case should be registered over the death of Rajkiran following which his body should be exhumed to enable her to identify her husband. She also demanded an autopsy.

### **Tamil Nadu: Efforts on to bring back 23 fishermen held in Sri Lanka**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/efforts-on-to-bring-back-23-fishermen-held-in-sri-lanka/article37308693.ece>

"Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting and Fisheries L. Murugan on Tuesday said the Centre was taking steps to bring back 23 Tamil Nadu fishermen arrested in Sri Lanka. “We are in touch with the Union External Affairs Minister and complete details of the arrested fishermen have been sought from the Tamil Nadu government,” Mr. Murugan told reporters during his visit to Thanjavur and Tiruchi. Replying to a query, Mr. Murugan said over 600 Tamil Nadu fishermen were killed by the Sri Lankan Navy prior to 2014. Not a single firing incident on fishermen had been reported after 2014 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi assumed charge, he claimed and added that the Centre was concerned about the welfare of the fishermen. The Centre had granted Rs.20,000 crore for the benefit of fishermen and there was no compromise on their welfare. The Centre had taken up modernisation of fishing harbours, including the facility at Kasimedu in Chennai, and fish landing centres with a view to improving their economic lot. The Centre’s policy was to provide Kisan Credit Card to every poor fisherman and the standard operating protocols were being readied.

The Union Minister said there was no opposition to the three new farm laws except in a couple of States. The laws allowed the farmers to fix the prices of their agricultural produce and the laws were enacted heeding the long-pending demand of the farming community. The farm laws were being opposed for “political reasons”. The resolution passed against the farm laws by the DMK government was unnecessary and a waste of time of the Legislative Assembly. “We only see the resolution as anti-farmer,” he said and claimed that no farmer in Tamil Nadu said they

did not want the farm laws. The suicide of farmers after 2014 had been completely stopped and aRs.6,000 per year was being directly deposited in the bank account of every farmer. To a query, Mr. Murugan said the DMK government had come out with many “unwanted” announcements. It was silent till now on providing Rs.1,000 to housewives as promised in the run up to the Assembly election. Replying to another query, he said the interests of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu would be looked into and steps taken accordingly to share Cauvery water without affecting both States.

### **Tamil Nadu: State hikes lean period dole for fishermen families to Rs.6,000**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/state-hikes-lean-period-dole-for-fishermen-families-to-6000/article37294647.ece>

"The State Government on Monday hiked the lean period dole given to fishermen families from Rs.5000 to Rs.6000 each. A total of Rs.108 crore has been sanctioned for the purpose by Chief Minister M. K. Stalin. This was one of the election promises of the DMK. In the first phase, 1.24 lakh families living in 11 coastal districts starting from Tiruvallur to Ramanathapuram will benefit. The government has allotted Rs.74.40 crore for this purpose and the money would be directly transferred to the respective bank accounts of the beneficiary fishermen, said an official statement here. The lean period dole is usually given during the months of October-November when fishermen cannot go out to fish in the sea due to inclement weather. Fishermen in Kanniyakumari district, which comes under the West Coast would be given this amount for the period from January to March and those in Thoothukudi, and Tirunelveli would be get it between April - May - June 2022.

The government also sanctioned Rs.135.60 crore as its share of savings schemes for fishermen and fisherwomen, who are members of cooperative societies. The amount would be deposited in the bank accounts of the society members. K. Bharathi of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association, who welcomed the increase, said that banks were not allowing fishermen to withdraw the amount unless both husband and wife or mother and son are physically present at the respective branch and sign the challans in front of officials. “At times those who are sick are also forced to go to the banks. ATM cards have not been issued to all beneficiaries. The Fisheries department must sit with the banks and sort out these problems,” he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Plea against construction in Ramnad’s CRZ**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/plea-against-construction-in-ramnads-crz/articleshow/87319139.cms>

"The Madras high court on Wednesday sought a response from the state government on a plea which sought for a direction to forbear construction activities within 500m of the high tide line at Kannirajapuram village in Ramanathapuram district.A division bench of justices V

Bharathidasan and S Ananthi was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by P Suyambu Lingam, a resident of Kannirajapuram village situated at Kadaladi taluk in the district. The petitioner stated that there are nine hamlets under the Kannirajapuram village panchayat. As many as 8,524 people are residing in the hamlets. A coastal road for the stretch of two kilometres connecting the East Coast Road and Gulf of Mannar is situated at the Daramakartha Kudiyirupu hamlet. The coastal road is the only access for the people to go to temples, burial ground and school. However, a compound wall is being constructed by a private company by blocking the access to the pathway. The company has also encroached the land beyond their patta land parcels, claimed the petitioner.

### **Tamil Nadu: Women in fisheries sector: A case of pulicat lake**

<https://mcc.edu.in/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Madhana-Rekha-UGC-Care-Journal.pdf>

The present paper discusses about the findings of the research study funded by the University Grants Commission. The aim of the study was to highlight the socio-economic conditions of fisher women in the Pulicat village of the Tiruvallur district. The primary source for the research was collected with the help of interview schedule and structured questionnaire relating to size of the family, occupation, level of income, land holding, level of education, living conditions, health status, social contact, etc. The secondary sources of data were collected from the published books, journals and Internet to supplement the study.

The fisheries sector in India has grown substantially over the past few decades. It has been experiencing a boom and is contributing to the economic growth of the nation. About 6 million fishers are dependent on fisheries for their livelihood in India (Amita Saxena, 2011). The total fisher population in Tamil Nadu has 27.60 cents. The fish eater's population is minimal to 27 percent in Tamil Nadu where the vast potential fish is traded to other states. It is interesting to note that about 48.8% of the fisher folk in the state are women. There are 460 Fisheries Co-operatives run by them with a membership of 2,50,276 women indicating a high level of women participation.

Fisher women engage themselves in seaweed collection in addition to the traditional jobs of fish curing, marketing, net making and prawn seed collection. Aquaculture activities can be pursued by the rural women folk at convenient leisure time without being a detriment to their routine. More effort is to be put towards filling the gaps in programme planning rather than programme implementation. The various issues challenging empowerment of fisherwomen have to be seriously taken into consideration while chalking out new development strategies. Women empowerment and the community development through combined efforts require a holistic approach. The present paper discusses about the findings of the research study funded by the University Grants Commission.

The aim of the study was to highlight the socio-economic conditions of fisher women in the Pulicat village of the Tiruvallur district. The primary source for the research was collected with the help of interview schedule and structured questionnaire relating to size of the family, occupation, level of income, land holding, level of education, living conditions, health status, social contact, etc. The secondary sources of data were collected from the published books, journals and Internet to supplement the study. Before proceeding to the targeted community, much of the time was spent in the village, a meeting was organized by the Principal Investigator for the research study. An interactive session was also held with the participants to create awareness on the schemes and provisions available to safeguard for the interest of women in the field of economic activity by the Government. Interviews were conducted with the fisher women of the selected villages of Pulicat.

The data was collected through systematic approach with the help of structured questionnaire schedule. About 500 samples were collected representing the 52 villages. Fisherwomen who involved in the collected of prawn, fish segregation, fish auction, fish loading, fish retail sales, fish wholesale businesses, fish export were interviewed. The frequency analysis of the questionnaire samples were analysed with the help of statistician and interpreted to infer the important findings. The data visualization was done with the help of computer graphics. The entire lifestyle, living conditions of fisherwomen of Pulicat were captured as video. The interviews and focus group discussions were video graphed and prepared as a documentary by the Principal Investigator....

**Tamil Nadu: Madras HC orders detention of foreign ship that hit the state fishing boat**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/10/31131248/1326750/Madras-HC-orders-detention-of-foreign-ship-that-hit-.vpf>

"The High Court passed the order while hearing a petition filed by P. Rajamani whose fishing boat was hit by the Cargo ship 19 nautical miles away from the Colachal harbour in Kanyakumari district on October 22. The fishing boat owned by Rajamani, 'Shij Mon -1' had 17 crew members who were thrown off and badly injured when it was hit by the cargo ship. The fishing boat was totally damaged in the collision. Two fishermen, who were seriously injured, were rescued by the Indian Coast Guard patrol vessel and admitted to Thiruvananthapuram Medical college while the remaining 15 managed to reach the shore with the support of other fishing boats that were fishing in adjacent premises in the sea. The petitioner, Rajamani prayed to the court that the ship plies with a Panama flag and 'if it is permitted to sail beyond our territorial waters, the injured fishermen would not get any compensation'. He requested the court to take action to detain the ship in Indian territory, and Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy directed the Indian Coast Guard, Director General of Shipping, and Mumbai port to detain the Panama vessel, 'MV Navios Venue' in Mumbai port itself for three weeks. The court ordered

notice to the official respondents and the ship and adjourned the case till November 26. Coastal Marine Police of Tamil Nadu had registered a case under Sections 280 (rash navigation of a vessel), and 337 (causing hurt by act endangering life or personal safety of others) of the Indian Penal Code. The case was registered following a complaint filed by the driver of the boat.

### **Tamil Nadu: Set up farm ponds under scheme**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Coimbatore/set-up-farm-ponds-under-scheme/article37201171.ece>

"The administration has called upon farmers to set up farm ponds for augmenting groundwater table in the district. According to the administration, farmers are called upon to set up individual farm ponds on their lands to both augment groundwater table by collecting water during the rains and also to set up income generating inland fishing operations. Farm ponds may be set up under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) programme, and the farmers may take up inland fish rearing in the ponds to generate income. Therefore, farmers are encouraged to set up farm ponds through MNREGS. According to the administration, the farmers seeking MREGS labourers for setting up farm ponds under the scheme may submit their applications along with copy of the ownership deed of the land, which should be in name of the individual farmer; copy of the bank passbook; a copy of the MNREGS job card if any; small farm identity card. Besides, the proposed farm pond should be of 360 sq.mt.

### **Tamil Nadu: Be in constant touch with fishermen during monsoon season**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/10/26175532/1325955/Be-in-constant-touch-with-fishermen-during-monsoon-.vpf>

"The Chief Minister held a review meeting with Secretaries of all the departments, at the Secretariat, in which district Collectors too participated through video conference. In the meeting, Stalin described to officials the precautionary steps to be taken during the northeast monsoon season and the area of focus during the disasters. ""During the monsoon season, special attention should be given to the deep-sea fishermen. Continuous information on the monsoon season should be given to the fishermen, both at sea and onshore, through advanced telecommunication devices. Fisheries officials should be in constant touch with the deep-sea fishermen during the monsoon season"", said the Chief Minister, in the meeting. He also said that Collectors and Superintendent of Police in all coastal districts should keep in mind that the lives of every fisherman matter. The huts in fishermen hamlets and slums should be constantly monitored during the monsoon season. He further said that nine districts, including Kanniyakumari, The Nilgiris and Erode, have already received too much excess rainfall in October and another 15 districts have received rainfall higher than their average in October

resulting in water bodies getting filled. Officials should release water as and when required to ensure that dams do not sustain any damages, added Stalin.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishers, trawlers face off near Pulicat over use of banned Chinese engines**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/oct/28/fishers-trawlers-face-off-near-pulicat-over-use-of-banned-chinese-engines-2376635.html>

"Tension prevailed in Pulicat on Tuesday when trawlers from Karaikal trespassed into shoreline waters within five nautical miles and damaged fishing gears of country craft fishermen. The trawlers were allegedly fitted with banned Chinese engines and had no registration numbers. The conflict reached the tipping point after a group of 50 fishermen in about six speed boats chased a trawler for about 20 to 25 km and surrounded it near Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. M Mathialagan, leader of 13 fishing villages in Pulicat, said it was not a stray incident. Several trawlers from Karaikal have been repeatedly violating TN Marine Fishing Regulation Act, 2016 rules and fishing within five nautical miles, damaging local fishermen's nets. "This has been on for two years and we have suffered damages close to Rs 1.5 crore," he said, adding most trawlers are fitted with 500HP engines. As per the Act, trawlers are allowed to fit a maximum of 250 HP engine. "Around 7 am on Tuesday, we received information of multiple trawlers operating close to the shores. So, our fishermen chased and rounded one of the trawlers; we only wanted to talk. But they curled glass bottles and other heavy objects at us and fled. Two of us sustained minor injuries," he added.

The fishermen have lodged a complaint with Tiruvallur District Collector Alby John and Assistant Director of Fisheries G Velan. Alby John, who visited Pulicat and interacted with fishermen, told TNIE all necessary measures to protect the interest and livelihood of local fishermen will be taken. "I have asked the Assistant Director of Fisheries to file a report and forward to headquarters to escalate the issue." The trawlers did not have registration numbers making it difficult to identify its owners, said Velan. "I am preparing a detailed report highlighting all the violations. The Puducherry government has to take action," he added. Trawlers with heavy nets sweep ocean floors, scraping it off en masse with all life forms, said Durai Mahendran, president of State Fishermen's Association. "The fine mesh size of the nets do not let juveniles and sometimes, eggs and larvae, escape." Meanwhile, Ethiraj, a fisherman from Arankuppam in Pulicat, also sought the help of TN Coast Guard to prevent illegal trawler vessels from entering the State's waters.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen federation plans indefinite strike**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fishermen-federation-plans-indefinite-strike-in-tn/article37165737.ece>

"Setting a deadline of November 10 to the Central and State governments for roll back of diesel prices, the Tamizhaga Anaithu Meenavar Kootamaippu (Tamil Nadu Fishermen Federation) on Monday announced its plan to launch an indefinite strike from November 11 and stage a massive demonstration in Chennai on November 15. Tabling a five-point charter of demands at a meeting held here, in which office-bearers of about 15 associations from Nagapattinam, Karaikal, Thoothukudi, Kanniyakumari and other coastal districts of the State participated, the members of the federation resolved to go on an indefinite strike. Speaking to reporters, fishermen leader Sesu Raja said the diesel prices had touched a new high and fishermen found it difficult to make both ends meet. With poor catch on the one side and a bundle of issues on the other, most of the fishermen experienced mounting debts.

The subsidy component for diesel too from the governments had not been credited properly, he alleged. Besides diesel price, the fishermen also faced threats from the Sri Lankan Navy while fishing in the Palk Bay area. By allowing the fishermen to catch their produce in the traditional Katchatheevu, the issue might be resolved. The Centre should hold talks with its counterpart in the island nation at the earliest and ensure peace prevailed in the fishermen community. Also, the Sri Lankan Navy should not harass the fishermen under the pretext of violation of territorial waters. These and other resolutions were passed at the meeting, which also condemned the Sri Lankan Navy for the death of a fisherman, Rajkiran, 30, from Pudukottai district last week. Another fishermen leader N.J. Bose said there were 6,500 mechanised boats in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and about 50,000 country boats. "We will keep off the sea from November 11 indefinitely, unless and until the issue was resolved permanently," he said and appealed to Chief Minister M.K. Stalin to immediately intervene in the issue.

### **Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu: Biodiversity takes a hit as aqua farmers smuggle bloodworms**

<https://www.deccanchronicle.com/nation/in-other-news/201021/biodiversity-takes-a-hit-as-aqua-farmers-smuggle-bloodworms.html>

"As smuggling of bloodworms from several brackish water bodies has become rampant affecting the local biodiversity, the forest authorities advised aqua farmers to culture them in their ponds and avoid penal action in parts of Andhra Pradesh. Several lakes including Pulicat with brackish water have become vulnerable for smuggling of blood worms to hatcheries located in parts of East and West Godavari, Nellore, Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and other areas in the state. There are nearly 300 hatcheries in the state. Aqua farmers who culture Vannamei shrimps after importing brooders from Hawaii, Singapore, Mexico and other nations use bloodworms to feed them with an expectation that it helps quick growth, lay more eggs and get more number of hatchlings so that they get good price in both international and domestic markets. Those who raise ornamental fish also feed them with bloodworms with an expectation

that such feed helps the fish to have strong pigmentation and help them earn good money by selling them.

As a kilogram of bloodworms fetches Rs 2,000 to Rs 4,000 and have huge demand to use as feed, they are being caught from the beds of water bodies and are being smuggled to hatcheries. All the collected bloodworms mainly from Venadu Island of Pulicat lake get transported to the market in Chennai as there are a number of hatcheries located in Tamil Nadu also in addition to parts of Andhra Pradesh. Though the forest authorities have been booking cases under the provisions of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and also under AP Forest Act, 1967, the illegal practice of collection of bloodworms and smuggling them out to various destinations, is going unabated. Moreover, collection of bloodworms from water bodies is affecting the local biodiversity as thousands of migratory birds which feed on them are being deprived of such feed forcing them to move to other places in search of food while fish in the water bodies which also feed on them are also losing their source of feed resulting in their deaths. This again results in some local fishermen who eke out their livelihood by catching fish in local water bodies and sell them to the customers losing their source of livelihood.

To overcome all these problems, the forest authorities have come up with an idea to advise the aqua farmers having hatcheries to culture bloodworms in their own ponds so that they need not encourage the illegal practice of catching them and smuggling them and facing penal action. Sullurpeta divisional forest officer D. Ravindranath Reddy said, "We are advising aqua farmers to culture bloodworms on their own to feed their shrimps and fish to avoid the illegal practice of smuggling. We are also sensitising aqua farmers to adopt such a practice."

**Tamil Nadu: 2 Fishermen 'Thrown out', 17 Injured after panama flagged cargo ship collides with boat off TN Coast**

<https://www.news18.com/news/india/2-fishermen-thrown-out-17-injured-after-panama-flagged-cargo-ship-collides-with-boat-off-tamil-nadu-coast-4357055.html>

"A cargo ship collided with a fishing boat off Tamil Nadu coast and in the impact, two fishermen, part of a crew of 17, were 'thrown out' and the Coast Guard rescued them on Saturday. The collision was due to 'negligence' and it caused injuries to 17 fishermen besides 'damage' to the boat, South Asian Fishermen Fraternity, general secretary Father Churchill claimed, demanding compensation for the fishermen. The Kanyakumari district based SAFF chief urged the government to take steps to get appropriate compensation on par with international standards for the fishermen as well as damages for the boat. "The Panama-flagged cargo ship Navious Venus bound for Mumbai from Singapore, did not stop after ramming into the fishing boat. It was due to sheer negligence,"" he told PTI and urged authorities to seize the ship and arrest its captain.

“Such incidents continue to happen as there is no strict action. If a vehicle driver causes an accident on road he is arrested. Why this is not followed in the case of a ship? Why this indifference” he asked. The Coast Guard, in a press release, said it received information about a mid-sea collision between a merchant’s vessel ‘Navious Venus’ and fishing boat ‘Shijumon.’ Two crew members of the fishing boat were ‘thrown overboard’ due to the impact of the collision, it said. All the fishermen were rescued and provided medical assistance and early on Saturday, two of them, who were injured in the collision, were taken to Thiruvananthapuram government medical college by a medical team from CG Station Vizhinjam-Thiruvananthapuram. Both the CG and SAFF said the fishing boat was escorted by local fishing boats and it reached the Colachel fishing harbour in Tamil Nadu with the remaining crew of 15.

“We are in the process of getting an FIR filed with the marine police,” the SAFF chief said. “As they were tossed up due to the impact of the collision, the 15-other fishermen also suffered injuries.” In a representation to the Directorate General of Shipping seeking legal action, the SAFF said on October 22, as many as 17 fishermen set out for deep-sea fishing in the mechanized boat ‘Shijumon’ from Colachel government fishing harbour. The fishing boat belonged to a fisherman, Rajamani from Kotilpaadu of Kanyakumari district. While the fishing boat was around nineteen nautical miles from Colachel, the cargo ship collided with it and caused damage, resulting in injuries to fishermen two of whom were thrown out. Immediately, the master of the boat informed the Coast Guard about the collision and requested assistance, and CG personnel reached the spot immediately. The two ‘thrown out’ and injured fishermen were K Chinnathurai and P Arulraj, aged 50 and 60 respectively, and they were taken to Thiruvananthapuram government medical college hospital for treatment.

“We kindly request your good office to take necessary and immediate legal action against the ship Navious Venus which collided with fishermen boat Shijumon and caused injury to the fishermen and heavy damage to the mechanized boat,” the representation said. A copy of the representation was also sent to fisheries, police, and other authorities in Cochin, Chennai, and Kanyakumari urging action. Of the 17 fishermen, 15 were from Tamil Nadu and two others from West Bengal. On February 15, 2012, two marines aboard an Italian-flagged oil tanker ‘Enrica Lexie’ allegedly shot dead two Indian fishermen, hailing from Kerala and on a fishing boat, “mistaking” them for pirates. Following remittance of Rs 10 crore compensation by Italy, the Supreme Court had in June this year directed the closure of criminal proceedings in India against two Italian marines, in connection with the killing of two fishermen off the Kerala coast.

**Tamil Nadu: Fishers’ stir against Sri Lanka navy still on**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/fishers-stir-against-sl-navy-still-on/articleshow/87193779.cms>

"Fishermen from Kottaipattinam in Pudukottai district continued with their protest for a second day on Thursday by skipping regular fishing activities and demanding action against Sri Lankan navy personnel who allegedly caused the death of a fisherman from the fishing hamlet. Demanding action against the Sri Lankan navy, around 1,500 fishing folks along with their family members participated in the protest. To show their solidarity, fishermen association functionaries from various coastal districts such as Jagathapattinam, Tiruvarur, Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Karaikal and Ramanathapuram also participated. The protesters also urged the state and union governments to bring back the two fishermen who were apprehended by the Lankan navy on Monday night while they were fishing. Family members of deceased fisherman R Rajkiran have appealed the state and union governments to take steps to get the body immediately. They said that the protest would continue till the body of Rajkiran is brought back to Kottaipattinam.

**Tamil Nadu: Fishermen association protests Sri Lanka Navy ‘attack’**

<https://www.dajjiworld.com/news/newsDisplay?newsID=884960>

"The Tamil Nadu Mechanized Boat Fishermen Association has called upon the Central and State governments to take up the issue of Sri Lankan Naval personnel regularly ""attacking"" Indian fishermen near the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL). President of the association M. Asan Mohideen, while speaking to IANS, said: ""The Sri Lankan Navy is indulging in attacking Indian fishermen and trying to kill them using illegitimate methods. The attack by the Sri Lankan Navy on an Indian fishing boat led to the drowning of a fisherman, Rajkiran, and the Sri Lankan Navy should be held responsible for this."" The association staged protest marches at Kottaipattanam in Pudukottai district on Tuesday evening over the ""attack"" of the Sri Lankan Navy on an Indian fishing boat. Mohideen said,

""This is not an isolated incident and the Sri Lankan Navy is not opening fire to kill our fishermen but is using other methods to do away with them. The Central government and the Tamil Nadu state government must take up the matter at the highest level in Sri Lanka."" However, the island nation's Navy in a statement on Tuesday said that it had ""rescued"" two Indian fishermen from a fishing boat that was sinking. It had also stated that the Indian fishermen were poaching in Sri Lankan waters and were clearly inside the Lankan waters of the IMBL. The Lankan Navy also said that one fisherman had went ""missing"" during the incident and that the two rescued fishermen were detained at Kankesenthurai in Jaffna. The Sri Lankan Navy also said that its personnel used to ""chase away"" the Indian fishing trawlers but one vessel with ""aggressive manoeuvres"" resisted the chase and advanced, leading to a collision with the Sri Lankan Naval vessel.

Three fishermen, Rajkiran (30), Arockya Xavier (32), and Suganthan (23) of Kottaipattanam in Pudukottai had gone to the sea for fishing on Monday near the IMBL at Katchatheevu and a Sri

Lankan Naval vessel intercepted them. One of the fishermen, Rajkiran fell into the sea, while two others, Suganthan and Arockia Xavier were detained by the Sri Lankan Navy on charges of crossing the IMBL and poaching in Sri Lankan waters. M. Chinnakuppan, Assistant Director of Fisheries, Pudukottai while speaking to IANS said, ""I have got information that the body of Rajkiran has been recovered from the sea and has been sent to Kankesnethurai in Jaffna for post-mortem."" However Sri Lankan Navy said that the search is on for the missing fisherman. Meanwhile, at Kottaipattanam, angry fishermen raised slogans against the Sri Lankan Navy and blocked roads.

### **Tamil Nadu: Seafood price shoots up by 30 per cent in Kasimedu market**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/City/2021/10/20032916/1324669/Puratasi-over-seafood-price-shoots-up-by-30-percent.vpf>

""Usually, the price will increase on weekends. But since Puratasi ended on Monday and Pradhosham fell on the same day, people thronged the market after a month which sent the price up by 30 per cent. The rise in price was also due to a shortage in supply because only 25 percent of boats went for fishing and supply from other states also fell. However, the rate was not up to our expectations this year, because both the fishermen and vendors are severely affected without enough supply and sale,"" said Nanjil P Ravi, spokesperson, Akila Indhiya Meenavar Makkal Sangam. Seer fish (Vanjiram) is being sold for Rs 550 – Rs 600/kg, black pomfret Rs 400/kg, crab Rs 230/kg, squid Rs 200/kg, black kingfish Rs 500/kg, red snapper (Sankara) Rs 240/kg, prawn Rs 255/kg, and barracuda (Sheela) Rs 220/kg. Further affecting the supply, the seafood brought from other states has also gone down due to heavy rain and cyclone warning. ""We receive seafood from Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Goa. But that has also reduced in the last few days due to intense rainfall and the cyclone warning. Even in Tamil Nadu, they have been warned against venturing into the sea due to strong winds in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea,"" said Kasinathan K, a wholesale trader at Kasimedu market.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fisherman drowns after boat rams Sri Lankan vessel**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/tn-fisherman-drowns-after-boat-rams-sri-lankan-vessel/article37081460.ece>

"A fisherman from Kottaipattinam in Pudukottai district reportedly died after falling into the sea when his boat collided with a Sri Lankan naval vessel on Monday. Two other fishermen on the boat were detained by Sri Lankan naval personnel on the charge of crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL). According to official sources, Rajkiran, 30, Suganthan, 23, and Arockia Xavier, 32, of Kottaipattinam, had ventured into the sea on Monday. When they were fishing in waters close to the IMBL near Katchatheevu, a Sri Lankan patrol vessel intercepted their boat. On noticing the authorities, the fishermen reportedly tried to escape.

But the Sri Lankan personnel managed to detain Suganthan and Arockia Xavier. In the melee, Rajkiran fell into the sea. M. Chinnakuppan, Assistant Director of Fisheries, Pudukottai, told The Hindu that he had received communication that Rajkiran's body had been recovered from the sea, and it had been taken to Kankesanthurai for post-mortem examination.

"The information has been conveyed to his family. Steps are under way to bring back his body as early as possible," he said. However, the Sri Lankan Navy on Tuesday evening said the body had not been found, and the search operation was still on. Meanwhile, angered over the death of Rajkiran, the fishermen of Kottaipattinam resorted to a road blockade on the East Coast Road on Tuesday, holding the Sri Lankan Navy responsible for his death. They raised slogans against the Sri Lankan Navy. M. Asan Mohaideen, president, Mechanised Boat Fishermen Association, Kottaipattinam, who led the protest, alleged that the young fisherman was beaten to death. Others who were fishing in the same location had witnessed the boat sinking after being hit by a Sri Lankan vessel. The Sri Lankan Navy, which had refrained from opening fire on fishermen for the last few years, was following "illegitimate methods" to kill innocent fishermen, he claimed.

He urged the Central and State governments to take serious note of the issue. However, the Sri Lankan Navy on Tuesday said it rescued two fishermen from an Indian vessel that was sinking, adding that it had been "poaching in Sri Lankan waters". A search operation was under way to find another fisherman, who "went missing" following the incident, a statement said. The two "rescued fishermen" were detained in Kankesanthurai in Jaffna. When asked about the missing fisherman, the Sri Lankan Navy's media spokesman, Captain Indika De Silva, said the search was ongoing.

"We are also in touch with an Indian naval vessel conducting a similar search operation on the Indian side of the IMBL," he told The Hindu. With regard to the incident, the Sri Lankan Navy said its patrol units were "chasing away" Indian fishing trawlers when one vessel, with "aggressive manoeuvres", resisted the chase, resulting in the collision. Tamil Nadu fishermen have repeatedly accused the Sri Lankan Navy of attacking them and their vessels — an allegation the island nation has denied. Following a similar incident in January, four Tamil Nadu fishermen, Samson Darwin, 28, A. Mesiya, 30, V. Nagaraj, 52, and S. Senthil Kumar, 32, from Ramanathapuram, died. There has been no official word so far on the investigation into their deaths.

**Tamil Nadu: Murugan writes to External Affairs Minister on fishermen detention in Sri Lanka**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/murugan-writes-to-eam-on-fishermen-detention-in-sri-lanka/article37012926.ece>

"Union Minister of State for Fisheries L.Murugan on Friday wrote to External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar seeking his intervention in securing the release of 23 fishermen from Nagapattinam, Karaikal and Mayiladuthurai who were arrested by Sri Lankan Navy. Mr. Murugan received a memorandum from representatives of 66 fishermen villages from these three places. A press release said Mr. Murugan reportedly assured them of all possible help to secure the release of the fishermen.

### **Tamil Nadu: Government urged to ensure fishing rights of inland fishermen**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/govt-urged-to-ensure-fishing-rights-of-inland-fishermen/article37061828.ece>

"Various organisations working for the cause of fishermen have urged the State government to ensure that inland fishermen do not lose their traditional fishing rights at dams, lakes and tanks. There are over one lakh inland fishermen in the State, who depend on waterbodies maintained by the Fisheries Department and the Public Works Department. "They can fish for a maximum of eight months in a year. Rest of the time, the waterbodies run dry. A government order in the 1990s mandated that priority should be given to inland fishermen over others when it comes to fishing rights. That should continue to be implemented.

The government must not look to make profit in these cases since the livelihood of thousands of families is involved," said K. Bharathi, South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association. Kabaddi Maran of the Tamil Nadu Meenavar Munnetra Sangam said there was a move to allow others to fish in these lakes and tanks with profit being the motive. "The practice all these years has been to allow fishermen's cooperative societies to pay a nominal amount towards lease for the year and allow them to let fingerlings in the waters, rear them and then catch and sell them. They just about manage to survive with the income." P. Narayanasamy of Andhiyur Besthavar Meenavar Cooperative Society said that a couple of years ago the PWD had called for tenders for their Varattu Pallam dam but after great difficulty, which involved going to court, it was cancelled. "We are hoping that the government would respect our rights. We want tourism projects to take off on lakes so that we can sell fish to visitors, which would mean more income," he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Police warn of possible attack on fishermen crossing IMBL**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/tn-police-warn-of-possible-attack-on-fishermen-crossing-imbl/article37037587.ece>

"The Tamil Nadu police have issued an alert on the possibility of an attack on fishermen crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) for fishing in Sri Lankan waters. Law-enforcing agencies along the coastal districts have been advised to sensitise the fishing community to the risks, in the backdrop of simmering differences between the fishermen of India and Sri Lanka over catching fish in the Katchatheevu area. According to police sources, mechanized boats fishermen in Rameswaram were on a week-long protest demanding that the Central and State governments permit fishermen of India and Sri Lanka to fish in the Katchatheevu sea area. They also demanded suitable compensation for the boats seized by the Sri Lankan Navy. Katchatheevu, an uninhabited off-shore island in the Palk Strait, is administered by Sri Lanka. Though the island was jointly managed by India and Sri Lanka allowing the fishermen of both countries to dry their nets there, it was ceded to Sri Lanka in 1974. Since then, Katchatheevu has remained an issue with some political parties in Tamil Nadu demanding that the island be returned to benefit the fishermen of India. With the mechanised boat fishermen set to enter the sea for fishing from early October 16, security agencies perceived the need to mount a vigil at sea. The Coastal Security Group of the Tamil Nadu police issued an alert stating that the possibility of an attack on Tamil Nadu fishermen by Sri Lankan fishermen could not be ruled out. Stating that it had received inputs on the crossing of the IMBL by Tamil Nadu fishermen which was objected to by their counterparts in Jaffna and Mannar, the agency said Sri Lankan fishermen had planned to stage an agitation in the sea on October 17 and 18, 2021, demanding the implementation of the Trawler (Mechanised Boat) Prevention Act. When contacted, Additional Director-General of Police, Coastal Security Group Sandeep Mittal said the Indian Navy and Coast Guard had been alerted to provide enhanced security in vulnerable areas.

However, incidents of aggression by the Sri Lankan Navy against Indian fishermen had increased over the last 8 months. "The Sri Lankan Navy needs to be sensitised against using aggressive force against Indian fishermen," Dr. Mittal said. AIADMK's plea In a related development, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam has called for the Union government's intervention to ensure the release of 23 fishermen arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy on October 13, 2021. In a letter, AIADMK coordinator and former Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam, drew the attention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the arrest of the fishermen at Point Pedro where they had gone from Nagapattinam for fishing. The Sri Lankan Navy seized their boats, took the fishermen into custody and took them to Karainagar Naval Base. Expressing concern over the frequent incidents of arrest of Tamil Nadu fishermen, Mr. Panneerselvam said fishermen were venturing into the sea with a constant fear of attack by the Sri Lankan Navy which was causing a lot of tension and unrest among the community along the coastal districts.

### **Tamil Nadu: Sea turns green in Gulf of Mannar due to algal bloom**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/sea-turns-green-in-gulf-of-mannar-due-to-algal-bloom/article36950185.ece>

"In a rare phenomenon called algal bloom, the sea has turned green in Gulf of Mannar in Ramanathapuram district - from Pamban to Vedhalai, and Periyapattinam to Keelakkarai - in the past few days. When thousands of fish washed ashore, fishermen were alarmed. According to R. Jeyakumar, Principal Scientist with the regional centre of Centre for Marine Fisheries Research Institute, a green algae called *Noctulica scintillans* occurs during September and October - the window period between the southwest and northeast monsoons. This rapid increase of algae population happens due to a combination of factors such as rise in sea temperature and low wind condition. Because of the low wind, the algae which thrives on nutrition, settles inside the bay region, because of the static water caused due to low wind and without scope for dispersion. This phenomena started 12 to 14 nautical miles off Rameswaram coast in the Gulf of Mannar and migrated into the Keelakkarai bay, causing death of fish species such as eel which thrive in coral reefs and never migrate.

Other fish species had migrated away from the algae. Mr. Jeyakumar said, "This is not the first time that this is happening. It occurred in 2018, and for the past three consecutive years since 2018." Near the shore, a green and blue florescence is witnessed at night off Keelakkarai. "We are coordinating with INS Parundu, the Indian naval air station in Uchipuli, to study the coast in Thondi region, and also with the Satellite Application Centre in Ahmedabad to gauge the chlorophyll content of the algae. Bases on these findings, we'll advise fisherfolk involved in cage farming so that they can move the cages, if need be," Mr. Jeyakumar said. Meanwhile, the Ramanathapuram district administration has started clearing the algae from the sea.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Arrival, sale of fish down at Kasimedu**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/chennai-arrival-sale-of-fish-down-at-kasimedu/articleshow/86883005.cms>

"Arrival of fish at the Kasimedu harbour and Chintadripet market has come down in the past fortnight. Fishermen attribute two reasons for this. One is the increase in the price of diesel that has forced many owners to keep their vessels moored to the piers at the harbour, reluctant to put out to sea. Second is the fact that in the auspicious Tamil month of Purattasi, which lasts from the middle of September to the middle of October, many non-vegetarian eaters turn vegetarians and do not consume seafood. This has led to fewer footfalls at the two main fish markets, they said. Fisheries department officials said of the more than 400 mechanised boats attached to the Kasimedu harbour, only 50 have put out to sea. Similarly, only about 150 trawlers have ventured out for fishing. Besides, 25 tuna long-liners have also set out to the sea from Kasimedu, said an official.

Currently, most of the boats that have gone out to sea are bringing in only small fish, which are not fetching huge amounts and leading to losses. Every day, on an average, about 400 tonnes of fish land at the Kasimedu harbour, said Balraman, a vendor. Vanjiram, paarai, Karuppu vaaval, nethili, Kezhanga and Vaalai are among the varieties arriving daily along with squid and prawns. It is on Sundays that retailers come in good numbers to the market. “When Purattasi is over, the fish sale will pick up at the market,” he said. A similar situation prevails at the Chintadripet market where, on an average, about 20 tonnes of fish used to arrive every day. Fish from Kerala and Karnataka also came to this market. But now, during Purattasi, the market receives only 10 tonnes of fish a day. “The business is very dull now,” said one of the traders doing business there. Besides, many boat owners in Kasimedu may not see it worthwhile to send their crew into the sea unless the diesel prices are brought down, said one owner. Only those who are in the export trade can afford to go fishing, he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen leader Arulanandam dead**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishermen-leader-arulanandam-dead/article36934998.ece>

"U. Arulanandam, 75, a long-time fishermen activist and Tamil Nadu representative in the Alliance for the Release of Innocent Fishermen, passed away at his residence here on Sunday. Fishermen association leaders from many towns and districts paid homage to Arulanandam, who was instrumental in educating the fishermen on their rights and responsibilities. His family said the last rites would be performed on Monday. Sesu Raja, a fishermen leader, said Arulanandam fought for the rights of not only Tamil Nadu fishermen but also Sri Lankan fishermen. At a time when Tamil Nadu fishermen associations were looking for support from the Union Government to hold talks with Sri Lankan officials to resolve long-pending issues, Arulanandam's opinion was much valued. When Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Giriraj Singh visited Ramanathapuram district in January, Arulanandam led a fishermen delegation from Jagathapattinam in Pudukottai district and submitted a memorandum seeking compensation for the fishermen families and release of the boats anchored in Sri Lankan waters for long.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishers go on strike in Nagore**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/fishers-go-on-strike-in-nagore/article36870139.ece>

"Fishers of Nagore went on a strike on Wednesday demanding retrieval of a trawler belonging to a local resident that had sunk in mid-sea off Kochi port. The fishermen said the loss to the owner due to the incident was to the tune of Rs. 1 crore. Though the 11 fishermen on board were rescued, the trawler, nets and other fishing gear had sunk. The trawler would gather rust and turn unusable if it was not retrieved at the earliest, they added.

### **Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh: Union Minister allays fears over Marine Fisheries Bill**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/union-minister-allays-fears-over-marine-fisheries-bill/article36887737.ece>

"Allaying the fears of fishermen, Union Minister of State for Fisheries L. Murugan has maintained that the Marine Fisheries Bill-2021 was drafted to protect the interests of traditional fishermen and the marine wealth. "The Bill has addressed the concerns of traditional fishermen. The Bill, drafted after wider consultations with all the stakeholders, aims at protecting the marine wealth as well as those who eke out their living by venturing into the sea," the Union Minister said while addressing a meeting of fishermen on Thursday. He asserted that the Centre was committed to protecting the interests of fishermen. "That is why a separate Ministry has been created for fisheries, animal husbandry and dairying for the first time in this country and the goal is to unleash the full growth potential of these sectors and improve the income of all the stakeholders," said Mr. Murugan. The Centre, he said, would develop five major fishing harbours across the country including the one proposed in Visakhapatnam as model ones with a view to turn them into hubs of economic activity.

Auction of water bodies Fishermen at the meeting resolved to step up agitation against the auctioning of traditional water bodies in the State. They feared that the move would deprive them of their traditional fishing rights, if commercial exploitation was allowed by big private players. Mr. Murugan promised to intervene to resolve the issues pertaining to fishing between the fishermen from Nellore district and their counterparts in Tamil Nadu amicably. "The choked mouth of the Pulicat Lake will be opened to save the fragile ecosystem for the benefit of fishermen," he said. Participating in the meeting, BJP State in-charge Sunil Deodhar lamented that fishermen from Andhra Pradesh were migrating to other States because of the 'anti-fishermen policies' of the YSRCP government. BJP State president Somu Veerraju exhorted the fishermen to be prepared for a protracted struggle to press for scrapping the 'controversial' G.O. 217. "The rights of fishermen on canals, tanks and reservoirs should be restored," he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Sri Lankan navy pelts stones on Indian fishermen**

<https://www.oneindia.com/india/sri-lankan-navy-pelts-stones-on-indian-fishermen-3320571.html>

"The Sri Lankan Navy on Wednesday pelted stones on Indian fishermen from here and damaged their fishing nets, Tamil Nadu government officials said. Fisheries Department officials said on Thursday that the incident happened near Katchateevu when the Lankan naval personnel who came in 10 fishing boats pelted stones on the Indian fishermen and damaged the nets in about 20 craft, PTI reported. However, nobody was injured in the incident, even as they warned the Indian fishermen against fishing there, the officials said. A complaint was filed with the Fisheries officials. Fishermen association representatives expressed concern over such recurring incidents and called for a permanent solution to the issue.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen back home after 19 months in Iranian jail**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/10/05034037/1321574/Nine-TN-fishermen-arrested-by-Iran-Coast-Guard-return-vpf>

"The fishermen - Albert Ravi, Dynas, Godwin Jon Weldon, Arockia Ligin, Joseph Beski, Jesudas, Sahaya Vijay, Michael Adimai, and Wellington - were working for a Kuwait-based fishing group and while fishing, had been arrested by the Iranian Coast Guard for entering its territorial waters. The fishermen had started from Fahaheel in Kuwait in three boats in the morning and were caught by the Iranian Coast Guard by evening. "It has been 19 months that my brother is in an Iranian jail. We thank the Indian government and the Tamil Nadu government for having taken extra efforts to bring them back to India. They had gone to Kuwait for a better living... Anyway, we are thankful to God that they are back to our country," Mary Mariam, a relative of one of the fishermen, told IANS from Nagercoil.

### **Tamil Nadu: Thermal plants may make Chennai unlivable'**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/thermal-plants-may-make-chennai-unlivable/article36767549.ece>

"North Chennai, an industrial zone, suffers from air pollution, mainly from the presence of several thermal power plants. The area has the North Chennai Thermal Power Station (Stage 1 and 2), NTECL at Vallur having a capacity of 1,500 MW and the Basin Bridge Gas Turbine Power Station, which are operated by State and Union government agencies. Ennore fishermen have been highlighting the pollution of waterways owing to dumping of fly ash. All localities suffer from air pollution that poses several health hazards. A study done by C40, a network of the world cities committed to addressing climate change, paints a gloomy picture of public health. It says the operation of thermal power plants could lead to more deaths among the adults, loss of man days and damage to children's health.

The study, entitled 'Coal-free cities: the health and economic case for a clean energy revolution,' pitches for sustainable energy to create thousands of jobs, prevent loss of man days, provide residents with cheap power and tackle climate change. The study has predicted that in the next

10 years, the pollution caused by thermal power plants could lead to 52,700 sudden deaths, 31,700 preterm births and asthma among 5,700 children in cities, including Chennai, Bengaluru, Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata. It has also predicted the number of sudden deaths to increase in Chennai in the year 2030 to 500 against 340 in 2019 because of the pollution from the thermal power plants. The study has called for closing the thermal power plants in Chennai and for generating over 1.40 lakh jobs by investing in solar and wind energies. G. Sundararajan of Poovulagin Nanbargal urged the Tamil Nadu government not to construct any new thermal plant and spike any plan for replacing or expanding the plants that are to be decommissioned in the coming years. He cited the freeze imposed on new thermal power plants by Chhattisgarh, Gujarat and Maharashtra. He wanted the government to promote sustainable energies to rid the city of pollution from the thermal power plants.

### **Tamil Nadu: Declare Kattupalli as high erosion zone: Tamil Nadu-Puducherry Fishermen Federation**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/09/30005111/1320535/Declare-Kattupalli-as-high-erosion-zone-Tamil-NaduPuducherry-.vpf>

"In a letter to the director of the environment department, they said that the ports constructed at the southern portion of Kattupalli island are leading to high erosion in the northern part of the island. "This may result in groundwater turning saline and sea engulfing the land areas. If this is allowed to continue further, it will impact drinking water resources, agriculture and fishermen living along the coast of Kattupalli and Pazhaverkadu," they said. They wanted the state to ask the ports to follow directions given in the environment clearance to protect the coasts.

### **Tamil Nadu: Protesting fishers urge Centre to hold talks with Sri Lankan govt**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/sep/29/protesting-fishers-urge-centre-to-hold-talks-with-lankan-govt-2365175.html>

"Hundreds of fishermen staged a protest in front of the RDO office in Vedaranyam on Tuesday, condemning the Union government and the Sri Lankan government. The protesters said fishermen, mostly from Nagapattinam, have been fishing with extreme fear for the last few weeks following attacks by miscreants from Sri Lanka. Condemning the attacks, the fishermen started a strike last Saturday. Arcothurai fishing hamlet leader Murugaiyan led the protest, and fishermen from Akaraipettai, Kechangkuppam, Velankanni, Vellaipalam, Pushpavanam and Kodyakarai participated. "The Central government should hold talks with Sri Lankan government," said Ragavan, a fisherman.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen stage protest condemning attack**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/fishermen-stage-protest-condemning-attack/articleshow/86592722.cms>

"Hundreds of fishermen, condemning the recurring incidents of attack on them allegedly by Sri Lankan fishermen, from 24 hamlets in and around Vedaranyam in Nagapattinam district staged protest by skipping their regular fishing activities for fourth consecutive day on Tuesday. They urged both the state and Union governments to take necessary action to end the threat faced by them for a long time. Three fishermen Sivakumar, Siva and Chinnathambi fishermen from Arukattuthurai were attacked allegedly by Sri Lankan fishermen a few days ago. During the incident, all the three sustained injuries. This was the fourth consecutive time where fishermen from Tamil Nadu faced such a threat, they alleged. Fishermen are also losing their catches and nets worth several lakhs of rupees, they stated. The fishermen gathered in front of revenue divisional office of Vedaranyam and raised slogans.

**Tamil Nadu: Amid the sea of YouTube videos floating in cyberspace, Ungal Meenavan Mookaiyur is a catch that stands out**

<https://www.thehindu.com/society/caught-in-the-web/article30557600.ece>

"He is K Kingston, an Internet influencer in his own way. This fisherman's videos on his adventures at sea are viewed routinely by lakhs of people. Kingston's cybersea adventures off the coast of Kadaladi, Ramanathapuram district, began with his TikTok videos, which he did "for a bit of popularity". He tried different hacks, but hit the viral league with a song from Dhanush's Maryan. As 'Komban sura' played in the background, a camera showed him catching a chinna sura (small shark) weighing a kilogram. The video got 10 lakh likes, as viewers were ensnared by the blue background. That was 14 months ago. Then, Kingston decided to do more. He made live videos of his sea expeditions. "They looked interesting to me," says the 30-year-old. One of his videos, of a star-fish, went viral. Most people said they saw a star-fish for the first time, while others wondered if it was a plastic specimen. "The next time, I made sure it acted alive, and shot all its movements," he adds.

The star-fish episode was a landmark: from then on, his videos would be guided by viewer suggestions. Claim to fame Kingston is proud of his conch shell video. It showed the live creature as his voice-over narrated its life-cycle. Viewers came back with questions, which he answered, and the follower count soon went up to five lakhs. "But it was not always 'Hey, you're great!'," points out Kingston. "Some asked why I was killing fish, trolls called me a killer." But Kingston answered them all patiently. In one post, he said, "Fishermen look after fish like they are his children." Appreciation across cyberspace was like oxygen for him. "I felt the pats," he says. Some viewers suggested that he put his videos out on YouTube too. He asked a friend to create an e-mail ID for him. Kingston's first YouTube video brought in 20,000 subscribers in a day (he'd added one lakh subscribers in 20 days). "I redid the conch shell video, and showed

how to make meen kozhambu with freshly-caught fish,” he explains. The video got one million views. YouTubing is now serious work for him.

Kingston has upgraded his mobile phone, and his audiences watch snippets on swimming strokes, dangers at sea, and the endless variety of sea-creatures. A techie friend in Chennai helped set up his YouTube channel four months ago. Soon, revenue from advertisements started trickling in. He is now saving for an underwater camera to improve production quality. When, recently, he heard that his videos were being used without permission in social media, he was alarmed. Some even called him “fake”. “I had to prove I was the producer and show copyright,” he says, adding that he messaged those who lifted his content. “I told them that I never stole anyone’s work. I struggle to make my videos. Take mine if you need it badly, but don’t claim ownership... don’t say I’m fake,” he says. His brother now monitors the videos and proves authenticity through time-lapse.

Fishing for ideas Kingston’s videos are educational too. One shows how clouds absorb water vapour from the sea. Most of his audience applauded his guts for showing the phenomenon up close, but others rubbished it. “A tornado in the making,” a viewer commented under the video. But Kingston was unfazed. “I knew I was right. The elders in my colony supported it but I had no scientific proof. A YouTube channel telecast the video, and a meteorologist authenticated my claim. I proved experience gives us bigger lessons than mere book-learning,” he says. The highlight in his videos is the complete absence of malice, and the patience with which he explains phenomena. “Let’s exchange views, nanba (friend),” he says. “Come, taste my fish fries.” He believes he is changing the unsavoury perception people have of fishermen. “We are branded rowdies and smugglers. But we’re engaged in a traditional craft; we battle waves. Now viewers say, ‘Fishermen are great... when we go to buy fish, we don’t haggle.’”

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen to intensify protest against Marine Fisheries Bill**

<https://www.newsclick.in/tamil-nadu-fishermen-intensify-protest-marine-fisheries-bill>

"The fishing community of Tamil Nadu has decided to further intensify the protest against the Marine Fisheries Bill, 2021. Besides, the draft policy framework on the blue economy, which envisages using marine resources for sustainable development, has invited the ire of the fishermen, who have alleged that the stakeholders were not consulted before its publication. The fishers have alleged that the Bill and the draft are heavily stacked against the rights of traditional fishermen while giving companies the liberty to utilise the resources of and from the ocean space to their benefit. While sustainable development and utilisation of resources have been given priority in the draft, the fishermen have expressed the fear of displacement and loss of livelihood. The state conference of the Tamil Nadu Fish Workers Federation (TNFWF) had also asked the Centre to withdraw the Bill and drop the draft to ensure protection of the

rights of the fishermen and the fisheries workers. Blue Economy draft will displace traditional fishermen

The draft policy, published in 2020, has defined blue economy as a subset of the national economy, comprising the entire system of ocean resources and manmade economic infrastructure in marine, maritime and the onshore coastal zones within India's legal jurisdiction, which aid in the production of goods and services and have clear linkages with economic growth, environmental sustainability and national security. However, P Stanley, national secretary, All India Fishers and Fisheries Workers Federation (AIFWWF), said that the "recent policies rolled out by the Union government on fisheries are heavily stacked against people earning their livelihood from seas, particularly the traditional fishermen". "We strongly oppose the draft blue economy policy of the BJP government, which will only favour the corporate entities," he told Newslick. On the consultations and invitation of opinions by the ministry of earth sciences on the draft, Stanley alleged that the stakeholders were not given a hearing to voice their plight and reservations. "The draft policy mentions about exploring the resources available in the ocean, but it will end up in exploitation.

The corporate entities will have a free hand to introduce tourism, sports activities and tap the natural resources from the bed of the ocean, which will have a huge impact on the traditional fishermen. Therefore, the draft must be withdrawn without any preconditions," he added. 'Withdraw Marine Fisheries Bill' The TNFWF demanded that the Centre should provide employment to the youths of the fishing community directly instead of giving a free rein to corporate entities. The Bill will only corporatise the wealth of the seas and hence should be withdrawn, it added. S Anthony, general secretary, TNFWF, said, "We have held a number of protests against the Bill across the coastal districts. The protest will only intensify if the Union government remains insensitive to our demands." The promise made by the BJP before the 2014 Lok Sabha elections on forming a separate ministry for fishing remains unfulfilled, the community said. V Kumar, deputy general secretary, Centre of Indian Trade Unions (state unit), said, "Opening the coastal areas to corporate entities for recreation, entertainment and research will lead to loss of livelihood for the two-crore strong population dependent on seas. The Bill also infringes the rights of state governments, which is against the federal structure."

State Government must fulfil demands the long-pending demands of the fishing community, which includes inland fishermen and fish-sellers, must be fulfilled by the state government, the leaders demanded. "The state government must carve out an independent welfare board for the fishermen and ensure that the enrolment and renewal processes are simplified. The demand for Rs 3,000 monthly pension for fishers above 60 years and women workers above 55 must be fulfilled," Kumar added. Other demands, including higher subsidies for diesel and kerosene for country boat fishermen and government aid during fishing ban have also not been fulfilled by the state government. The housing issues of the fishing hamlets also need the attention of the state

government, which gets considerable income from exports. The state government earned revenue of Rs 5,591.49 crore in foreign exchange in 2018-19, as per the fisheries policy note. "The fishing community remains largely neglected despite playing a crucial role in ensuring healthy food for the population and income to the government. Policies should be framed in consultation with the community, not imposed, as being done by the BJP government," Anthony said.

**Tamil Nadu: The potential in seaweed farming in transforming the lives of coastal communities, SHGs and women, the first Multipurpose Seaweed Park in India was established**

<https://www.uniindia.com/india-4th-largest-exporter-of-marine-products-murugan/south/news/2516911.html>

"Union Minister of State for I and B, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and dairying L Murugan on Sunday said India was the fourth largest marine products exporting nation in the world, constituting about 17-18 per cent from India. Addressing the concluding ceremony of 'VanijyaSaptah-Trade and Commerce Week' here, he said to boost the marine sector, the Union Government has launched the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) at an estimated investment of Rs 20,050 crores. The scheme envisages enhancing fisheries exports to Rs one lakh crores by 2024-25 from Rs 46,662 crores, he said and urged the youth and the people of Tamil Nadu to make good use of this scheme. The Minister said recognizing the potential in seaweed farming in transforming the lives of coastal communities, SHGs and women, the first Multipurpose Seaweed Park in India was established in Tamil Nadu.

Asserting that Tamil Nadu has all the ingredients to be a top export hub, Mr Murugan urged the industry to grab this opportunity, increase the range of the products, diversify the export destination, step up the value ladder and never compromise with the quality of the product. "The product which is exported, not just carries the name of the brand, but also carries with it the reputation of Tamil Nadu and India is also associated with it", he added. The Minister said that Reform, Perform and Transform is the new mantra. The Atmanirbhar Bharat is the vision and Vocal For Local is the action point under the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said following the footsteps of freedom fighter V.O.Chidambaram Pillai, whose 150th birth anniversary is being celebrated, Mr Modi announced Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Vocal for Local during the 75th year of Indian Independence. New sectors are being identified and promoted for their export potential. Local region-specific products, textiles, toys having the flavour of the region, are promoted to find a global market, he said.

**Tamil Nadu: Kings Infra to bring 5K farmers under sustainable aquaculture**

<https://www.dailypioneer.com/2021/state-editions/kings-infra-to-bring-5k-farmers-under-sustainable-aquaculture.html>

"Ecologically sustainable aquaculture based on symbiotic technology is set to revolutionise the coastal aquaculture industry in the country. The aquaculture based on symbiotic technology is a guaranteed way for achieving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for doubling the aqua farmers' income, said Tamil Nadu J Jayalalithaa Fisheries University (TNJFU) vice-chancellor G Sugumar. He was speaking after inaugurating the project on standardised pond-based culture technique for commercially important marine finfishes and pond-based recirculated aquaculture system (RAS) for vannamei shrimp at Chippikulam near Thoothukudi. Sugumar said the initiative launched by Kings Infra in association with the university to promote the project would help the aquaculture farming practice to be truly sustainable in the country.

The recirculated aquaculture system (RAS) empowers farmers to utilise water to the maximum sustainable levels by eliminating possible wastage by converting the same to another resource. Speaking on the occasion, chairman and managing director of Kings Infra, Shaji Baby John said the company aims at training over 5,000 farmers in the coastal region by utilising the technology being developed under this joint collaborative project. Stressing on the importance of doubling farmers' income for the growth of the economy he said the ecologically sustainable aquaculture provides the best possibility for the coastal farmers to realise the dream of augmenting their income. The joint venture would develop a standard technology on developing the framework for sustainable aquaculture technology in a step-by-step manner incorporating the necessary scientific inputs and technical requirements.

The next stage would be creating a knowledge-sharing platform for extending the developed technology to the farming community and also to provide on-farm training, he added. The Kochi-based Kings Infra has been advocating the need for an environmentally sustainable aquaculture for the past many years. Sustainable aquaculture has considerable scope for growth as 49 per cent of global demand for human consumption of fish is contributed by aquaculture. Aquaculture shrimp contributed 74 per cent value of the Indian seafood exports worth Rs 43,717 crore exports in FY 2021.

### **Tamil Nadu: Mechanised boat sinks, fisherman goes missing**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/mechanised-boat-sinks-fisherman-goes-missing/article36613244.ece>

"A fisherman went missing off Koodankulam coast on Wednesday when the mechanised boat in which he, along with 12 other fishermen, was returning to the base sank due to rough weather in the high seas. Police said 13 fishermen – 10 from Kanniyakumari district and three from West Bengal – had ventured into the sea from Kollam Fishing Harbour for deep-sea fishing in the boat owned by Binu of Kollam on September 17. When they cut short their fishing trip and

were returning to their base due to heavy wind in the high seas, the boat suffered damage at the bottom. As the boat began to sink 20 nautical miles off Koodankulam coast, the fishermen jumped into the sea after informing the boats fishing in the vicinity about the serious problem they were facing. While 12 fishermen were rescued by the fishermen in other boats, C. John, 57, of Vaniyakudi in Kanniyakumari district went missing. General Secretary of South Asian Fishermen Fraternity Rev. Fr. Churchill has sent an appeal to the Indian Coast Guard urging it to launch search operations.

### **Tamil Nadu: Boats and nets of Indian fishermen damaged in alleged attack by SL navy**

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/boats-and-nets-of-indian-fishermen-damaged-in-alleged-attack-by-sl-navy/2165329>

"Boats and fishing nets of Indian fishermen from here were damaged in alleged attack by the Sri Lankan Navy, Tamil Nadu Fisheries officials said on Thursday. The incident happened late on Wednesday near Katchatheevu when Lankan Naval personnel, who came in about 10 patrol boats, hurled glass bottles and stones, they said. While nobody sustained injuries, about 25 boats were damaged in the incident while the personnel damaged fishing nets in about 40 craft, officials said. The damaged boats were towed to the shore with the help of others. Fishermen association representatives N Devadass and P Sesuraja expressed concern over such incidents and said the fishers were apprehensive of carrying on with their vocation in the seas due to such recurring incidents. A complaint was lodged with the local Fisheries officials over the matter.

### **Tamil Nadu: Tackle sea erosion in Nagapattinam**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/tackle-sea-erosion-in-nagapattinam-says-palaniswami/article36601675.ece>

"AIADMK co-coordinator Edappadi K. Palaniswami on Tuesday called for measures to be taken on a war footing to tackle the problem of sea erosion in several places in the State. In a statement, he referred to the issue in Nambiar Nagaram, Nagapattinam district, where the sea was said to have been rough for 45 days. As a result, the sea had eroded some 500 m of land, with the seawater entering up to 100 m of land. Approximately 10 houses and electric poles had been affected, the former Chief Minister said. A similar problem Mr. Palaniswami recalled that when former Handlooms Minister and the present Vedaranyam legislator, O.S. Manian, was a Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) in the 1990s, he had brought a similar problem in the fishing village of Kilvelur taluk of Nagapattinam district to the notice of then Chief Minister Jayalalithaa, who then ordered the planting of palmyra saplings. Consequently, the problem was sorted out, Mr. Palaniswami said. OPS plea on pavements In a separate statement, AIADMK coordinator O. Panneerselvam referred to a report on the replacement of pavements in Chennai. Mr. Panneerselvam said people were of the view that even well-laid pavements were dug up and

replaced, resulting in the taxpayers' money being wasted. He asked Chief Minister M.K. Stalin to see to it that the interests of pedestrians were safeguarded, while ensuring that public money was not wasted. Approximately 10 houses and electric poles have been affected in Nambiar Nagaram in Nagapattinam district Edappadi K. Palaniswami AIADMK co-coordinator.

### **Tamil Nadu: Lieutenant Governor nod for aid to fishermen**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/l-g-nod-for-aid-to-fishermen/article36560273.ece>

"Lieutenant Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan has accorded approval for release of the second instalment of grants-in-aid (phase II) of Rs. 1.21 crore towards compensation to fishermen families for the period of fishing ban. Each of the 2,216 fisher families will get Rs. 5,500 under the "Welfare and Relief for Fishermen During Lean Seasons and Natural Calamities" scheme in the Union Territory, according to a pressnote from the Raj Nivas. Another file cleared by the Lt. Governor pertained to approval for an increase in the rate of consolidated remuneration from Rs. 40,000 a month to Rs. 50,000 a month to the Medical Officers (ISM&H) engaged on contract basis on par with Medical Officers (Allopathy) working in Health Department. New rule The decision of the Council of Ministers to empower the tahsildar-cum-executive magistrate in Puducherry and Karaikal regions and deputy tahsildar-cum-executive magistrate in Mahe and Yanam regions to issue legal heir certificate has received concurrence of the Lt. Governor. This will reduce inconvenience of public in approaching courts for obtaining legal heir certificate and alleviate piling up of cases in the subordinate courts.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen protest against construction of Pvt port in Pulicat**

<https://ommcomnews.com/india-news/tn-fishermen-protest-against-construction-of-pvt-port-in-pulicat>

"The fishermen community have strongly voiced their protest against the construction of a private port in the Pulicat area. They warned that the construction would lead to the death of the Pulicat lake, a brackish water lake. The fishermen community has already given a memorandum to Union Minister of State for Fisheries and animal husbandry and Information and Broadcasting, L. Murugan on the construction of the private port. The minister while on a visit to the Pulicat area had met the leaders of the Fishermen community who were protesting against the construction of the private port at the lake. The representatives from villages along the lake said that opening the bar mouth where sea water entered and exited the lake was important for its survival and wanted the bar mouth to be kept open permanently and objected to the construction of a private port that would kill the lake. S. Moorthy, a resident of the area, who is into traditional fishing and lives along the Pulicat lake told IANS, "We are in protest against the construction of a private port in the area and have voiced our strong objection to Union Minister

of State for Fisheries, L. Murugan. If the government is not stalling the construction of the port, we will announce our next course of action.” The fishermen community instead requested the minister to take steps for the construction of a fishing harbour in the area. Murugan, according to the fishermen leaders, informed them that if the state government moots a proposal for the construction of a fishing harbour, the Central government would study the same and take appropriate action. The minister informed the fishermen that the Central government would take steps to provide housing to them under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna. Kisan cards will also be issued to fishermen, the minister said

### **Tamil Nadu: Tiruvannamalai sets record with 1,121 farm ponds in 30 days**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/09/19022034/1318906/Tiruvannamalai-sets-record-with-1121-farm-ponds-in-.vpf>

"Conveying this to DT Next, he said that the aim behind the initiative was to ensure adequate water for drinking and agricultural purposes during the summer and hence a brainstorming session was conducted for officials and farmers, which led to the idea of creating farm ponds. Started with the guidance of PWD minister EV Velu, the scheme soon caught the attention of many as the work progressed with daily monitoring. "It costs Rs 1.78 lakh to create one farm pond of 72 feet long, 36 feet wide and 5 feet deep," Murugesh says, adding, "as each pond can hold 3.64 lakh litres, we soon found that the 1121 such water bodies set up on private farmlands in 541 specially selected village panchayats can hold 40.69 crore litres, which will be more than enough to recharge local wells and also assure water for cultivation in summer." Murugesh said the next move would be to seek farmers' views to rear fish in their ponds which "will then be an additional source of income for them." Officials, including those from the USA-based Elite World Records, the UAE-based Asian Records Academy, Indian Records Academy and Tamizhan Book of Records inspected the ponds in various locations and stated that "nowhere in the world were so many ponds constructed in different locations within 30 days." The world record awards were handed over to collector Murugesh in the presence of SP Pawan Kumar Reddy and additional collector M Pratap.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen to be issued Kisan Credit Cards: Union Min Murugan**

<https://odishatv.in/news/national/fishermen-to-be-issued-kisan-credit-cards-union-min-murugan-160007>

"Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, L. Murugan, said on Saturday that the Central government will issue Kisan credit cards to fishermen with or without boats of their own. Speaking with the fisherfolk in Pulicat in Thiruvallur district, Murugan said that fishermen have an important role to play in India's economic growth. The government will issue Kisan cards to all the fishermen, including those

who do not have their own boats, he said. The government is also taking significant measures to establish ports all over the country, the minister said. Murugan said that five ports, including the one in Chennai, are to be upgraded to international level and construction works are on to establish six new ports in Tamil Nadu.

The seaweed farming industry generates more employment, he said, adding that for the first time in India an announcement regarding seaweed farming in Tamil Nadu was made in the Union Budget. In order to stabilise the Pulicat estuary, Rs 26.85 crore has been sanctioned and the review work is in progress, Murugan said, adding that the project will come into effect very soon. Earlier on September 17, Murugan shared a video in which he is seen interacting with fishermen on 'Ground Zero' at Kasimedu Fishing Harbour. He captioned his post: ""Fishermen are backbone of our economy. Everyday they take risk for their selfless commitment to feed the people. Privileged to meet them on ground zero at Kasimedu Fishing Harbour.""

### **Tamil Nadu: Pazhaverkadu fisherwomen will be offering a gratitude feast for the Chief Minister for saving the biodiversity of the region**

<https://www.thehindu.com/life-and-style/food/pazhaverkadu-fisherwomen-will-be-offering-a-gratitude-feast-for-the-chief-minister-of-tamil-nadu-for-saving-the-biodiversity-of-the-region/article36505446.ece>

"On October 16, the day declared by the United Nations as World Food Day, women of the fishing community of Pazhaverkadu, well known as Pulicat Islands, plan to get together and cook up a seafood feast for the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. A historic seashore town about 60 kilometres from Chennai, Pulicat or Pazhaverkadu is considered a haven for seafood lovers. Pazhaverkadu prawns and crabs are bestsellers across all the fish markets in Chennai. The island is famous for certain varieties of fish, but its value in terms of food heritage and biodiversity was truly spelled out recently, when a group of fisherwomen from Pazhaverkadu came to Chennai to invite the CM to their village via a press conference. At the unusual event, where the women set out tasty samples of Pulicat's fish, crab and prawns, G Rajalakshmi, a fisherwoman said, "Right from the British era, our island has been known for seafood."

"A majority of the population in the island depends on fishing for livelihood. Women specialise in prawn and crab catching in brackish waters. The yield has been reducing considerably over the years and if the port expansion begins, we will be wiped out completely," added M Veeramma. Now, these women earn between Rs.300 and Rs.500 a day. "We get into groups of 10, hire a mid-size goods van and go to fish markets in and around Pazhaverkadu such as at Ponneri, Minjur, Redhills," says Rajalakshmi. "On a couple of days of the week we head to Chennai markets in Saidapet, Ennore and Kasimedu... Can you imagine our plight if the region is taken away for port expansion?" she asks with tear-filled eyes. These women play a significant role in the economy of this fishing village, right from catching fish to the curing, auctioning and

marketing. “As our island is known for the best quality seafood, especially crabs and we would like to present a grand seafood feast for the CM, and the feast would be prepared by the women in our community,” says Vijaya. The women have already had an elaborate discussion on the Chief Minister’s menu — they want him to taste their favourite dishes.

For example, one of the most popular dishes of Pulicat is eral (prawn) karukkal, a quintessential part of a fisherman’s daily life. Fresh-caught prawns are cleaned to remove the sand, with their shells intact. Then on an earthenware kadhai, the prawns are cooked slowly on a low flame with rock salt and broken red chillies, stirring continuously until all the water is absorbed. “We finally press the cooked prawn with a wooden ladle to squeeze out any water, and stir fry it till dry. It is an amazing preparation which we pack in a tiffin box along with soaked rice when our menfolk head into the sea for a couple of days for fishing. Karukkal will not spoil for at least four days,” says Rajalakshmi. N Vijaya adds, “Most of the cooking we do at home is traditional and handed down from generation to generation.” Vijaya is an expert at making crab soup, and readily shares her cooking process.

“Clean a medium-sized crab, place it in a vessel, add four cups water and bring it to boil,” she says, “To this, add a sliced onion and tomato, throw in two red chillies and pepper. When the concoction is reduced to half, switch off the heat. Then heat one teaspoon oil, a teaspoon of ginger garlic paste and curry leaves, and pour it over the soup. Garnish with minced coriander leaves.” The menu for October 16 will be as follows: kal nandu (crab) soup, eral vada, eral karukkal, eral biryani, paara meen kulambu, vaala meen sunda vecha kulambu, meen (fish) puttu, nandu thokku and maybe some fried nethili karuvad (dry fish). “We are still undecided about what to offer for dessert,” says Vijaya. “We normally prepare paal payasam or sakkara pongal for festivities, so we will probably make one of these on that day.”

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen seek waiver of road cess on diesel**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishermen-seek-waiver-of-road-cess-on-diesel/article36506531.ece>

"Fishermen have urged the Centre to reduce agriculture infrastructure and development cess, which is Rs.4 for a litre of diesel, and the additional excise duty which goes towards road and infrastructure cess, which is Rs.18 a litre. “We are unable to buy diesel and many boats remain onshore since the larger boats require between 4,000 litres and 8,000 litres of diesel per voyage. The State government bears the sales tax on diesel for 18,000 litres a year per boat in the

mechanised boats and 4,000 litres per boat a year for motorised country craft. But the Centre does not give us any respite. It, instead, burdens us with an additional Rs.22 a litre,” said Varadhan, a community leader. In 2020-21, 97,256 kilo litres of diesel was supplied to fishing boats with a subsidy of Rs.157.68 crore. Posters have come up all over Kasimedu urging the Centre to exempt fishermen from the payment of these two amounts. The posters seek urgent intervention of both the governments. “The State government recently reduced petrol prices but not that of diesel. It can consider bringing down diesel prices at least for fishing boats since only around 20% of the boats go on voyages,” said K. Bharathi of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association. Nanjil Ravi of the Akhil Indhiya Meenvar Sangam said Chief Minister M. K. Stalin must write to the Centre on behalf of fisherfolk. “Boat owners are unable to get loans because banks do not provide loans for boats. They had expected an announcement on the setting up of a bank for the community in the recently concluded Budget session but that did not happen,” he said. Oil industry experts said reduction in cess would not be possible. “The Centre can reduce the price but the cess is a fixed figure. If the cess is waived for one industry, then others too will start asking for such a measure, which will reduce the government’s income under that head,” he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Civic body issues ultimatum to fish traders**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/civic-body-issues-ultimatum-to-fish-traders/article36423668.ece>

"Tiruchi Corporation has gone ahead with its decision to demolish the existing fish cum meat market behind the Gandhi Market so as to construct a modern building, by issuing an instruction to traders to shift with effect from Monday. The Corporation has made it clear that fish and mutton stalls will no longer function at the existing building, which was said to have been constructed about 50 years ago, by putting up a notice that the traders could henceforth conduct business at Diamond Jubilee Bazaar. Those among the traders who have had a long-standing association with the fish market, are a worried lot. “It is hard to digest that the 20 square feet stall that fed my family for five decades will be razed down. I am sentimentally attached to it,” says a 60-year-old fish trader.

Though it was announced that the market would not function from Monday none of the traders have so far shifted operation to the alternative site as yet. However, some agree that they have no other option but to shift their business to a new location in a few days. “We cannot drag the issue further. We want an assurance that all existing traders will be accommodated in the new building. Though we have been demanding it for long, the officials have not given any assurance,” says another trader. A senior Corporation official told The Hindu that the new modern meat market to be built at an estimate of Rs. 13 crore would address all issues faced by customers and traders. The existing market had served the people for more than 50 years and it

was in a dilapidated condition. It would be demolished any time so as to start the construction work. Alternative arrangements have been made for the fish and meat traders to carry out their routine business until completion of the building work. While the fish traders have been asked to move to Diamond Jubilee Bazaar, poultry and meat traders have been allotted space at the Corporation's abattoir. The new meat market would be built on 25,000 sq ft at the same spot, where the current market was located. There would be 148 stalls and it would have two floors with separate provisions made for fish, mutton and chicken traders. An arrangement would be in place for parking 200 two-wheelers. There was no cold storage facility in the existing building but the new building would have a cold storage facility for fish traders. Establishing a waste disposal mechanism was also part of the plan.

### **Tamil Nadu: Notice to Centre, State for diluting CRZ rules**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/City/2021/09/10052113/1317190/Notice-to-Centre-State-for-diluting-CRZ-rules.vpf>

"The plea moved by K Bharathi, president, South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association, challenged an office memorandum issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change abandoning the process of obtaining prior clearance, which is contrary to the CRZ notification, 2011, that insists on obtaining prior permission for activities within a regulated coastal area. The first bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice PD Audikesavalu directed the governments to file their counters with three weeks after conceding with the petitioner that if the process was abandoned, there would be wanton degradation; even if the parameters are left unaltered, the activities undertaken before permission may cause irreversible change and completely destroy the environment.

"The petitioner maintains that even if, in course of granting the ex post facto clearance or refusing the same, that part of the project which contravenes norms is required to be undone or the entirety of the project is required to be abandoned and the activities undertaken stopped together with the construction razed, the damage that it would have done may be irreversible or may take decades together before the natural scheme of things is restored," the bench observed. The bench led by Chief Justice Banerjee said there was sufficient basis to the petitioner's assertion that if the principle of prior clearance was diluted and ex post facto clearance was permitted, it would encourage the wanton degradation of the coastal region and would be completely opposed to the purpose of the Environment Protection Act, 1986, and the ethos of Section 3. "The matter is of importance and the Union government should adhere to the time indicated to file its counter-affidavit," the bench added, and listed the case for next hearing on October 21.

### **Tamil Nadu: Meet the female seaweed divers: 'Our life is very tough**

<https://www.thenationalnews.com/travel/destinations/2021/09/09/the-female-seaweed-divers-of-tamil-nadu/>

"For underwater thrill-seekers, scuba diving is a way to explore exotic marina flora and fauna. However, for hundreds of impoverished women inhabiting the 100-odd coastal villages in India's southern state of Tamil Nadu, the activity is the only way to put food on the table. The intrepid divers, who range in age from 20 to 70, and inhabit hamlets such as Keelakarai, Erwadi, Rameswaram and Pamban in Ramanathapuram district, deep-dive around the 21 islands of the Gulf of Mannar to harvest seaweed growing on the surface of submerged rocks. The shallow bay has a 365-kilometre coastline, and is teeming with coral reefs and fascinating creatures such as the critically endangered dugongs (sea cows), sharks, whale sharks, sea horses, green and hawksbill sea turtles, dolphins and sea cucumbers. It is also rich in high-quality seaweed packed with minerals and vitamins that commands a premium from pharmaceutical and cosmetic companies. But what's remarkable is that the fisherwomen, who are unable to afford pricey scuba diving suits or oxygen cylinders, jump into the rough sea wearing only saris and rubber slippers. Bandaging their hands with cloth to prevent injuries from sharp protruding rocks, they wade deep into the waters to extract seaweed and deposit it in a satchel strapped to their backs.

"We sail out into the ocean early morning with local fishermen in their boats. For a good harvest, we have to stay at a selected island for five to six days, leaving our families behind," says Suganthi Ravi, 37, from Narikuzhi village. Ravi collects "'Kappaphycus'" seaweed, also known as elkhorn sea moss, a species of red algae bought by seaweed-processing companies to manufacture value-added products for the food processing and agriculture industries. Seaweed is a type of marine algae. Its consumption by humans dates back to the fourth century. "It grows on hard surfaces such as rocks, stones and dead coral, and is used in the manufacture of drugs and chemicals and as a thickening jelly-like agent [agar agar] in food," says Dr Sreedhar Shekhar, a marine biologist from Chennai. "'India has a long and vibrant 7,500kilometre-long coastline which lends itself very well to seaweed cultivation. The plant has great commercial value and is now being recognised as a renewable source of food, energy, chemicals and medicine.'" Reports suggest that given its surging demand, seaweed may be a \$26 billion industry globally by 2025.

However, for these fisherwomen, one kilogram of seaweed fetches a paltry 20 rupees (\$0.30) in the market, with a haul from one trip averaging 40kg to 50kg. Even so, the divers are happy that their profession gives them an identity and a source of income, about \$100-\$150 monthly. "My earnings may be meagre, but it has helped me raise a big family, educate my four kids and marry off two daughters. None of my children are interested in my profession, but I'm proud of it and will continue until the day I die," says Ravi. Muniyaayi, 55, a mother of four who also sells basic grocery items from a makeshift, single-person "'petti kada'" stall as a side business, says despite her large family, she doesn't depend on anyone. "My eldest daughter has studied up to bachelor's level and got married. I work for myself and financially assist my children, too, if they ask."

Mary, 60, who started seaweed harvesting when she was just 7 without her parents' knowledge, feels proud and self-empowered.

“I have three sons and one daughter. But I’m not dependent on my children nor on my husband. I’ve never taken a single paisa from anyone in my life.” Seaweed collection offers a vital support system for these unlettered women who have never gone to school. “We have no social support system, nor any financial assistance from the government, either. My husband died young leaving our two young kids behind, which pushed me to collect seaweed even though I was petrified of water,” says Mary. Personal struggles aside, professional challenges have also tested the women’s resolve. In 1986, the Gulf of Mannar was declared a National Biodiversity Park under India’s Wildlife Protection Act, which prohibited people from diving here. They still go, though, albeit without permission, keeping an eye out for anti-poaching officials. Environmental challenges have further added to their travails.

The older fisherwomen point out that when they started accompanying their mothers and grandmothers into the sea in the 1970s and 1980s, their collection of seaweed was substantially larger. But now, owing to global warming, the harvest has whittled down considerably. “The nature of the sea has also changed,” says diver Namthai, 73, who has been collecting seaweed since she was 13. “It is warmer and rougher due to which we now have to spend more time underwater. We also have to swim farther from the coast than we used to.” Known as the “brave grandma”, the septuagenarian rues she can only collect 15kg of seaweed in a day due to her age, compared to a young diver’s 50kg. Responsible harvests The divers also complain that their incomes have been divided as more divers take to the waters, which impacts the seaweed population in the region. Given these challenges, the women are leveraging their wealth of knowledge about the gulf waters to protect it.

Lakshmi Moorthy, 50, a seaweed collector from Chinnapalam village who started diving at 14, is the leader of a group of divers in her area. She says that the women are aware of the perils of global warming and are taking steps to protect the marine ecosystem on which they have depended for sustenance for generations. “We take care never to overharvest the seaweed. Our cultivation cycle is restricted to 12 days a month. We also avoid harvesting between April and June, when fish breeding is at its peak. We hop between the islands of the region to take only what we need and not stress one particular region.” Moorthy received the “Conservationist of the Year” award from US NGO Seacology in 2015 as a representative of the 2,000-plus women who protect the biosphere in the Gulf of Mannar. The honour included a glass trophy and a \$10,000 prize. She says she has also mobilised local fisherwomen to launch a union of seaweed harvesters. More than 600 of them have started cultivating seaweed on bamboo rafts, which helps save time and labour-intensive trips to the islands while ensuring a good harvest throughout the year, especially during the prohibited fish breeding months. This hardy profession has taken a toll on the divers’ health, though. “Due to the prolonged exposure to the composition

of water in the Gulf of Mannar, our hair colour changes and our teeth look stained, both of which make us look older," says Ravi. "Our hearing also gets impacted as we dive down to between six and 12 feet. At times, seashells give us deep gashes on our feet. Many divers have a problem finding a good match." For these reasons, the profession has few takers among the younger generations. Parvathi, 50, from Chinnapalam village, who has been diving since age 10 to collect *Gelidiella acerosa*, a type of seaweed that's used to make agar agar, thinks she's probably the last of her tribe. "Our life is very tough and fraught with risks. Not everybody is so brave," she says. "We don't want our daughters to follow our paths. Instead, we want them to study and go for a white-collar job."

### **Tamil Nadu: Illegal double-fold fishing nets, trawlers seized**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/illegal-double-fold-fishing-nets-trawlers-seized/articleshow/86021843.cms>

"Fisheries department officials seized four mechanized trawlers from a fishing harbour at Sethubavachathiram in Thanjavur district for the alleged use of double-fold nets for fishing. Despite repeated warnings by the officials, the fishermen had been using the banned nets, which destroy fish species, the officials said. Based on widespread complaints that fishermen from Mallipattinam, Sethubavachathiram in the district had been using the 'irattai madi' (double fold) nets despite repeated warnings, officials from the fisheries department conducted surprise checks at various fishing harbours. A team of fisheries officials and coastal security group personnel led by assistant director of fisheries department Sivakumar inspected the Sethubavachathiram fishing harbour. The team found that fishermen Raman, Balakrishnan, Kalimuthu and Murugan had used the banned nets. The officials seized the double fold nets along with the boats.

### **Tamil Nadu: Team assesses impact of groynes project at Pulicat**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2021/sep/08/team-assesses-impact-of-groynes-project-at-pulicat-2355723.html>

"A four-member team appointed by an Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) of the Union Environment Ministry visited the Pulicat Bird Sanctuary in Tiruvallur on Tuesday and assessed the impact of proposed groynes construction. Led by MV Ramanamurthy, director of National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), the team visited the lake's bar mouth, where construction is planned. Ramanamurthy said his team will file the report shortly. The State government has sanctioned ₹27 crore for construction of two training walls or groynes, measuring 160m and 150m on either side of the bar mouth. The project is aimed to stabilise the bar mouth to enable continuous sea access to fishing boats in all seasons. The project has been a long-pending demand of over 35,000 fisherfolk inhabiting 60 villages from Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

However, the EAC had expressed concern and said, “It would alter the entire flow regime of the Pulicat Lake, which is an important wetland, hosting large congregations of birds. Any unscientific interventions like opening of mouth may have severe impacts on the lagoon ecology.”

Hence, the expert team was appointed to conduct a site visit and submit a report. Tiruvallur MP K Jayakumar, who accompanied the team, told TNIE, “I have constantly followed-up the issue with the environment ministry. This project is very important and a necessity for local fishermen. The EAC, instead of raising objections to such projects, should try to stop projects like Adani-Kattupalli Port expansion that would have devastating impact on Pulicat Lake.” Several fishermen organisations submitted memorandum to the team. Durai Mahendran, a fishermen leader, said the bar mouth has choked due to constructions upstream.

“In the past, the mouth used to be always open. There should be constant exchange of water between the lake and the sea for a healthy fish stock.” Govt’s way of dealing with it - State government has sanctioned Rs 27 crore for construction of training walls Problems - The Pulicat Lake mouth is silted and reduced in width and depth - The bar mouth is completely choked, making it difficult for fishing vessels to enter the sea - Fish stock has depleted considerably Government’s solution - Build training walls on either side of the bar mouth to keep it open round the year - Deepen it by 3m to allow free movement of fishing vessels - Northern wall will be of 160m and southern wall will be of 150m - Bar mouth opening will be enhanced to 300m from the current 40m Concerns - Having 300m of bar mouth open in all seasons will bring in excessive sea water into the lake, which may cause more harm than good - Natural sand drift movement is likely to be affected - Environment ministry said unscientific interventions may have severe impacts on lagoon ecology

### **Tamil Nadu: Vembar fish landing centre near Thoothukudi to get more facilities**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/vembar-fish-landing-centre-near-thoothukudi-to-get-more-facilities/article36337371.ece>

"The coastal hamlet of Vembar, situated about 30 km from Thoothukudi, with 100 country boats and 50 mechanised boats, will soon get new facilities at the Fish Landing Centre and the places around it, District Collector K. Senthil Raj has said. The Vembar Fish Landing Centre, which was created in 2018 at an outlay of ₹10.50 crore under the NABARD Scheme, has a 164-meter-long ‘T’-shaped jetty where the mechanised boats, which are involved in ‘day fishing’, are berthed. A fish auction centre, fishnet mending centre and an approach road were created when the fish landing centre was established for the benefit of 50 mechanised boats. Apart from the mechanised boats, 100 country boats also engage in ‘day fishing’ from Vembar to feed around 1,000 families. Dr. Senthil Raj, who inspected the fish landing centre on Monday, said the approach road would be re-laid as the vehicles coming to Vembar to take fish had to

manoeuvre on a badly-damaged stretch. Since the number of mechanised boats operating from Vembar has touched 50, the fishermen appealed to the Collector to extend the fish landing centre and the groyne as well, as the boats suffer damage whenever heavy wind lashes this region. The fishermen also requested the Collector to widen the approach road so that the lorries with refrigeration facilities could reach the fish landing centre easily and asked him to install high-mast lights at three places along the road leading to the beach and also at the fish landing centre. “The fishermen’s demands will be fulfilled,” Dr. Senthil Raj said after the inspection. Joint Director of Fisheries R. Amal Xavier, Assistant Director of Fisheries T. Vijayaraghavan, Executive Engineer, Department of Fisheries, Gangadharan and NABARD District Development Manager Suresh Ramalingam accompanied the Collector.

### **Tamil Nadu: High diesel prices, poor returns force big fishing boats to remain moored ashore in Kasimedu harbour**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/chennai-high-diesel-prices-poor-returns-force-big-fishing-boats-to-remain-moored-ashore-in-kasimedu-harbour/articleshow/86027678.cms>

"Owners of fishing boats in Kasimedu harbour are banking on a miracle. Despite spending lakhs on fuel alone, they were unable to get a good price for their catch. “A decade ago, we would carry 1,500 litres of fuel for deep sea fishing. Today, we carry 3,500 litres, which costs more than ₹3 lakh. Apart from this, the boat owner has to spend money on ration and water for those travelling in the boat along with their salaries. Having spent so much, the returns are very low these days,” D Jayaraman, a deep sea fishing boat owner, said. Another owner, E Ragupathi, said there were about 300 deep sea fishing boats in just Kasimedu harbour. These boats travel nearly 80km east from the shore and stay out at sea for more than 20 days to catch yellowfin tuna and skipjack tuna, which are in great demand abroad. Most owners took loans and spent crores just to build their boats. But, as the catch doesn’t fetch the expected amount, the owners were incurring huge losses, Jayaraman said.

Citing the example of the Karnataka government, owners demanded a hike in diesel subsidy as per the boat size in Tamil Nadu too. Many deep-sea fishing boat owners built such expensive boats only after the Centre urged them to take up deep sea fishing. Now, it is the responsibility of the Centre to reduce diesel prices and increase the subsidy amount, Jayaraman said, adding that only then could those dependent on this trade survive. D Selvazhagan, a boat owner, said the city lacked an adequate number of export units for the two tuna species and this also contributes to the poor price for their catch. As soon as the fishing ban was lifted along the east coast, more than 200 deep sea vessels set out for work, Ragupathi said. Slowly, the numbers dwindled and now about 50 boats are out at sea. He urged the state and Centre to look into the issue as it directly affects the livelihoods of thousands of fishermen.

### **Illegal double-fold fishing nets, trawlers seized in Tamil Nadu, India**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/illegal-double-fold-fishing-nets-trawlers-seized/articleshow/86021843.cms>

"Fisheries department officials in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu seized four mechanized trawlers from a fishing harbour at Sethubavachathiram in Thanjavur district for the alleged use of double-fold nets for fishing. Despite repeated warnings by the officials, the fishermen had been using the banned nets, which destroy fish species, the officials said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Coast Guard vessel hits fishing boat, claim TN fishermen**

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/coast-guard-vessel-hits-fishing-boat-claim-tn-fishermen/2155231>

"Two fishermen from Vedaranyam in Nagapattinam district sustained injuries as a Coast Guard vessel allegedly hit their fishing boat. The injured fishermen returned to the shore on Tuesday morning. While the Coast Guard in Chennai said that an investigation has been launched into the matter, official sources said there appears to be ""no collision"". Earlier, four fishermen belonging to Pushpavanam hamlet near Vedaranyam ventured into the sea in a fiberglass boat on Monday afternoon. Around 11:30 in the night, a Coast Guard vessel that happened to pass through that area accidentally hit the edge of the fishing boat, the injured fishermen claimed. In the impact, two fishermen Mahalingam (60) and Selvamani (30) slipped into the sea from the boat.

The engine portion of the boat sustained damage, they claimed. While Mahalingam managed to board the boat shortly, Selvamani struggled in the water for over two hours before being rescued by another fishing boat that happened to pass through that way. All the fishermen reached the Vedaranyam shore on Tuesday morning. Mahalingam and Selvamani were rushed to the Vedaranyam GH and their condition is stable. Officials of Coastal Security Group police, Q Branch, and fisheries welfare department are enquiring into the issue. Meanwhile, the Coast Guard said ""investigation has been undertaken to analyse the situation."" Official sources, while claiming that there was ""no collision"", said fishing nets in the boats must have got entangled with the CG vessel and in the impact the fishermen must have fallen into the sea. They did not elaborate.

### **Tamil Nadu: Madras HC directs govt to consider fishermen plea on fishing net**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chennai/madras-hc-govt-consider-fishermen-plea-fishing-net-7483879/lite/>

"The Madras High Court has directed the State government to consider and take appropriate decision within a month on a plea from fishermen in Cuddalore to allow them to catch fish using purse seine nets. Justice R Mahadevan gave the direction, while disposing of a writ petition from the Fishermen Co-operative Society in Cuddalore, recently. The petition prayed for a direction to the authorities concerned to permit the members of the society to catch fish using purse seine nets with ring, in pursuance to the order of the Union Fisheries Ministry dated March 20, 2020, by considering the petitioner's representation dated July 8, this year. According to the petitioner society, consisting of about 656 fishermen, the State Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (FS V) department on March 25, 2000 had issued a notification under the Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Act, prohibiting fishing by pair trawling or fishing with purse seine nets by any fishing vessel, country craft or mechanised boats, irrespective of the size and power of engine in entire coastal areas of the state in territorial waters as a measure to conserve fishery.

In the meantime, the Union Fisheries Ministry constituted a Technical Committee to review the duration of the fishing ban period and to suggest further measures to strengthen the conservation and management aspects. The committee submitted a report to the Union government in September 2014, but it was not implemented. Therefore, five persons filed a writ petition in 2015 to implement the expert committee report and to grant exemption to the ban imposed by the March 2000 GO. By an order passed on March 12, 2015, the High Court had directed the government to consider the committee's report. Pursuant to this order, the central government issued a notification on March 20, 2020 to implement the committee's report. As per this notification, the fishermen all over India, including the members of the petitioner society, are entitled to fishing activities with the use of purse seine nets with rings. But this too was not given effect to, with the result, the ban on using the purse seine nets with rings, continued. Hence, the present writ petition.

Recently, when the matter was taken up, the state government submitted that a communication dated July 30 this year was addressed by the Assistant Director of Fisheries department in Cuddalore to the petitioner, stating the government will take a decision on petitioner's representation. "In the light of the communication dated 30.07.2021, this Court directs the government and the Fisheries department to consider the petitioner's representation dated July 8 and take appropriate decision within four weeks," the judge said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Crackdown on juvenile sardine fishery with banned nets**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/crackdown-on-juvenile-sardine-fishery-with-banned-nets/article36202885.ece>

"Sardine (mathi meen) fishing has turned risky for fishers indulging in destructive practices along Nagapattinam-Mayiladuthurai coastline. The Fisheries Department, with the

support of Marine Enforcement Wing of the police, has tightened the noose around such fishers to prevent netting of juvenile sardine fish. Fishers tend to indulge in indiscriminate netting of the variety that command a huge market in Kerala. The confiscated fish caught adopting prohibitive practices are auctioned by the department. The catches are seized once the inspection teams undertaking mid-sea patrolling find the mesh with gaps lesser than 40 mm, and the size of fish to be lesser than 10 cm, the measurement specified by the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Cochin. In a crackdown last month, the department in Mayiladuthurai under the supervision of the district administration took action against operators of five mechanised boats and 73 country crafts for using banned purse seine nets, with gaps lesser than 40 mm in netts and for fitting engines with more than specified horsepower, in violation of Tamil Nadu Marine Fisheries Regulation Act 1983.

The Mayiladuthurai administration has formed four inspection committees to monitor the entry and exit points of the sea in keeping with the directives of the State government and the High Court advocating strong controls on the mesh size of nets as well as outright ban on practices such as bull trawling, in which massive nets sweep everything up from the sea floor. The minimum legal size of fish is taken note of by the inspection teams to curb the catch of juveniles before they can spawn and replenish the population. The demand from expanding fishmeal plants has also prompted fishers to net juvenile sardines indiscriminately, according to senior officials.

The extent of catch of Indian oil sardine (*Sardinella longiceps*), a staple food in Kerala and a mainstay of its fishing industry, plunged to 45,000 tons in 2016 in that State after a record-high catch of 390,000 metric tons in 2012, prompting the ICAR - Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute to undertake a study to determine reasons for decline in sardine fishery along Kerala coast. In a move to protect the resource, the department restricted fishing of juveniles of fishes based on scientific advisory by CMFRI and the Minimum Legal Size (MLS) was introduced for 14 species. For sardine, the MLS was 10 cm. To cater to the demand of consumers in Kerala, fishers in Tamil Nadu fit their country crafts with double engines of high horsepower to reach fishing area faster and harvest larger shoals. Having enforced tighter controls, officials, on their part, are hopeful that the periodic crackdowns would have the desired deterrent effect.

### **Tamil Nadu: Desilt three estuaries of Pulicat lake, say fishermen**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/desilt-three-estuaries-of-pulicat-lake-say-fishermen/article36216061.ece>

"Fishermen of the Pulicat lake have urged the State government to take steps to desilt all three estuaries of the large brackish waterbody, two of which are in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. The lake has one mouth at Nawabpetta, a second near Sriharikota and a third in Pazhaverkadu — all these allow entry/exit of sea water from the Bay of Bengal. At present the Tiruvallur district administration is temporarily dredging the bar mouth at a cost of Rs.18 lakh.

Collector Alby John Varghese recently visited the spot and interacted with fishermen where they asked that dredging be done on a continuous basis at the bar mouth. “They also asked that facilities be created for tourists and boating for tourism be allowed. Requests for re-laying of roads, lighting and water supply too were made, which we will ensure are provided,” he said. Community leader Durai Mahendran said they needed a long-term solution to the problem. For the lake’s survival “The depth of the water has decreased due to continuous silting. In some places the depth is as low as 0.8 m.

If tidal flow is impeded due to closure of bar mouth, silting will continue, leading to the natural death of the lake,” he said. Aarde Foundation’s founder and architect Xavier Benedict said the estuary kept shifting once in three years, which was why fishermen said the proposed seawall would not be useful. “What is needed is an authority on the lines of the Lake Chilika Authority in Odisha. This is because the lake is spread across two States — Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. It is not a question of the livelihood of fishermen alone but also of the existence of the lake, which is Asia’s second largest brackish waterbody, covering over 712 sq.km.,” he noted.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Rains, curbs bring down fish prices at Kasimedu market**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/City/2021/08/29155420/1314784/Rains-and-time-restrictions-bring-fish-prices-down-.vpf>

“Unlike usual Sundays, the sale was less, as it is Krithigai today and tomorrow is Krishna Jayanthi. So the market received less than 1,000 people. Also, due to the continuous rainfall for the past few days, customers are not coming to the market,” said Prabhakaran R, a wholesale trader at the fish market. Though the traders were expecting an increase in the price, it decreased by 10 per cent. Now, seer fish (vanjaram) is being sold for Rs 550/kg, black pomfret Rs 430/kg, red snapper (sankara) Rs 300/kg, crab Rs 250/kg and prawns Rs 260 – Rs 300/kg. Nanjil P Ravi, spokesperson of Akila Indhiya Meenavar Makkal Sangam, noted that city fish markets have been receiving catch from other states, as the fishing ban on the west coast has ended. That too has affected the business at Kasimedu, he said. “Sale was seriously affected due to the time restriction. As customers are allowed to purchase only from 10 pm to 5 am, only a few are visiting the market. Also, the number of boats venturing to the sea had fallen to 100 due to diesel price hike. Because of the continuous rain since last week, fishermen were cautioned against venturing out. Due to this, we are receiving only around 80 tonnes of fish,” he added.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen adopt resolution in favour of purse seine net use**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/aug/30/fishermen-in-tamil-naduadopt-resolution-in-favour-of-purse-seine-net-use-2351624.html>

"Fisherfolk representatives from villages across the State that reportedly favour use of purse seine nets adopted a resolution in favour of usage of the banned net at a meeting here on

Sunday. The representatives from the districts of Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai, Cuddalore, Villupuram, Puducherry, Chengalpattu, Kanchipuram, Chennai, and Thiruvallur at the meeting in Nambiar Nagar persisted in using the fishing net banned under the Tamil Nadu Marine Fisheries Regulation Act, 1983. "Working to obstruct us from using purse seine nets would cause disruption of peace and harmony in the fisherfolk community. We demand that all the fishing hamlets cooperate with us in using purse seine nets from February to April and then from June to September. As the Act leads to issues in law and order, the State government should call invite both sides, talk to them and enable a way to continue purse seine fishing," said S Kandasamy, a fisherfolk representative from Nambiar Nagar. The meeting was convened after clashes broke out among fishermen over purse seine net usage in Mayiladuthurai district a few weeks ago.

### **Tamil Nadu: Rameswaram fishermen stage protest against diesel price hike**

<https://www.aninews.in/news/national/general-news/tn-rameswaram-fishermen-stage-protest-against-diesel-price-hike20210827111556/>

"Fishermen in Rameswaram on Friday protested against the diesel price hike and demanded an increase in the monthly subsidy of diesel. Speaking to ANI, Rameswaram Fishermen's Association Secretary Sagayam said that they have begun a strike against the increase in diesel price and demanded that the Tamil Nadu government increase the monthly subsidy on 1,800 litres of diesel to 3,000 litres." "We have more than 700 mechanised boats in Rameswaram. There was a situation when we could not operate the boats as the diesel price had gone up to Rs 98 per litre," he stated. "Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) promised an increase in diesel subsidy in their election manifesto. But no such announcement has been made in the budget. We are very disappointed," he added.

The fishermen said that they are suffering due to the high cost of diesel, declining fishing and losses incurred due to the inability to operate boats. They urged the Central government to take immediate action to save their livelihood and protect the fishing industry which earns a large amount of foreign exchange. They also demanded a fair price for the fish. Meanwhile, Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Tuesday said that the Central government is sensitive to fuel price rise while also hinting that the public might get relief (in terms of fuel price) in the upcoming month. Singh also informed that the central tax on fuel has remained the same at Rs 32, but since the Value Added Tax (VAT) by states is set in percentage, their tax increase as the price of fuel increases internationally. Fuel rates have increased across the country and differ from state to state depending on the incidence of VAT.

### **Tamil Nadu: Plea challenges classification of land as fishing harbour**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/plea-challenges-classification-of-land-as-fishing-harbour/articleshow/85606781.cms>

"The Madras high court on Tuesday sought a response from the state government on a plea which challenged the classification of a portion of land from meenavar poromboke to fishing harbour at Erayumanthurai village at Kanyakumari district. A division bench of Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and justice M Duraiswamy sought the response while hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by B Antony, a resident of Erayumanthurai village. The petitioner stated that the government had constructed a fish landing station at the village, which has a restroom facility for the fishermen and space for repairing their nets. He stated that in June, revenue officials came to the village and started measuring the portion of the land situated near the landing station. When the people inquired, the officials informed that the land was classified from meenavar poromboke to fishing harbour. He claimed that the villagers were not aware of this classification and no opportunity was given to hear the local fishermen. The villagers had submitted representations expressing their grievances to the authorities stating the meenavar poromboke which was used by the fishermen cannot be classified as fishing harbour. Since, no steps were taken; the petitioner moved the HC Madurai bench.

### **Tamil Nadu: Govt assures to get 63 boats released from Sri Lanka**

<https://www.oneindia.com/india/tamil-nadu-govt-assures-to-get-63-boats-released-from-sri-lanka-3304481.html>

"Tamil Nadu government has assured to take immediate steps for the release of over 63 impounded mechanised boats of Tamil Nadu fishermen from Sri Lanka. ""There are currently no Tamil fishermen in the custody of the Government of Sri Lanka and the Government of Tamil Nadu is continuing to take all measures to rescue the 63 boats seized by the Government of Sri Lanka in the last two years,"" said a statement from the government. ""The government is keen in finding out the tamil fisherman who are indulged in sea fishing and making various facilities for the benefit of the fisherman across the state,"" it stated. The fisherman safety will be ensure by the government, it added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Govt to construct 31 fish landing centres at Rs 359 crore**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/tamil-nadu-govt-to-construct-31-fish-landing-centres-at-rs-359-crore/articleshow/85729471.cms>

"Minister for fisheries, fishermen welfare and animal husbandry, Anitha R Radhakrishnan on Saturday said in the assembly that the government would construct 31 new fish landing centres across the coastal districts at a cost of Rs 359 crore. Of these, 11 fish landing centres would come up in Tuticorin district at Rs 109 crore cost, he said. Radhakrishnan hails from Tuticorin district. Fish landing centres would be constructed in Cuddalore (6), Chengalpet (7), Kanyakumari (3) Mayiladuthurai (2), Thanjavur (1) and Villupuram (1) districts, the minister said while replying to debate on demands for grants for his department.

To prevent sea erosion in Puthenthurai village in Kanyakumari district, the department would construct a wall spending Rs22 crore, he said. He added that an integrated fisheries college-cum-research centre would be established in Tuticorin spending Rs3.2 crore to offer training to fishermen to improve their skill sets and enhance their revenue. He said the fishing harbour in Tuticorin would be desilted and deepened at Rs5 crore. "Protecting the welfare and traditional fishing rights of the fishermen is the top priority of this government. It is also the intention of the government to get the national commission for fishermen welfare for safeguarding the welfare of marine and inland fishermen," said the minister. The government would establish an advanced multispeciality hospital and research centre for pets at Nandanam at Rs7.99 crore. It would also document the native breed dogs, the minister said.

The government would encourage Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Science University to undertake research for the betterment of livestock, poultry and food sector in the state. Kolathur to get ornamental fish trade centre The government would establish an international standard ornamental fish trade centre at Kolathur in Chennai at Rs50 crore cost, minister for fisheries-fishermen welfare and animal husbandry Anitha R Radhakrishnan told the state assembly on Saturday. The trade centre would be established with contribution from government and private players. He said ornamental fish markets in Kolathur were flourishing and that nearly 2,000 families depend on it for livelihood. The upcoming facility would further extend support to traders on a large scale with export and logistics, he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Formalin found in 350 kg of fish in Kasivilangi market**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/formalin-found-in-350-kg-of-fish-in-kasivilangi-market/article36118033.ece>

"A total of 650 kg of fish, spoilt and laced with formalin, was seized at Woraiyur Kasivilangi Fish Market by officials of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) on Thursday. On inspecting five wholesale and nine retail outlets and three container lorries parked at the market, the officials led by R. Ramesh Babu, Designated Officer, Food Safety and Drug Administration, Tiruchi, and Deputy Director of Fisheries, R. Sharmila found 300 kg of fish laced with formalin, a cancer-inducing chemical used illegally to preserve fish, and 300 kg of spoilt fish. With the help of rapid test kits to identify formalin, the team said the chemical was used to prevent fish from decaying quickly. Traders and suppliers used it to extend the storage life of fish. The seized fish was destroyed while action would be taken against the sellers, official sources said. Mr. Babu said selling fish laced with formalin was a punishable offence. He also warned the public to avoid purchasing such fish and urged them to alert authorities of FSSAI if they came across such adulteration.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen concerned over time restrictions**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishermen-concerned-over-time-restrictions/article36109065.ece>

"Fishermen have expressed concern over time restrictions being placed on boats. "Cases are being filed in Cuddalore against fishermen who have stayed at sea for over 12 hours. Such restrictions have never been placed on fishermen except on those in Rameswaram and Thoothukudi where boats have to fish amidst dangers of being fired at," said K. Bharathi, South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association. Selvam, a fisherman from Cuddalore said officials of the Fisheries Department and police were implementing the time restrictions mentioned in the Tamil Nadu Marine Fisheries Act which would not be suitable for those who stay at sea for longer durations. "We travel to our chosen spot for about 5-10 hours, cast the net and wait overnight and if the catch is good, return to the shore. A 12-hour-long window would hardly suffice for trawl and gill net vessels," he said. If that rule was applied to all fishing harbours in the State, it would ruin the entire marine fishing industry, said Ko. Su. Mani, a community leader. "The issue in Cuddalore has to do with purse seine nets and nothing else. These fishing hamlets took to the now-banned fishing mode since their livelihood was affected. A fresh study must be done to see whether all forms of 'surukku valai' fishing are harmful," he said. Mr. Bharathi said the Act must be amended to remove the time restriction clause. Fisheries Department sources said steps would be taken to ensure fishermen are not put to trouble.

### **Tamil Nadu: Warring fishermen keep away from sea**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/warring-fishermen-keep-away-from-sea/article36071124.ece>

"Though the situation has calmed down between the two warring groups of fishers supporting and opposing banned purse seine nets in the district, both sides continue to keep away from the sea. A strong posse of police personnel has been deployed to prevent law and order problems triggered earlier this month when a group of Poompuhar-based fishermen on a mechanised boat cornered another group belonging to Vanagiri mid-sea and damaged their fibre-glass boat. Three fishermen were injured. The situation escalated when a group of fishers from Vanagiri retaliated by setting on fire four fibre glass boats belonging to the opposite group. Police booked cases against perpetrators on both sides and seized the mechanised boat. "As such, there is no restriction on fishers entering the sea with permitted nets. The situation will ease further after a few more arrests [of absconding fishers] are made in a day or two," Superintendent of Police Suguna Singh said. Meanwhile, fishers of Tranquebar have resumed their fishing activities. The police and fisheries departments have tightened vigil to prevent fishers of both mechanised and fibre boats from using nets with gaps that are smaller than the permitted level.

### **Tamil Nadu: NGT forms panel to look into Cooum encroachment complaint**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/ngt-forms-panel-to-look-into-cooum-encroachment-complaint/article36071017.ece>

"The southern bench of the National Green Tribunal has appointed a joint committee to ascertain whether a fish market has been built on the bank of Cooum in Vanagaram. Fish market The applicant moved the NGT alleging that an individual had established a large-scale fish market on the Cooum river bank without obtaining environmental clearance. The petitioner submitted that the respondent had encroached on a huge portion of the Cooum bank and also constructed concrete structures on the buffer zone. The respondent had also dumped huge quantities of construction debris on the river obstructing the free flow of water. The NGT directed that a joint committee comprising the Collector, Tiruvallur, or a senior officer not below the rank of District Revenue Officer deputed by the Collector, senior officers from the Tamil Nadu State Environment Impact Assessment Authority, TNPCB, PWD and Water Resources Organisation inspect the area and submit a report.

### **Tamil Nadu: NABARD aid for integrated mangrove fishery farming system in Cuddalore district**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/nabard-aid-for-integrated-mangrove-fishery-farming-system-in-cuddalore-district/article36041746.ece>

"The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has extended a grant of Rs.24.90 lakh for a project on Integrated Mangrove Fishery Farming System (IMFFS) in Cuddalore district. According to a release, the project is being implemented by the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) and is aimed at enhancing the adaptive capacity of the fishing community. The project is being implemented on 2.10 hectares of land in Mudasalodai village by involving traditional and Irula fishers from Mudasalodai and Kalaignar coastal hamlets in Pichavaram. Under the Integrated mangrove fishery farming system, mangroves are integrated with fish culture. "This is a new kind of farming system wherein conventional earthen aquaculture ponds are modified in such a way to provide about 30% of the area for raising mangroves and the remaining for fish cultivation," said S. Velvizhi, Principal Scientist, Fish for All Research and Training Centre, MSSRF. The farms have been designed to be tidally fed, which makes them more environment friendly and profitable. The presence of mangroves would mitigate the impact of rising sea levels whereas the sustained harvest of fish would take care of the adaptive capacity of the coastal community, she said.

The farm pond is designed in a mitochondrial pattern and is a tide-fed pond. The pond development has progressed all the way from removal of weeds, deepening of waterlogged areas, strengthening of pond bunds, floral and faunal diversity analysis, and mangrove plantation. NABARD Chief General Manager T. Venkatakrishna recently visited the project site and interacted with the stakeholders. Mr. Venkatakrishna also suggested MSSRF help the community members form Farmers Produce Organization. MSSRF can also train villagers on fish processing and seed production, he said. NABARD District Development Manager Vijay Neehar was present.

### **Tamil Nadu: Steps will be taken to build mechanised boats for deep sea fishing**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/steps-will-be-taken-to-build-mechanised-boats-for-deep-sea-fishing-in-tn/article36018126.ece>

"Steps will be taken to construct subsidised tuna liner steel mechanised boats in Tamil Nadu instead of relying upon Kochi-based boatyards for building these vessels used for multi-day deep sea stay fishing, Union Minister of State for Fisheries L. Murugan has said. Speaking to reporters after inaugurating Tirunelveli MLA's office along with BJP State president K. Annamalai at Exhibition Grounds on Friday, Mr. Murugan said the Narendra Modi-led BJP Government at the Centre and the State Governments were sharing 80% subsidy being given for the mechanised steel boats used for multi-day deep sea stay fishing. Since the Tamil Nadu fishermen, who were selected for this scheme, had to rely on the Kochi-based boat yards for constructing these boats, it was causing additional expenses to the beneficiaries. Hence, his ministry would take steps for creating infrastructure facilities in Tamil Nadu itself for constructing these tuna liner steel mechanised boats. When asked about the number of boats sanctioned for Tamil Nadu during this fiscal under this scheme, Mr. Murugan said it would be announced shortly.

The Minister said the BJP cadres would dispel the misconceptions over the 'Fisheries Bill 2021' as wrong information was being propagated with the objective of tarnishing the image of the Union Government, which had allotted Rs.20,000 crore for the fishermen's welfare during the current financial year. The Bill, which was being discussed at various levels and with the fishermen, the stakeholders, before being tabled in the Parliament, would be a "boon for the fishermen" in protecting their interests. Mr. Murugan expressed satisfaction over the performance of four BJP MLAs in Tamil Nadu Assembly. "Even as a few were claiming that the BJP would never find a place in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, we have got four MLAs, who are performing exceedingly well in the Assembly and effectively playing the role of Opposition MLAs," he added. When asked about the inordinate delay in taking a decision on giving on lease the Chengalpet-based Integrated Vaccine Complex to Tamil Nadu Government for vaccine production, Mr. Murugan did not reply. Mr. Annamalai said the DMK's 100-days had given

“mixed feeling” to everyone. “While the State Government has to maintain cordial rapport with the Union Government for the benefit of Tamil Nadu, it is arresting our party cadres on meagre reasons and attempting to foist cases against its political rivals, especially against the AIADMK leaders. Instead, the Tamil Nadu Government should focus on the development of the State by ensuring good relationship with the Centre,” Mr. Annamalai said. Later, Mr. Murugan and Mr. Annamalai garlanded the statue of freedom fighter Ondiveeran at the memorial opposite the District Court Complex on the occasion of his 250th death anniversary.

### **Tamil Nadu: Earthquake in Bay of Bengal sends tremors across Tamil Nadu, Chennai**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chennai/tamil-nadu-chennai-earthquake-bay-of-bengal-7468262/>

"An earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale sent tremors across parts of Tamil Nadu, including Chennai, at noon on Tuesday. The National Centre for Seismology identified the epicentre located off the Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh coasts at a 10 km depth in the Bay of Bengal (Latitude 14.40 and Longitude 82.91). The earthquake, which hit at 12.35 pm, was a Category VII in the tremor intensity, considered ‘Very Strong’. The epicenter lay 296 km south-southeast of Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh and 320 km south-southeast of Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Several people took to social media to comment of the tremors.

### **Tamil Nadu: Concerns of fishermen will be addressed: MoS**

<https://newstodaynet.com/index.php/2021/08/23/concerns-of-fishermen-will-be-addressed-mos/>

"Union Minister of State L Murugan has said the Prime Minister is concerned about the issues concerning the fishermen. “We are also planning to introduce the India Marine Fisheries Bill 2021. We will take up all issues and I am sure the government will address them,” he said. Speaking at a meeting with Seafood Exporters Association in Chennai, he said, “we will leave no stone unturned to address the issues impacting the marine product exports.” He said the government will provide all possible support to the sea food Industry in terms of policy interventions to ensure the growth of sea food exports in a sustained manner and take it to new heights. The Minister of State said fisheries sector in India has shown impressive growth with an average annual growth rate of 10.2 per cent during the year from 2014-15 to 2018-19.

### **Tamil Nadu: Six Indian fishers return home from Iran**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/aug/23/sixindian-fishers-return-home-from-iran-2348431.html>

"Six Indian fishermen from Tamil Nadu and Kerala, languishing in Iran for several months, returned home yesterday. They arrived at Chennai airport on Sunday morning. The fishermen said that they had been fishing in Iran but in the last two months they were left high and dry when their sponsor declined to provide them wage, food and medical facilities. "It was because we could not get a good catch," said the fishermen. They then appealed to the Indian embassy to help them return to India. The six fishermen were identified as Varghese from Chinnathura in Kanniyakumari district, Arumugam from Tindivanam in Villuppuram district, Ezhumalai from Cuddalore, Sathish and Chelladurai from Thanjavur and Justin from Kochuthope, Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala.

Rehabilitation and Welfare of Non Resident Tamils commissionerate officials received them at the airport and sent to their native places. Deputy Director K Ramesh said, "After dropping fishermen at Cuddalore and Tindivanam, the fishermen from Thanjavur, Kanniyakumari and Thiruvananthapuram were taken in a car to Tiruchy, from where they left in buses. Commissionerate of Rehabilitation and Welfare of Non Resident Tamils had arranged the car, bus tickets and food. Reaching home on Sunday evening, Varghese, from Chinnathura, Kanniyakumari told TNIE that he and the others had gone to Iran in the beginning of March last year, based on the understanding of receiving share (wage) for fishing catch. The boat owner was an Iran national. "The boat owner did not give us our share. The boat captain, who was from Tamil Nadu, supported his decision," he said. He said that three other fishermen from Tamil Nadu and Puducherry returned home by paying money but they could not. "We did not have money. The Indian embassy helped us return home," he said. The fisherman noted he and Justin were given `1 lakh for going to Iran. "Now we are penniless," he said.

**Tamil Nadu: Fishers gets a grant of Rs 25 lakh, NABARD has made a plan**

<https://thenewstrace.com/fishers-gets-a-grant-of-rs-25-lakh-nabard-has-made-a-plan/179693/>

"The Nationwide Financial institution for Agriculture and Rural Construction (NABARD) has allotted a grant of Rs 24.9 lakh for a challenge on Built-in Mangrove Fishing Device (IMFFS) in Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu. A observation from NABARD mentioned that MS Swaminathan Analysis Basis (MSSRF) will enforce the challenge which goals to lend a hand fortify the adaptive capability of the fishing neighborhood. The challenge is being applied on 2.1 hectares of land in Mudaslodai village in Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu and comes to conventional and Irula fishermen from the Mudoslodai and Kalaignar coastal settlements, most commonly from Pichavaram. MSSRF scientists mentioned, this can be a new form of farming machine, through which soil aquaculture ponds are changed, in order that 30 in keeping with cent house is made to be had for rising mangroves and the remaining for fish farming. He mentioned that the farms are being designed in the sort of approach that they are able to be fed

via tides, making them extra eco-friendly and lowering the affect of emerging sea degree because of the presence of mangroves. The continual harvest of fish can even handle the adaptive capability of the coastal neighborhood. The farm pond is designed to type the mitochondria development and the advance of the pond contains elimination of weeds, deepening of waterlogged spaces, strengthening of pond dams, flower and fauna research and mangrove plantation.

### **Tamil Nadu: Subsidy for inland fishing in Dharmapuri**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Coimbatore/subsidy-for-inland-fishing-in-dharmapuri/article35754623.ece>

"Subsidies are proposed under the National Agriculture Extension Project for inland fishing for farmers on their farms here in the district. Under the Nation Agriculture Extension Project, applications are invited from farmers interested in inland fishing on their farms at a subsidy. The project entails a subsidy of 40% of the total project cost of Rs.7 lakh for setting up of a new farm pond for fishing on a hectare of land. This envisions a subsidy amount of Rs.3.50 lakh. The input cost of Rs.1.50 lakh will be met by a subsidy amount of Rs.60,000, which is 40% subsidy. Under the project, a total subsidy of Rs.4.10 lakh is granted to the farmer. Farmers may own the land or hold a lease to the land for not less than five years. Farmers interested in availing the subsidy may apply through the fisheries office here before August 20. The selection shall be based on priority basis in the event of receipt of excess number of applications. The applications will be received at the office of Assistant Director of Fisheries, 1/165 A, Ramasamy Gownder Street, Oddapatty, Dharmapuri, phone – 04342-296623.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen clash: Administration holds peace talks**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/fishermen-clash-administration-holds-peace-talks/article35949830.ece>

"Peace talks were convened between two groups of fishermen on Monday by the Mayiladuthurai administration, in the wake of a recent clash over use of banned purse seine nets. District Collector R. Lalitha, and Superintendent of Police Suguna Singh, secured assurances from representatives of the two sides to desist from indulging in provocative acts that triggered the clash on Saturday. A mechanised boat belonging to fishermen of Poompuhar that was fitted with the banned purse seine nets had rammed and destroyed a fibre glass boat causing injuries to three people. These people belonging to Vanagiri village had tried to stop the illegal fishing activity. Subsequently, fishermen of Vanagiri had set on fire three boats belonging to the opposing group in Poompuhar. Four persons - two each from the warring groups - have been arrested, and police presence has been strengthened in the two villages to prevent law and order problems, Mr. Suguna Singh said. Heads of 27 fishing villages were invited for the talks. Those

indulging in pair trawling using purse seine nets were told in clear terms about the ban imposed on the fishing practice by the High Court, and that alternative means for livelihood must be pursued, the SP said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Tuna harbour to help decongest Kasimedu facility**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/chennai-tuna-harbour-to-help-decongest-kasimedu-facility/articleshow/85446227.cms>

"Seafood lovers in north Chennai can soon buy fresh fish from Thiruvottiyur kuppam where the state fisheries department is constructing a tuna long line harbour. The new facility is aimed at creating an exclusive anchoring area for boats planning to stay out at sea for more than 25 days and to decongest the existing facility at Kasimedu, said a senior fisheries department official. With regard to seaside work at the upcoming facility, the official said, the department had completed creating two breakwaters using groynes and will start construction of a wharf and a boat landing jetty. Once this is finished, the authorities will turn their attention to building structures on the land side including an auction hall, a net mending shed, an administrative building of the fisheries department and rest rooms. ""Each building will take at least a couple of months and by March next year we expect to complete all the civil works and make the tuna line harbour ready for inauguration,"" said the official.

South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association President K Bharathi said the facility at Kasimedu had space to anchor 680 boats of different sizes, but was now home to 1,100 vessels. A sizeable number of fishermen from Thiruvottiyur, Ennore and Manali, who now anchor their boats at Kasimedu, can move out once the new facility, which can accommodate 300 boats, is complete, he said. E Raghupathi, a boat owner, said the fisheries department was claiming that the new facility was exclusively meant for long line fishing boats, but those with smaller boats had already started using the place. As far as Chennai is concerned, he said, operation of tuna long line boats is difficult due to lack of skilled manpower. Teams of fishermen putting out to sea in such boats should know the various fish aggregating grounds and, most importantly, should be able to identify live bites to lure deep-sea fish. Such knowledge is lacking in the city, he said. ""Even if the fisheries department is ready to impart training on these issues, there are no takers,"" he said. Each such vessel should be 24 metres long, fitted with a 250HP engines and should be able to stay at sea for a minimum of 21 days and a maximum of 30 days, he said. The main catch of long liners is yellow fin tuna, sharks and blue molies, all export-oriented, Raghupathi added.

### **Tamil Nadu: 3 injured, 5 boats damaged after conflict erupts over ban on fishing nets**

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/tamil-nadu/story/boats-damaged-conflict-erupts-ban-fishing-nets-tamil-nadu-1842126-2021-08-18>

"A conflict erupted at sea between fishermen from two villages near Sirkazhi in Tamil Nadu over the use of banned purse seine fishing nets. In the chaos that ensued, a trawley rammed into a boat. One boat was completely damaged and four others were set on fire. Three people were admitted to the hospital with injuries. How It All Unfolded Purse seine nets are banned in Tamil Nadu as they cause severe damage to the aquatic ecosystem. However, several sects of fishermen from Poompuhar, Thirumullaivasal and Madavamedu have been protesting against the ban and demanding that it be lifted. Earlier, Mayiladuthurai district collector Lalita held talks with the protesters and informed them that stern action would be taken against those who fish in the sea in violation of the Fisheries Regulation Act. When some fishermen broke the rules, officials and the Coast Guard filed a case against them. The fishermen from Poompuhar and Thirumullaivasal hamlets were outraged by this. They claimed that fisheries officials and the Coast Guard did not act properly. To protest, they planned to take their boats to sea on Tuesday. On hearing this, Vanagiri fishermen took their fibre boats to sea to stop them. A trawley of Thirumullaivasal fishermen saw the fibre boats blocking their path and rammed straight into one. In this incident, Ramkumar, Vinod and Silambarasan from Vanagiri fishing hamlet were injured. To take revenge, the fishermen of Vanagiri village set fire to four parked fibre boats belonging to the Poompuhar fishermen and escaped. As tensions between the two groups rose, the police were called in. The Coast Guard and police have registered a case and the investigation is underway.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen upset as diesel price reduction brushed aside**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/aug/14/tn-budget-fishermenupset-as-diesel-price-reduction-brushed-aside-2344487.html>

"Fishermen expressed disappointment over not finding a mention of any reduction in diesel prices in the State Budget on Friday. They also rued a lack of steps to tackling coastal erosion. While the Finance Minister announced a reduction in effective tax rate on petrol by `3 per litre despite a reported annual revenue loss of Rs 1,160 crore, fishermen questioned why diesel did not get a similar concession. "The diesel subsidy quota per month for mechanised boats and motorised boats is insufficient. "Boat owners still spend several thousands to a few lakhs per fishing trip after exhausting the quota. Diesel price reduction is also much needed for transporting fish. With surging fuel prices, the best the State government could have done is reducing diesel price in the Budget. We are thoroughly disappointed about being overlooked," said N Anjappan, a fishermen representative from Vellapallam. They also sigh at the plan to expedite the special scheme for diversification of fishing trawlers heading to the Palk Strait so that more trawlers can be converted to deep-sea boats (gill netters and long tuna liners). A major portion of the scheme with maximum subsidy, however, remains exclusive to the three Palk bay districts: Thanjavur, Pudukkottai and Ramanathapuram, it is claimed. Fishermen from other districts will only reportedly avail maximum benefit if their boats are impounded by Sri Lankan authorities. Fishermen from Nagapattinam and Mayiladuthurai districts are also facing an equal

amount of distress from the Sri Lankan conflict as compared to Thanjavur, Pudukkottai and Ramanathapuram

**Tamil Nadu: Rs 150 crore allotted for development of Kasimedu fishing harbour**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/aug/14/tn-budget-rs-150-crore-alloted-for-development-of-kasimedufishing-harbour-2344492.html>

"Kasimedu Fishing Harbour will be upgraded at a total cost of Rs 150 crore in association with Chennai Port Trust. This comes in the wake of a proposal to decongest berthing areas and minimise crowd in selling areas. The proposal to modernise Chennai fishing harbour include additional wharf near easter Breakwater to a length of 300m, finger jetty to a length of 150m, lower level wharf for 100m, fish processing hall, public utility complex, 120 retail shops, computerised vessel monitoring system, solar power system and water supply arrangements. The modernisation proposal also includes cold chain facilities, a boat repair yard, marketing centre to interact with buyers and other basic facilities. Chennai Fishing harbour, which was constructed in 1985 and caters to 575 mechanised vessels. The minister also announced a total of Rs 433.97 crore for construction of fishing harbours and fish landing centres in the Revised Budget Estimates for 2021-22 and Rs 143.46 crore has been allocated for improvement to fish landing facilities. Overall allocation for the welfare of the fishermen in the Revised Budget estimates for Rs 1,149.79 crore.

**Tamil Nadu: 500 kg of banned African catfish seized in Dindigul**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/08/15062328/1311973/500-kg-of-banned-African-catfish-seized-in-Dindigul.vpf>

"Officials from Departments of Food Safety and Fisheries jointly conducted a surprise raid at the fish market at around 4 am, to check such illegal act. While testing the quality of fish, the team found huge quantities of African catfish, which is highly carnivorous and proves to be detrimental to the culture of local country species. Hence, the culture and its market remains banned in India, sources said. During the raid, the team also seized rotten fish to the tune of five hundred kilos. According to K Sivarama Pandian, District Designated Officer, Food Safety Standards Act, Dindigul, out of 25 fish vending stalls in the market, seven vendors were fined Rs.2,000 each and all such rotten fish were destroyed in the decompost pit. On the seizure of African catfish, which could survive even sans water for certain period of time, the officer said the vendor was warned of stern action. It's priced Rs 80 a kilo and since it's priced cheap, several consumers preferred to buy it. Moreover, such fishes are also available as fried item in bars, he said. The Fisheries Department staff was asked to create awareness about consumption of healthy seafood and avoid eating such banned fish, which could cause serious health hazards, he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fisherman injured in stone-attack by Sri Lankan Navy**

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/tamil-nadu-fisherman-sri-lankan-navy-stone-attack-1840030-2021-08-12>

"A fisherman from Tamil Nadu's Rameswaram was injured after the Sri Lankan Navy allegedly attacked a boat with stones. The incident took place on Wednesday night when a group of fishermen had ventured into the sea from Mandapam port in Tamil Nadu. They were fishing near Kachchatheevu when five Sri Lankan Navy patrol boats surrounded them and began throwing stones at them, the fishermen said. Kachchatheevu is an uninhabited island located between Sri Lanka's Neduntheevu and India's Rameswaram in the Palk Strait between the two countries. It has been traditionally used by both Sri Lankan and Indian fishermen. The fishermen, who were attacked, said the Sri Lankan Navy targeted them saying that they had crossed the maritime border. The Sri Lankan Navy destroyed their nets and threatened to arrest them, the fishermen said. Jayapaul, a fisherman from the Rameswaram who was part of the group suffered injuries in his head. He fainted after the stones hurled by the Lankan Navy team hit him. He was later taken to hospital for treatment. ""We left around 9 am yesterday [Wednesday] from Mandapam. Around 7 pm, the Sri Lankan Navy surrounded us and began attacking us with stones,"" said Jayapaul. He said, ""One of the stones hit me. I had to cut the net and we escaped. I fell unconscious. Once I reached the shore, I was taken to a hospital where they treated me and stitched my wound."" Jayapaul claimed ""harassment by the Sri Lankan Navy was turning severe"" and urged central government's intervention in the matter.

Meanwhile, another group of fishermen said they were attacked by the Sri Lankan Navy. This group was from Rameswaram and returned on Thursday morning. They too said the Sri Lankan Navy men threw stones and bottles at them. Last week, a fisherman from Nagapattinam was injured after a bullet fired by the Sri Lankan Navy personnel grazed his head. The group that was targeted was fishing in the sea southeast off the Kodiakarai coast near the international maritime boundary line in the wee hours of August 1. A Sri Lankan Navy boat approached them at a fast speed and the navy personnel opened fire at their boats, Nagapattinam fisheries department officials said. One fisherman belonging to Nagapattinam got injured in the head in the incident. ""Lankan Navy personnel started attacking many boats in the area. First, they threw stones and then opened fire. One of the bullets came towards our boat and it pierced a partition and hit one among us named Kalaiselvan. The bullet scratched his head and he fell down unconscious,"" Deepanraj, one of the fishermen in the boat, was quoted as saying by news agency PTI.

### **Tamil Nadu: Sand dumped in backwaters now being removed**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2021/aug/12/sand-dumped-in-backwaters-now-being-removed-2343544.html>

"Under pressure, the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (TANGEDCO) has begun removing the dredged sand that was dumped illegally in the Kosasthalaiyar river backwaters in Ennore. Local fishermen from Kattukuppam have confirmed to Express that three tipper lorries and one proclainer were seen removing the sand. "We visited the place around 4 pm. The work was going on at slow pace and it would easy take several weeks to completely remove the sand and restore the place to its original shape. Just removing sand upto the water level is not enough, the original 1.5 metre-depth must be restored," Ravimaran, a local fisherman said. Meanwhile, the Madras High Court on Wednesday directed TANGEDCO to file a status report on the issue by August 17. Selvaraj Duraiswamy, a fisherman from Kattukuppam, had filed a petition urging the court to restrain TANGEDCO from land-filling the waterbody, which was not included original designs for Ennore SEZ project. Express had earlier reported about the violation and how TANGEDCO had been deviating from the approved alignment. The power corporation has reclaimed 15 acres of water body, including more than one acre of river and mangroves, for building a coal conveyor corridor for the SEZ project. The approved alignment does not involve conversion of the river or other waterbodies. Desingh Ananthan, another person who filed a writ petition over this issue in the High Court, said that the area where TANGEDCO dumped sand is known locally as Pazhankalvai (old canal) at Konamudukku, which is one of the most biologically productive segments in the Ennore Creek because of the presence of mangroves and a deep water habitat.

A recent report released by the Save Ennore Creek Campaign found dangerous levels of arsenic, cadmium, copper and chromium in the dredged sand samples used by TANGEDCO to reclaim backwaters. Use of dredged sea sand for reclamation is banned by the National Green Tribunal. A January 2020 report submitted to the NGT by a joint committee found that sea sand dredged and dumped in the Ennore Creek by Kamarajar Port contained "very high concentrations" of magnesium, potassium, chromium, lead and calcium, and "high concentrations" of other toxic metals. The levels of these metals found in the samples taken from TANGEDCO's dumpsite inside the river are far higher than even the "very high concentrations" reported by the panel. When contacted by Express, a senior Ennore SEZ project official said that instructions have been given to remove the sand from the waterbody. However, he refuted the charges of change in project design alignment. Recently, hundreds of fishermen from Kattukuppam had besieged the dumpsite, forcing the Tiruvallur administration to intervene and direct the TANGEDCO to suspend works temporarily. About 250 fishermen, including kids and women, in 60-70 boats also stomped the construction site and set-up tents protesting and raising slogans against the project.

**Tamil Nadu: New norms to cut crowds at Chennai's Kasimedu harbour to continue**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/new-norms-to-cut-crowds-at-chennais-kasimedu-harbour-to-continue/articleshow/85229983.cms>

"The new arrangements at the Kasimedu fishing harbour last weekend have helped reduce crowding at the place and there has been a positive feedback from fishermen and customers. The fisheries department and Greater Chennai Corporation have decided to continue it till the number of positive Covid-19 cases drop. CHENNAI: The new arrangements at the Kasimedu fishing harbour last weekend have helped reduce crowding at the place and there has been a positive feedback from fishermen and customers. The fisheries department and Greater Chennai Corporation have decided to continue it till the number of positive Covid-19 cases drop. A Balaraman, a vendor in Kasimedu, welcomed the new arrangements.

Usually, he said, crowds start arriving at the harbour since Friday night. Fishermen with their catch, wholesale and retail buyers together mean that as many as 50,000 people congregate from Friday night to Saturday morning. Now, the fishermen with their catch and wholesale buyers are allowed in the area from 10pm to 5am. By 6am, the retail fish trade begins and the buyers are allowed to enter, he said. Appreciating the work of the corporation health team which is conducting the vaccination camp in the harbour area, Balaraman said the team members diligently checked the temperature of every person coming into the harbour area. South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association President K Bharathi said at least 8,000 people came to the harbour every day. This includes boat drivers, boat owners, helpers who clean the boats, and wholesale and retail fish vendors. Of this, nearly 80% have been vaccinated, he said. Several fishermen and their family members have volunteered to get themselves vaccinated after awareness camps were conducted on the importance of getting jabs, he said. "The members of the corporation health team who are camping in the harbour are doing a good job and the vaccination camp is continuing till today," Bharathi said.

### **Tamil Nadu: A small victory for Ennore fisherfolk**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/a-small-victory-for-ennore-fisherfolk/article35867487.ece>

"In a small victory for Ennore fishermen, Tangedco began removing dredged mud and ash dumped in the Kosasthalaiyar and the backwaters. They moved court for an order to remove the material dumped in the last six months. A. Desingu of Kattukuppam said that after several protests against the dumping, they had no option but to go to court. "By completely blocking water flow, they have spoilt our livelihoods. They are constructing the coal belt conveyor across the river. They have built piles inside the river in locations where they have not obtained permission," he said. Around 8,000 families from eight villages, including Mugadhwarakuppam, Nettukuppam, Ennorekuppam, Thalangkuppam and Sivanpadaiveedukuppam, depend on fishing in the waterbodies. "It took them six months to dump the stuff and they would need more time to clear it," he said. A senior official of Tangedco said the sand dumped for developing a temporary road for constructing bridges to carry the coal conveyor belt was being removed, as Electricity

Minister V. Senthilbalaji had directed officials to study the possibility of utilising the bridges of the coal conveyor belt already under operation for the north Chennai thermal power stations. The official also pointed out that all construction activities under the two projects, including Ennore SEZ and NCTPS Stage 3, have been stopped temporarily.

### **Tamil Nadu: Coast eroding, Budget-2021 to focus on climate change**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/aug/11/tn-coast-eroding-budget-2021-to-focus-on-climate-change-2343081.html>

"The Tamil Nadu government is set to give a big push to climate change mitigation efforts, and some major announcements are likely in the upcoming Budget session. Currently, Tamil Nadu is at the crossroads in terms of sustainable development, with 41 per cent of the State's coast eroding, as per the latest report by the Chennai-based National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR). Meanwhile, an analysis done by NASA, using the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report to assess changes in sea level globally claims 12 coastal cities in India, including Chennai, are likely to go underwater by the end of the century. Sources told TNIE that the Union Environment ministry has asked the government to revise the Tamil Nadu State Action Plan on Climate Change (TNSAPCC 2.0), which was prepared with technical support from the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), and accordingly, the action plan has been revised, reexamining the State-specific impacts and vulnerability.

"The final draft will shortly be placed before the committee headed by the Chief Secretary and later sent to the Union Environment ministry for approval and funding," sources said. The revised action plan will emphasise health, gender, disaster management and mitigation, sustainable development goals and Composite Vulnerable Index (CVI) for the State in general and districts in particular based on 63 indicators. The Department of Environment is the nodal agency implementing climate change-related programmes and coordinating with the concerned line departments in the State for submitting proposals under the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change (NAFCC) in consultation with the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). Chief Minister MK Stalin, while inaugurating a recent international conference on 'Ensuring food and nutrition security in the context of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic' at MSSRF, said the State government identified climate change as an important issue affecting everyone.

The Environment and Forests department also submitted a 10-year vision document to the government, which focuses on making TN climate-change resilient. The biggest and most immediate threat is coastal erosion and the problem of sea-level rise. To a query on the impact of coastal erosion on fisheries, Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Parshottam Rupala told Parliament on Tuesday that 32 per cent of the country's coastline was under varying degrees of erosion, and Tamil Nadu ranks fourth with 41 per cent of its coastline

eroding. West Bengal has the highest erosion problem with 60 per cent of its coastline eroding. The analysis was done by NCCR, which is an arm of the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences. The NCCR has carried out a national shoreline change assessment mapping the Indian coast using 28 years of satellite data.

### **Tamil Nadu: 42 micro-enterprises planned for fish processing in Nagapattinam**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/42-micro-enterprises-planned-for-fish-processing-in-nagapattinam/article35841009.ece>

"Start of 42 new micro-enterprises exclusively for fish processing has been planned in Nagapattinam under One District One Product (ODOP) tagline of the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme. The Centrally-sponsored scheme meant to enhance competitiveness of individual micro-enterprises in the unorganised segment of the food processing industry, promote formalisation of the sector, and provide support to Farmer Producer Organisations, Self Help Groups, and Producers Cooperatives along their entire value chain, entails a subsidy benefit to the extent of 35 percent of the project cost to a maximum of ₹ 10 lakh. The Nagapattinam district administration has put in place measures to implement the scheme through the Department of Agricultural Marketing and Agricultural Business. Assistant Agricultural Officers of Vedaranyam, Keelaiyur, Nagapattinam, Thalaignayiru, Kilvelur, Tirumarugal have been entrusted with the task of identifying prospective entrepreneurs under the scheme. The Nagapattinam administration has also assigned the task of streamlining bank loans to the beneficiaries through the District Industries Centre.

Under the Capacity Building component of the PMFME Scheme, the National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM) and the Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology (IIFPT) have been performing a key role in providing training and research support to selected enterprises/groups/clusters in partnership with the State level technical institutions. With an outlay of ₹10,000 crore over a period of five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25, the scheme envisions to directly assist 2,00,000 micro food processing units nationwide for providing financial, technical, and business support for upgradation of existing micro food processing enterprises. Proponents of economic acceleration in Nagapattinam district have been emphasising for long the start of fish processing units, to ensure better prices for fish catches. At present, the fishermen find themselves necessitated to sell their produce soon after landing on the shores in the absence of storage and processing facilities. The bulk of the procured fish loads are transported to destinations in Kerala and the rest to Tuticorin for processing and export business.

### **Tamil Nadu: Protecting our underwater ecosystems**

<https://www.nation.lk/online/protecting-our-underwater-ecosystems-108649.html>

"For all the noise we make about being an island surrounded by picture-perfect ocean, there is a surprising lack of discussion on our marine habitats and how we need to conserve them. Yes, we're renowned for our whale watching, and Sri Lanka's blue whales are fairly unique for being non-migratory, but by and large, marine conservation in Sri Lanka tends to fly under the radar, which is surprising when you consider that, as an island, Sri Lanka's landmass is approximately 65,000 km<sup>2</sup> while our territorial waters amass 540,000 km<sup>2</sup>. There is a spotlight on marine conservation at the moment because of the MV X-Press Pearl disaster, but this focuses a lot on plastic pollution and mitigating damage rather than mindful conservation. Our marine habitats contain lots of little ecosystems, the most prolific of which is the coral reef. Last Tuesday (7), the Wildlife and Nature Protection Society of Sri Lanka (WNPS), Sri Lanka's oldest (and the world's third oldest) nature protection society, hosted a special lecture on coral reefs in the northern coastal waters of Sri Lanka and their conservation needs. The speaker, Arjan Rajsuriya is the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Country Office Marine and Coastal Expert. He was also in charge of the National Aquatic Research Resources Research and Development (NARA) coral reef research programme from 1988 to 2012, and the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) Sri Lanka National Co-ordinator from 1998-2015. Rajsuriya spoke about the coral reefs off the coast of Northern Sri Lanka adjacent to the Mannar, Jaffna, and Mullaitivu Districts, and presented the findings of a rapid biodiversity survey conducted by IUCN Sri Lanka to assess the status of coral reefs in the northern coastal waters and the threats they face due to increased harvesting of marine resources, development, and climate change.

With marine conservation on everyone's minds, Brunch chatted with Rajsuriya on coral reefs in Sri Lanka, the issues they face, and how they can be conserved. Understanding the role coral reefs play in our marine environment Put very simply, coral reefs are very important for coastal protection, marine biodiversity, and fisheries. Coral reefs are built by and made up of thousands of tiny animals – coral "polyps" – that are related to anemones and jellyfish. Polyps can live individually or in large colonies that comprise an entire reef structure. Most coral polyps have clear bodies. Their skeletons are white, like human bones. Generally, their brilliant colour comes from the zooxanthellae (tiny algae) living inside their tissues. Several million zooxanthellae live and produce pigments in just one square inch of coral. These pigments are visible through the clear body of the polyp and are what give corals their beautiful colour. When corals die, they leave behind their skeletons which are made of calcium carbonate, and new coral larvae settle on the old skeletons using them as a substrate from which to grow, this process is what creates coral reefs as we understand them.

Corals don't settle exclusively on old skeletons; however, they settle on any hard surface – this is how we see coral reefs form around existing rock formations and even in man-made settings like shipwrecks or concrete blocks. The process of a coral reef is very slow, with the fastest growing coral achieving a maximum growth rate of 20 cm a year, and the slowest growing most complex

corals growing at a rate of a centimetre a year. Coral reefs create a habitat for a vast variety of marine life, which is why they are so important to maintaining biodiversity. They also play a large role in protecting the coast, and are very important for fisheries because they are nurseries and breeding grounds for fish and many other species. For context, coral reefs support 25% of marine fish in the world. The threats that coral reefs face Speaking to Brunch, Rajasuriya explained that the biggest threat to coral reefs is rising ocean temperatures because of climate change and global warming. “Corals are very sensitive to environmental change, so when there is a sudden change in temperature, they can be very badly affected,”

Rajasuriya explained, adding that corals have a symbiotic relationship with the zooxanthellae algae. The zooxanthellae are their main food source, and when stressed (they are easily stressed by warmer water), coral expel the zooxanthellae and in doing so, end up in greater distress. When corals lose their zooxanthellae, they also lose their colour, a phenomenon known as bleaching. Climate change also means rising sea levels which will see coral reefs go deeper underwater, this would lead to zooxanthellae not being able to get enough sunlight, which in turn would harm the corals because they will not have enough zooxanthellae to thrive. Other threats to coral reefs are largely man-made, Rajasuriya explained, listing activities like destructive fishing, pollution, and increased sediment in oceans as other major threats to coral reefs. “All of these can be broken down further into different categories,”

Rajasuriya said. “Destructive fishing can include physical destruction from nets getting entangled in reefs to methods like dynamite. Pollution can mean plastics but also other pollution like oil spills and what has happened recently with the MV X-Press Pearl. Deforestation also adds a lot of sediment that buries corals and makes the water murky, which affects the algae’s process, and all these things combined leave corals badly affected. Coral reefs are dying in many parts of the world, and coral recovery is also affected by continued human activities and climate change.” How Sri Lanka’s coral reefs are faring When asked how healthy Sri Lanka’s corals and coral reefs have been over the past few years are in comparison to reefs around the world, Rajasuriya’s answer was simply that our corals are doing, “quite badly”, sharing that Sri Lanka’s coral reefs have not been able to recover properly following a severe bleaching incident in 1998, when the temperature of the water around Sri Lanka rose (temporarily) by about 3?.

While it is normal for some bleaching to occur in corals each year because of global ocean currents and water movements, the recovery of corals since this major bleaching event was hindered as it was followed by another severe bleaching event around 2016 (this was the same bleaching event that compromised Australia’s Great Barrier Reef). “It’s like a boxer receiving another punch when he is trying to get up,” Rajasuriya said. “In addition to these recurring bleaching events that have been taking place on and off because of the rapidly changing global climate, human activities have also continued, reducing the chances for recovery.” The MV X-Press Pearl disaster has done nothing to help the long-term plight of coral reefs, though

Rajasuriya shared that we are not yet able to accurately define the impacts of the MV X-Press Pearl on our coral reefs.

“Assessments can only be done in clear water towards the end of the year,” he explained, adding: “By then, it will be difficult to locate and understand the impacts unless they are very obvious. There can be a lot of subtle impacts on reefs over a long period that we can only speculate about.” Conserving reefs: What can we do? Conserving reefs, like marine conservation in general, is something that flies under the radar, because, unlike environmental and conservation issues on land, they’re not easy to see. “What is underwater cannot be seen by many people; it’s always hidden,” Rajasuriya said. “Even with fish, people don’t often realise that the fish they buy may come from a destructive fishing method. It’s not like shooting an animal and producing the meat, because with the sea, not many people see what happens underwater. Most people would be very concerned if they knew how the fish they eat are caught.” For conserving coral reefs and marine environments in general, Rajasuriya shared that there needs to be co-management, a comprehensive and inclusive approach that engages all the people who actually use and interact with the coral reefs, from the government to civil society to fishermen to tourism stakeholders to aquarium fish collectors. All these parties need to be included in the management process. He stressed that the Government alone cannot manage all the designated protected marine areas, they’re simply too vast, and managing marine areas is not at all similar to managing terrestrial areas.

“The general situation is that the management authorities must change their thinking in terms of management,” Rajasuriya said. “There needs to be a paradigm shift in the approach to management that is more on co-management. There needs to be a change in attitude from the people also. They also need to take responsibility for the degradation of the marine environment collectively. The best way to approach this is the co-management process with different committees handling different things.”

### **Tamil Nadu: Fire destroys boat in sea**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fire-destroys-boat-in-sea-chinna-muttom-kanniyakumari/article35728083.ece>

"Fourteen fishermen who ventured into the sea in a mechanised boat from Chinna Muttom Fishing Harbour near here had a miraculous escape on Tuesday night after a fire broke out in the engine that ultimately destroyed the boat. Sources in the harbour said the mechanised boat owned by Sahaya Antony of Kanniyakumari ventured into the sea at 5 a.m. on Tuesday. When the boat was four nautical miles away from the fishing harbour while returning to the base, a fire broke out in the engine that spread to other parts of the boat immediately as the wind was heavy at that time. As their efforts to douse the flames failed, all the 14 fishermen jumped into the sea. They were rescued by another boat returning to Chinna Muttom Fishing Harbour.

Fisheries Department officials, who visited the spot where the accident happened on Wednesday, said a technical snag in the engine might have triggered the fire. Following the fire accident, the fishermen of Chinna Muttom abstained from fishing operations on Wednesday.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen press for cooperative bank**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishermen-press-for-cooperative-bank/article35710745.ece>

"With the State Budget round the corner, fishermen have urged the government to ensure that their long-pending demands are met, especially that of a cooperative fisheries bank on the lines of the cooperative agricultural bank. "The pandemic has broken our back. We have no money. Many boat owners have let their boats on voyages for want of cash for repair. We are spending more on voyages than what we earn. And there is nobody to lend to us. The banks won't, they need collateral. Our homes do not have any pattas, thus rendering us technically propertyless," said Varadhan, a community leader. No credit line Owners of boats and those in the allied industries have been demanding a cooperative bank. "Without an influx of capital, you cannot expect the industry to get back on its feet. Boat owners, both small and large, need support now like never before. We do not want freebies, we want the banks to help.

There was a move to provide loans through Kisan Credit Cards but that failed to take off," said M.D. Dayalan, who runs a fish net shop. He said that personally he was unable to avail a loan under the Mudra scheme at a nationalised bank. "I have never defaulted on repayment of loan amounts. But the bank refuses to give me a fresh loan citing some reason or the other," he said. K. Bharathi of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association, said there was a need for improving facilities in fishing harbours. "There is no emergency medical aid in any of the harbours. Lighting, internal roads, drinking water and toilets have to be improved. At the Kasimedu fishing harbour, the boat owners are unable to export fish as the European Union has not approved of the conditions here. There has been a long-pending demand from fishermen to take over the harbour from the Chennai Port Trust," he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Country boat fishermen besiege fisheries dept office**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/08/03043907/1310013/Country-boat-fishermen-besiege-fisheries-dept-office.vpf>

"According to them, the fisheries officials have been hesitating to take steps against the mechanised boats which use the banned twin trawling nets which causes damage to the sea wealth. Since the officials had not initiated steps against those mechanised fishermen even after repeated requests, they called for a protest. As per the decision, on Monday, the country boat fishermen from Thanjavur, Pudukkottai, Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur and Ramanathapuram assembled in front of the Fisheries Department Office at Mallipattinam and staged a protest.

They demanded action against the fishermen who use the twin trawling nets and urged the state government to remove the officials who support them.

**Tamil Nadu: TANGEDCO dumps toxic sea sand in Kosasthalai River; Ignores NGT ban**

<https://storyofennore.wordpress.com/2021/08/03/tangedco-dumps-toxic-sea-sand-in-kosasthalai-river-ignores-ngt-ban/>

"Ignoring a National Green Tribunal (NGT) order banning the use of dredged sea sand to reclaim waterbodies, TANGEDCO has blocked the Kosasthalai River's backwaters using dredged sea sand with dangerous levels of arsenic, cadmium, copper and chromium. Sand samples collected from the reclaimed portion of the river contained 14.96 mg/kg of Arsenic, more than two times the Interim Sediment Quality Guideline (ISQG) for aquatic sediment of 7.24 mg/kg, 15.23 mg/kg of cadmium, more than 20 times ISQG, 23.54 mg/kg of copper which is 1.25 times ISQG and 106.1 mg/kg of chromium, which is more than twice safe levels in aquatic sediments. The ISQGs are safe threshold levels of chemicals for protection of aquatic life, and represent levels above which toxic effects on aquatic life may occur. The samples were taken on 14 July, 2021 and were analysed at the US Environmental Protection Agency-approved Chester LabNet.

A January 2020 report submitted to the NGT by a joint committee of Central Pollution Control Board and Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board found that sea sand dredged and dumped in the Ennore Creek by Kamarajar Port contained very high concentrations of magnesium, aluminum, potassium, chromium, lead and calcium, and high concentrations of other toxic metals like copper, nickel and zinc. The levels of these metals found in the samples taken from TANGEDCO's dumpsite inside the river are far higher than even the very high concentrations reported by the joint committee. Movement of sand is a strictly regulated activity. However, given the prevalent lawlessness in the Ennore-Kattupalli area, sea sand is routinely transported from the ports to various places without license from the revenue authorities. This matter has been brought to the notice of the revenue authorities.

On 19 July, 2021, fishers from Kattukuppam occupied the site of the illegal encroachment in Kosasthalai River by the coal conveyor corridor for TANGEDCO's Ennore SEZ project. A 3-member citizen panel has written on this matter to the Chief Minister and Chief Justice of Madras High Court echoing the demands of the fishers. They have called for an immediate halt to any further dumping, and recommended removal of dumped sand and restoration of the wetlands. "Fish is an inexpensive source of protein for the poor. Dumping contaminated sand in this section of the river is like poisoning their food. This is the place where we catch the fish that we sell in the market", said R.L. Srinivasan, a fisherman from Kattukuppam. Contamination of river due to industrial pollution, coal ash leakage and dumping of toxic material such as contaminated sand dredged from the harbour basin has degraded the river water quality and harmed fish population.

Health of Ennore fishers is severely impacted due to contamination of river and fish. Exposure to contaminated water while fishing has chronic skin diseases among fishers. Consumption of contaminated seafood may also lead to health impacts. With a public health infrastructure that is not sensitive to the special needs of this pollution-impacted community, health issues due to industrial pollution go untreated. Fisherfolk have demanded that all further encroachment of the river bed should be stopped, and the river should be restored to good health.

### **Tamil Nadu: Marine Fishing Bill 2021: Tamil Nadu fishermen remain firmly opposed**

<https://mediaindia.eu/society/marine-fishing-bill-2021-tamil-nadu-fishermen-remain-firmly-opposed/>

"Bowling to pressures from the World Trade Organisation, the Indian government moves a controversial bill in the Parliament that has brought angry fishermen out on the streets in protest. While some of the provisions of the bill may be better for the environment, it will have severe impact on fishermen. Fisherfolk across the country have come out in strong protest against the Marine Fisheries Bill 2021, scheduled to be tabled in the ongoing session of Parliament. The fishermen attack the bill not just for the content, which threatens to deprive them of their livelihood, but they are also very upset about the process of drafting the bill, which was non-participatory and secretive, say fishermen's unions. The fishermen are protesting against the ambiguity in definition clauses, the complexity in the process of licensing and registration, weakening of the states' powers and the loss of revenue to states along with likely harassment of fishers for stringent penal provisions. Little wonder then that most of the state governments with a coastline whose fishermen will be impacted by the bill, have come out openly against the bill. At the forefront is Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin.

"We understand and appreciate the need to protect and preserve the marine eco system, we also consider it equally important that the livelihood and interests of the traditional fishermen are clearly protected" said Stalin, while asking Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to move the highly controversial Marine Fisheries bill in ongoing monsoon session of the Parliament. "The bill was being moved without adequately addressing the concerns and well-being of Indian fishermen and certain clauses infringed upon the rights of the state," he added, saying a fresh draft should be introduced in the Parliament after due consultations with the fishermen. Marine fishery is an important segment of the Tamil Nadu economy, employing over 1.1 million people in 608 coastal villages. With a coastline stretching to over 1100 km and an exclusive economic zone of 190,000 sq km, the state accounts for almost 700,000 tonnes of marine fishery products

or about 5 pc of the total fish production in the country. Indian Marine Fisheries Bill 2021 The fishermen say there are problems with practically each section of the bill that they say seems to have been designed to harass and harm them, instead of protecting them.

For instance, sections 3 to 8 of the bill refer to licensing for fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone and beyond. This creates doubts if the fishermen need multiple licenses for different parts of the sea. Sections 9 to 13 refer to “monitoring, control and surveillance measures, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing”. The National Fish Workers Forum demanded that the penalty provisions have to be withdrawn. The fishermen could be penalised for not keeping logbooks and the navigation and vessel monitoring equipment. As with their colleagues from other parts of the country, fishermen in Tamil Nadu say their biggest concerns and reasons for opposition to the bill comes from the fact that even though the bill would put their world upside down, they were not consulted even a bit by the union government. The fishermen are strongly opposed to these modifications which they say threaten their livelihood and put them at a significant disadvantage with fishermen from other countries. Tamil Nadu fishermen stage protest On July 19, many of them hoisted black flags on their boats to register their opposition to the bill. At Ramanathapuram, about 600 km south of the state capital, Chennai, over 200 women staged a hunger strike protest against the draft bill, but to no avail, they say. One of the fishermen upset by the draft bill is 25-year-old Akash, who hails from historic town of Rameswaram, a little distance from Ramanathapuram. Akash has been fishing for the past five years along with his father Kuppuswamy who is a veteran of over 35 years. Akash says that all the fishermen in the state are united against this bill.

“We are not alone, but it seems that the leaders in New Delhi are not interested in protecting the welfare of fishermen and this seems in the bill they trying to pass against us which will cause a big disadvantage for us,” says Akash. Akash and Kuppuswamy normally go fishing for three days at a time in order to be able to catch the fish at different spots in the sea and hence optimise the earning from each trip. But they worry that the proposed law will not allow such practices and hurt them and other small fishermen badly. “In a particular area a particular types fish only found and that doesn’t give that much of profit to us. If they pass the bill, then we won’t be able to go so far for fishing and we make money only when go far out in the sea. It will be much more difficult if this bill will be passes” Akash says.

Most of the smaller fishermen do not have their own boats and the small boats go out almost together and to the same area. They also stay together, mostly in places close to the coast. The fishermen are upset that not only does the bill restrict their movements, but it also puts severe restrictions on the kind of net they can use. “We use different nets for different season as the catch is different and the same net is not good for catching a variety of fish. Hence, it will be a huge loss to us if they began allotting nets for us to use,” says Akash. Several states have spoken out against the bill, notably the coastal states and those not ruled by the Bharatiya Janata Party.

But fishermen are worried that Delhi will once again ignore the advice. “Even Tamil Nadu CM has asked the central government not to move this bill without consulting the fisheries departments of various states and also the local and traditional fishermen.

But if the central government insists on pushing the bill through the Parliament, then we would even march to the Parliament and continue to protest against this bill, until they would protect the fishermen,” Akash tells Media India Group. The fishermen are also opposed to the new licensing regime proposed by the bill which introduces several new categories of licence fees or taxes, in addition to the ones already imposed by the state governments. “Why should we pay a penalty or fee for fishing? Earlier, we used to get a ticket for fishing now why we will pay for it? It is our right to venture into the sea as a citizen of this country. When we asked for the subsidies in diesel and better infrastructure including fair price for each catch, the government have done nothing regarding this. So, now why should we pay taxes to them,” he says. The fishermen say they are firmly opposed to several provisions of the bill that are actively against their interests, especially of the small fishermen, who make up well over 90 pc of the total fishermen in the country. For instance, the new rule sets strict limits on distances and areas where the fishermen can go and fish and it imposes heavy fines for all breaches. They say that even if they accidentally went further than allowed on licence, the government has right to impound their boats and it would leave them in abject poverty. They say that they will continue to agitate against the bill which is bound to hurt their interests from all sides.

“Already, all the fishermen are marking their anger by protesting and also tying a black flag to their boats to register our opposition to the bill during the ongoing monsoon session of the Parliament. We are not going to keep calm until the government withdraws the bill or takes immediate corrective measures to protect us,” he says. It is not just the fishermen who think that the bill will hurt the small fishermen. Even members of the civil society agree. “The new bill may bring some benefit to the economy, but it will affect numerous families, traditional fishermen families and many more,” says Balaji, a civil lawyer in Madras High Court. He goes on to say that even if the need for the bill has emerged due to the pressures of the World Trade Organisation, the government ought to have taken into account the situation of the Indian fishermen and introduced some safeguards. But, he adds, there were no safety measures taken by the government and hence the fishermen were bound to protest. If the drafted bill is indeed passed by the Parliament, it will be the government’s responsibility to provide some relief measures to the fishermen.

Sustainable fishing However, Balaji does welcome the measures to promote sustainable fishing in view of the dramatic fall in fish population around the world due to overfishing and other practices by fishermen around the world such as catching fish that are too young. “I welcome the restrictions that bill imposes on the fishermen regarding fishing in allocated areas, because we have to be worried about the number of species that have become endangered due to human

activity. So, such measures may help preserve the ecosystem,” Balaji tells Media India Group. He goes on to say that many eco-friendly measures had already been introduced by the government over the years. One is the annual ban on all fishing, which was 45 days earlier, but in 2017 the ban was prolonged to 61 days to adequately cover the spawning period. But the government also compensated the fishermen for loss of income by giving them INR 5000 each for these extra days.

“Similarly, if now the new law requires the fishermen to reduce their catch or abstain from some areas or end certain practices, then the government ought to compensate them adequately so that the fishermen can also fully and seriously join in the preservation effort,” says Balaji. He adds that the Centre can put the bill on hold and carry out broad-based consultations with the fisherfolk as well as various state governments. Then the bill can be reintroduced, but with proper protection to both – the fish and the fishermen.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fisherman hurt in firing by Lankan Navy personnel**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/tn-fisherman-hurt-in-firing-by-lankan-navy-personnel-7434445/>

"A fisherman belonging to Nagapattinam district sustained head injuries as Sri Lankan Navy allegedly opened fire when he was fishing along with others off the Kodiakarai coast. A total of 10 fishermen belonging to Akkaraipettai and Keechankuppam hamlets ventured into the sea in a mechanised boat from Nagapattinam port on July 28, Nagapattinam fisheries department officials said. When they were fishing in the sea southeast off the Kodiakarai coast near the International Maritime Boundary Line on the wee hours of Monday, a fast craft of personnel belonging to the Sri Lankan Navy allegedly opened fire at the boats that were fishing in the vicinity, officials added. "Lankan Navy personnel started attacking many boats in the area. First, they threw stones and then opened fire. One of the bullets came towards our boat and it pierced a partition and hit one among us named Kalaiselvan.

The bullet scratched his head and he fell down unconscious," Deepanraj, one of the fishermen who were in the boat, said. "We immediately turned our boat towards the coast and rushed Kalaiselvan to Nagapattinam GH. Since the bullet first pierced the boat before hitting him, he has escaped with head injuries," he added. He stressed that the Lankan Navy allegedly opened fire when the fishermen were fishing within the Indian limits. The injured fisherman hailed from Akkaraipettai hamlet in this district. Nagapattinam District Collector Dr Arun Thamburaj visited Nagapattinam GH and interacted with the affected fishermen. He inquired about the incident. The Coastal Security Group police, Q branch, and Fisheries department officials are conducting enquiries. The incident led to tension in fishing hamlets of Nagapattinam district.

### **Tamil Nadu: Proposed harbour a threat to Kaliveli ecosystem?**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/aug/02/proposed-harbour-a-threat-to-kaliveli-ecosystem-2338818.html>

"The State government has proposed a modern greenfield fishing harbour with 12,000 tonnes per annum capacity inside the Kaliveli backwaters, South India's second largest brackish-water lake, in Villupuram district. Biologists say this would disrupt the ecology in what is believed to be the last surviving clean backwaters on the east coast, a home for many wetbird species. Also, the livelihood of small-scale and marginalised fishers in the area is at stake. The fishing harbour inside the backwaters is proposed to have all supportive amenities like auction halls, landing centres, etc. Fisheries department officials say there is an urgency to develop a harbour due to increased fish catch in Chengalpattu and Villupuram districts, and it would lead to good quality and hygienic fish availability in the markets. But to achieve this, a lot of construction work must be undertaken in the ecologically sensitive area. The Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearance application submitted by the fisheries department before the State Coastal Zone Management Authority (TNSCZMA) and reviewed by The New Indian Express, reveals that a navigation channel is proposed to be developed in Kaliveli backwaters to create a permanent approach channel for the fishing vessels. This would be achieved by clearing the sandbar between the Kaliveli waters and the sea. An area of five hectares of sandbar would be dredged to maintain a water depth of 2.5m lower than the current levels. Besides, a navigation basin is proposed within the backwaters. To prevent sedimentation of the navigation channel, two training walls are planned on the northern and southern sides of the channel measuring 400m and 600m respectively.

Priya Davidar, a conservation biologist, said, "It is an Important Bird Area (IBA), identified by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the National Wetland Conservation and Management Programme. So, building a harbour inside this region is nothing but a call for disaster. The government can easily build the harbour on the sea front instead of disturbing backwaters, like how the Kasimedu harbour was built." The biodiversity-rich waters of Kaliveli lagoon, which is the second largest brackish water body in southern India after Pulicat lake, has been the traditional fishing ground for folk who use non-motorised countryboats.

Around 65,000 people, mostly from marginalised communities like Adi Davidar, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, are dependent on this lagoon for their livelihood. Ecological significance of the area is evident as earlier this year, the Villupuram administration issued a first declaration under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 to declare Kaliveli wetlands as a bird sanctuary. M Yuvan, an active member of the Madras Naturalists Society, told Express that Kaliveli wetlands was one of the largest waterfowl congregation sites in Tamil Nadu, and a well-known raptor roosting site for species like the Eastern Imperial Eagle, Greater Spotted Eagle, Red-necked Falcon and several harriers.

“The area hosts over 30,000 ducks, 20,000 to 40,000 migratory shorebirds and 20,000 to 50,000 terns in the winter. The Grey-tailed Tattler, a rare migratory wader, has been recorded only here and in the Pulicat across the country,” he said. Moreover, environmentalists noted that north of the proposed fishing harbour site is the 17th century Alamparai Fort built during the Mugal era at Kadapakkam. Alamparai, a flourishing place of trade, fell into oblivion when the British Army led by Sir Thomas Eyre Coote, captured the fort in 1760 and reduced it to ruins. Now, the State archeology department has taken up works to renovate the fort. Coastal engineers say the training walls of the proposed harbour may trigger erosion near the Alamparai fort. State archeology department deputy director K Sivanathan said that according to rules, areas 100 metres from the fort is a ‘no development zone’ and areas 100 to 300 metres from the fort is regulated, where only certain kinds of activities are permitted.

“They may have to obtain a no objection certificate from the archeology department before commencing works. I will also check on the exact location of the proposed harbour,” he added. CRZ clearance, EIA report flawed the fisheries department has committed glaring errors in obtaining Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearance and in the preparation of Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) report for the project. As per the EIA Notification, 2006, the preparation of Terms of Reference (ToR) is a mandatory prerequisite for the commencement of preparation of the EIA report. The official documents, accessed by Express, reveal that State Environment Impact Assessment Authority issued ToR on October 17, 2020, while EIA report was already completed on June 4 that year, which was in fact used to conduct a public hearing in 2021.

A closer analysis reveals that the Rapid EIA report prepared prior to issuance of ToR was copy pasted and produced as the final EIA report, which is a clear violation of EIA Notification. Environmentalist and fisherfolk rights activist K Saravanan said that this activity was fraudulent. “The EIA report is riddled with significant errors and is inconsistent with the ToR. The preparation of EIA report before the ToR was issued is sufficient cause in itself to cancel the issuance of CRZ clearance by the State authority.” When contacted, Environment Secretary Supriya Sahu said she was not aware of the project and would look into the matter.

### **Tamil Nadu: Lorries transporting fish intercepted**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/lorries-transporting-fish-intercepted/article35618787.ece>

"A joint team consisting of Assistant Director, Fisheries, Sirkazhi, and police personnel intercepted seven lorries at Karuvi Junction near Sembanarkoil in Mayiladuthurai district on Thursday after it was found transporting fish caught apparently using banned nets in violation of the Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Act, 1983. A group of fishermen from Vanagiri and Tharangambadi assembled at Karuvi after coming to know that the vehicles were seized and

picked up an argument with the officials. As the Assistant Director, Fisheries, apparently refused to allow the vehicles initially, fishermen threw down a box containing fish from one of the vehicles triggering tension. Police personnel held talks with the fishermen. Following the talks, one lorry was prosecuted under the Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Act. The remaining six lorries were released after registration of the Motor Vehicle Act case, said the sources.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen want more bus services between hamlets in Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram and Chennai**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishermen-want-more-bus-services-between-hamlets-in-tiruvallur-kancheepuram-and-chennai/article35573173.ece>

"For decades, fishing communities have been struggling without sufficient buses between their hamlets in Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram and the city. Though the government has introduced a new bus route, 109T, connecting 100 fishing hamlets between Tiruvottiyur and Kovalam, fishermen want more direct buses connecting villages in all the three districts. "Fishermen from Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram and Chennai visit Kasimedu for work. There are people coming from Semmencherry and Ennore. They have to come early in the morning. But since they do not have sufficient bus services, some sleep on the boats.

Many rely on autorickshaws, who fleece them," said Nanjil P. Ravi, spokesperson, Akhila India Meenavargal Sangam. The demand of fishermen for more bus services over the years have not yielded results. "Our relatives are spread across hamlets in three districts. When the bus terminus was functioning from Flower Bazaar, fishermen could easily change buses to reach their destinations. But after it was shifted to Koyambedu, it became difficult," he added. K. Bharati, president, South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association, said many women fish vendors visit Kasimedu very early in the morning.

"Due to lack of bus services, they arrive at the docks the previous day, and stay the night. More buses will help them travel easily. It would be helpful if the MTC allows us to carry fish till 5 a.m. so that there is no disturbance to other passengers during peak hours," he said. Mr. Ravi said more than two decades ago, the government had rolled out a bus service connecting Tiruvottiyur and Kovalam. "But it was stopped in a month as the road was bad, and the drivers were finding it difficult," he said. Now, with the introduction of the 109T bus route, fishermen are hopeful of getting buses connecting the three districts. "Fishermen from Kovalam used to shell out thousands of rupees to travel by cab to fishing hamlets around Royapuram. They also used to come to Kasimedu by hiring vehicles.

Now, they are relieved as they spend ₹48 per person on the newly introduced 109T bus route," explained P.R. Mahendran, a fisherman from N.T.O. Kuppam. According to an MTC official,

the new route was started on July 4, based on a request by the Akhila India Meenavargal Sangam. A total of four buses are operated between Tiruvottiyur and Kovalam. On average more than 1,500 passengers travel on this route on a daily basis. The 109T bus service starts from Tiruvottiyur, and makes over 35 stops, including Royapuram, Beach Station, Kamarajar Salai, Sathya Studio, Besant Nagar, Thiruvanmiyur, Neelankarai and Muttukadu, before reaching Kovalam.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishing Regulation Bill will push us out of work: Fishermen**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/jul/25/tn-fishing-regulation-billwill-push-us-out-of-work-fishermen-2335004.html>

"Fisherfolk in the coastal districts of Nagapattinam and Mayiladuthurai have been up in arms against the TN Fishing Regulation Act (Amendment), 2020 over the past month. The regulations, such as the ban on purse seining, have divided them into two camps. However, they stand united against the Union government's Indian Marine Fisheries Bill, 2021. Their main problem with it is the need for a license to fish in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) or high seas, which, they say, will affect fishermen on all kinds of boats. "We contribute to the country's economy by our fishing, but will soon be out of work due to the Bill. It's getting harder to fish every year, and our boats have to keep going further as fish are getting more evasive. Such Bills with unrealistic limitations would push us out of work," said C Mathiyazhagan, a fisher-representative of deep-sea fishing boats.

Fishermen in motorised boats usually fish around 10 nautical miles (nm), but also venture further due to availability of fish, and weather. Fishermen from Kilvelur and Vedaranyam taluk in Nagapattinam district, who usually fish in Coramandel waters, travel 25-50 nm south towards Palk Strait. Their livelihood is likely to be affected by the Bill. "We fish southeast of Kodiyakarai as the waters and weather are calmer in the monsoon. But the Bill would consider our traditional boats on a par with merchant vessels," alleged R Steepan Raj, a motorised boat fisher from Vellapallam in Nagapattinam district. At a time when they are concerned about getting a good enough catch to meet fuel expenses and other basic needs, they fear the Bill would cause them to be incriminated. P Jawahar, a researcher from the Tamil Nadu Dr J Jayalalithaa Fisheries University in Nagapattinam, said fishermen are right about the changing availability of fish.

"Large schools of fish migrate due to factors such as sea temperature, food availability and breeding. This is challenging to predict due to global warming, and hence, fishermen face an increased challenge," he said. Another major reason the Bill is being opposed is that it calls for the appointment of Coast Guard officials, and the involvement of a magistrate or judicial magistrate to hear cases of offences. "Not all of them understand fishing and our way of life. There have been instances when the armed forces treated our fishermen with contempt. The Bill

would make Tamil-speaking fisherfolk answerable to the Coast Guard, and there are likely to be challenges in communication,” said RMP Rajendra Nattar, a fisher-representative from Nagapattinam. These authorities would also be empowered to board and search vessels at sea. “Our men have been persecuted by the Sri Lankan Navy and Coast Guard since the 1980s... Now, they are about to face the same fate at the hands of the Indian Coast Guard. The Bill is ‘anti-fisher’ and inhumane,” said National Fishworkers Forum secretary RV Kumaravel. An official from the fisheries department said, “The State government has taken grave consideration of representations from the fishing community and conveyed the concerns to the Union government.”

### **Tamil Nadu: Indian Marine Fisheries Bill: Fishing for trouble?**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/jul/25/indian-marine-fisheries-bill-fishing-for-trouble-2335003.html>

"The Union government recently listed the Indian Marine Fisheries Bill, 2021 to be passed in the ongoing Monsoon session of Parliament, and fisherfolk have strongly objected to it, saying it would benefit corporates and deprive traditional fishermen of their livelihood. As per the Tamil Nadu Marine Fisheries Regulation Act, 1983, fishing is permitted on country craft boats within 5 nautical miles (nm) and on mechanised vessels between 5 and 12 nm. Mechanised vessels with trawlers are only to be used between 5 am and 9 pm. Over the years, fishermen on both country craft boats and mechanised vessels have moved far beyond the 12 nm mark, as the availability of fish reduced in the terrestrial sea.

The State government has control up to 12 nm from the base line, while the rest is vested with the Union government. Now, the Union government’s Indian Marine Fisheries Bill, 2021 proposes to only grant licenses to vessels registered under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, to fish in the EEZ (see chart). It also puts the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) in charge of Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS), and proposes punishments for fishermen breaching the EEZ without a licence, not complying with ICG orders, and obstructing ICG officials. ‘Legislation lacks clarity’ National Union of Fishermen president Anton Gomez told TNIE the Bill lacks clarity on the varieties of boats to be registered under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958. Fishermen choose catamarans, country boats, fibre boats and mechanised vessels based on their financial condition, he said, adding that most fishermen are poor, and use country boats and fibre boats.

Treating all modes of fishing as one show their insensibility, Gomez asserted, and pointed out that the Bill was drafted without consulting traditional fisherfolk. He further said the Bill is draconian as it lets the ICG penalise those who net non-permitted species. “Fishermen don’t engage in selective fishing; their nets catch all kinds of fish,” he noted. Gomez welcomed the move to restrict foreign vessels from entering the EEZ, but added that there are suspicions that

corporates backed by international fishing agencies would be encouraged. Thoothukudi District Country Boat, Cattumaram and Fibre Boat Fishermen Welfare Association's legal advisor advocate Dayan said the Bill seems to generalise all modes of fishing. Obtaining a license is difficult, the charges are high, there are annual fees, fitness certificates need to be renewed, and on top of all this, the penalties are unaffordable for poor fishermen, he argued, adding that traditional fishermen are illiterate and cannot register themselves online.

Even little violations could lead to seizure of boats, and this would affect the livelihood of fishermen. Moreover, a one-year jail term for questioning Indian Coast Guards is extremely unjust," said Dayan. Availability of fish reducing the fishermen said they primarily depend on the continental shelf area and the EEZ because of the availability of fish in the terrestrial sea is shrinking. In fact, there has been a drastic decline in fishing resources in the Indian ocean, they pointed out, attributing it to destructive fishing practice by trawlers, climatic changes, the continental plate drift during the 2004 tsunami, and excess fishing by international long liners in the EEZ. Traditional fishing includes conch collection from the seabed. Several hundreds of fishermen depend on conch diving. Conch-collecting fisherman from Trespuram MRB Regan said the Bill would destroy their prospects as they collect conches beyond 12 nm. M Krishnamurthi, from the Unorganised Workers Federation, said the Bill's restriction on traditional fishermen venturing beyond 12 nm without a license violates the traditional right of fishermen to access fishing resources.

"Fishermen might accidentally go further. Impounding their vessels due to this would leave them in abject poverty," he remarked, and alleged these restrictions on traditional fishermen were aimed at handing over fishing and trading rights to international corporate entities. Corporates set to gain? Fisherman Kebiston said a similar Bill proposed in 2009 by the then Congress government was shelved amid opposition from the fishing community, but now, the BJP-led Union government has made a few modifications and drafted the Bill again. Another fisherman, Gunasekaran, from Vembar fishing hamlet, said regulations are needed to protect the marine ecosystem, but not to have corporates replace traditional fishermen, as this would be counterproductive. "The Bill would impoverish 90 per cent of traditional fishermen, and benefit corporates waiting to monopolise the ocean's fishing resources," he added.

'Bill violates Constitution' Thoothukudi Country Boat Fibre Boat Fishermen Association president Dr SJ Gayes alleged the Bill violates the Constitutional guarantees of the right to life and personal liberty, and the right against exploitation enshrined in Articles 21 and 23 respectively. Besides, putting the Indian Coast Guard (which is under the Central government) in charge of monitoring, control and surveillance of fishing obviates the State's hold on fishermen's welfare, he added. Gomez said the Bill is against the interests of traditional fishermen, who contribute several crore ruppees to the Gross Domestic Product, and should be withdrawn as it was not drafted in consultation with traditional fishermen along the coast. The government,

meanwhile, says the Bill would ensure regulation of fishing in the EEZ, which is under the purview of the Central department of fisheries. It is envisioned to provide a framework for sustainable exploitation of aquatic living resources, protect endangered threatened and protected marine species, and reign in illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, an official stated. Lines in the sea Here's how zones are classified Territorial zone - 12 nautical miles (nm) from shore baseline Contiguous zone - 12 nm from end of territorial zone Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) - 200 nm from end of territorial zone High seas - from end of the Exclusive Economic Zone

### **Tamil Nadu: Draft Marine Fisheries Bill: A netting trouble**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/draft-marine-fisheries-bill-a-netting-trouble/article35517538.ece>

"On July 20, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi against moving the Indian Marine Fisheries Bill, 2021, in Parliament, contending that many of its provisions went against the interests of the local fishermen and certain clauses infringed upon the rights of the States. Contending that the proposed Bill had many disturbing clauses, including criminalisation and imprisonment of fishermen, use of force against fishermen and levy of charges and huge penalties, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, which has a substantial coastline, pushed for a wider debate. On July 22, Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi Lok Sabha members Thol. Thirumavalavan and D. Ravikumar, elected from the coastal districts of Cuddalore and Villupuram, met Union Minister for Fisheries Parshottam Rupala in New Delhi and submitted a memorandum opposing various provisions of the Bill. "The Bill treats fishing as a criminal activity and fishermen as criminals. It provides for licenses', imposes hefty fines and attempts to create a corpus fund with the fine amount. It also encroaches upon the rights of the State government," contended Mr. Ravikumar, who convened a meeting of fishermen in Villupuram.

Fishermen's threat that news of the Bill spread like wildfire, and fishing villages and harbours in the State have been on the boil ever since. A black flag agitation was held. Fishermen have threatened to blockade ports if Parliament passed the Bill in its present form. "It does not take into consideration the traditional rights of fishermen who have been fishing where they find fish. It talks about fines even for fishermen with non-motorised traditional craft, and the prescribed fine amounts are quite heavy. There has been no consultation with stakeholders or the public whatsoever. The licences are to be obtained under the Merchant Shipping Act, and not the Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Act, and the authority to impose fines would be given to the Central forces like the Coast Guard. Already if our boats pass by their craft, we are treated like criminals, asked to kneel down and raise our hands above our heads and threatened to be shot," said K. Bharathi of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association. This Bill, says Pradip Chatterjee, convener of the National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers, has been introduced

in a hurry without any scope for stakeholder or public comments as it was done in the case of the Draft National Marine Fisheries (Regulation & Management) Bill, 2019. This Bill is far from the realities of Indian marine fisheries as all kinds of boats, including the mechanised fishing boats like trawlers and purse seiners, are designated as small-scale boats. It is a blatant betrayal of the small-scale fishing communities and an open attempt to subjugate the livelihood of small-scale fishers to the interests of mechanised boat owners. The body has written to members of Parliament, requesting them to ensure that the passage of the Bill is deferred until these concerns are properly addressed, and stakeholder consultations are undertaken.

‘Adopt national policy’ the draft National Fisheries Policy has been published and is being finalised. The government should adopt the policy before finalising the Bill, opined V. Jayanand, a retired official of the Fisheries Department of Puducherry. “As in the case of all Acts, this one, too, would be dependent on the rules to be prescribed for its implementation. The rules, too, should be framed and publicised simultaneously,” he said. A retired official of the Tamil Nadu Fisheries Department explained that Indian citizens do not require any licence or letter of authority from the Central government to fish in the Exclusive Economic Zone as provided under Section 7(5) of the Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and Other Maritime Zones Act, 1976.

Accordingly, the regulation of fishing along the coast of Tamil Nadu has so far been legally undertaken by the State Fisheries Department under the Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Act. “The Bill, in its present form, does not explicitly indicate its intent to protect the rights of all sections of Indian fishermen, including artisanal and traditional fishermen and fish workers, to provide them a secured livelihood, while protecting and safeguarding the marine environment and the natural resources,” he pointed out. Minister to meet MPs When questioned about the reservations about the Bill, Mr. Rupala told The Hindu on the phone from Delhi: “We are hearing everyone’s views. I have received the suggestions of the Chief Minister. Some of your [Tamil Nadu] fishermen brothers, too, met me. I am going to hold a meeting with all MPs from the coastal constituencies.” After deliberations, efforts would be made to explore how to incorporate their views in the Bill, he said. Asked whether the Union government would still table the Bill, he said: “It will be our effort [to table the Bill now]. We will see what comes out of this deliberation and decide.”

‘Allow purse seine nets’ Fishermen in the State were divided during their protests in the past few days in some parts of the State — for and against the use of purse seine nets. In Cuddalore district, fishermen protested last week, demanding that they be allowed to use purse seine nets. Despite the ban, a section of fishermen continues to use it. “The government could instead permit the fishermen to use these nets for certain months in a year when the catch of the ‘mathi’ [sardines] variety is usually large. The market for this variety is huge in Kerala and Karnataka,” said Rajendran Nattar, a representative of the fishermen at Akkaraipettai. Nevertheless, for

preserving the marine resources in the long run, the government must make sure that mechanised boats are fitted with engines of permissible horsepower, he said. However, senior officials of the Department of Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare maintained that the purse seine nets could never be allowed in view of the ban.

They also pointed out that only a section of the fishermen was demanding the use of purse seine, while the majority were against it. The majority of fishermen demanded that the use of the banned net be stopped because their catch was disturbed by the purse seine net users, officials said. “While this group is against the banned net, those illegally using purse seine allege that those not using it are using thick nets, which is another violation — the gap between the strands of the net is not 40 mm,” said an officer. Lack of facilities the absence of processing facilities in the State is another issue. “It is unfortunate that the fishers are still dependent on middlemen from Kerala and Thoothukudi, who decide the procurement cost to their advantage,” pointed out V. Ramachandiran, president of the Nagapattinam District Small and Tiny Industries Association.

The fishermen of the Kasimedu fishing harbour, too, have been raising this issue. “We are forced to sell fish at very low prices to the two merchants who agree to purchase fish from here. They say they cannot give us higher prices since the cost of transport to Kerala is quite high,” said Varadhan, a fishermen community leader. Though the fishing harbour projects at Poompuhar, Arcottuthurai, Nambiyar Nagar and Vellapallam are welcome, the gap in the marketing of the marine produce has to be addressed, said representatives of fishermen welfare associations. S.J. Gayes of Manappad, president of the Thoothukudi District Country Boat and Catamaran Fishermen Welfare Association, said some of the mechanised boats with imported high-power engines had not been registered with the Department of Fisheries, and they posed a serious threat to the country craft. Sea erosion is a grievance of fishermen from Kanniyakumari district. The menace can be neutralised only by properly constructed groynes in all coastal hamlets on the stretch between Rajakkalmangalam and Neerodi, said Fr. Churchill, general secretary of South Asian Fishermen Fraternity. S

and quarrying and mining of beach minerals by a public sector undertaking at Manavalakurichi in the district was among the prime reasons for the sea erosion, some fishermen said. They wanted the State government to stop the mining of beach minerals. As more than 1,000 mechanised boats are mostly involved in multi-day deep-sea fishing in this region, a control room should be opened at Irayumanthurai to transmit and receive satellite phone signals for alerting the fishermen out in the sea 600 nautical miles from the coast, Fr. Churchill said. Treacherous harbour Fishermen argued that the faulty design of the Thengapattanam fishing harbour and the Parakkaani check-dam resulted in the accumulation of sand at the nearby estuary, which led to accidents. A total of 27 fishermen lost their lives at the Thengapattanam harbour’s entry/exit points since 2014, including six deaths in the past year. “The harbour was

designed without consultations with the local fishermen. The sea would be rough from Kanniyakumari to the west coast and it would be even more menacing during the monsoon,” said Sunil Sabariyar of Vallavilai, a coastal hamlet close to the Kanniyakumari-Kerala border. Fishing near the Katchatheevu islet (ceded to Sri Lanka) is still a matter of discussion among fishermen. For livelihood, fishermen had to venture into the sea near Katchatheevu; the catch was good there, said P. Sesu Raja, a fisherman leader at Mandapam.

Though the deep-sea fishing scheme was inaugurated by the Prime Minister in September 2017 at Mandapam with the aim of resolving issues relating to cross-border fishing, U. Arulanandam of Pamban, who is Tamil Nadu’s representative of the Alliance for the Release of Innocent Fishermen, pointed out that so far the Department of Fisheries had built only 30 deep-sea fishing vessels for Pudukkottai, Nagapattinam and Ramanathapuram districts. Enhancement of diesel subsidy, an increase in the financial assistance to the fishermen during the annual ban period to ₹10,000 and establishment of a fish landing centre at Rameswaram and a state-of-the-art storage facility are among the other demands of the fishermen. Senior officials of the Department of Fisheries said the government was working on welfare schemes, and some of them were likely to be announced in the Budget session of the Assembly.

### **Tamil Nadu: Move to relocate fish market runs into opposition**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/move-to-relocate-fish-market-runs-into-opposition/article35481433.ece>

"A plan to temporarily relocate the city’s fish market on East Boulevard Road by Tiruchi Corporation to a space opposite to Viscountess Goschen Government Muslim Girls Higher Secondary School (VGGMGHSS) in Tharanallur has run into opposition from locals. Mooted as part of the Corporation’s redevelopment project under the smart cities mission, the century-old fish market is to be demolished and reconstructed as a double-storey structure with cold storage facilities. Fish vendors in the existing market will be expected to function from a yard earmarked opposite the Goschen School, while the new building gets ready. However, the announcement has not gone down well with residents in the area, particularly from the 111-year-old VGGMGHSS, that is one of two State Government-run institutions (along with Government Hobart Higher Secondary School in Chennai) dedicated to the education of Muslim girls. “We already have a major traffic management problem due to our proximity to Gandhi Market. Many transport companies park their heavy vehicles outside our gate, making it difficult for students to enter the campus. Besides this, the strong smell of the karuvattu pettai [dried fish market], especially during their stock loading days, has already affected air quality in our neighbourhood. Now, a fresh fish market will only add to our problems,” Khaja Mydeen, president, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) of VGGGMHS, told The Hindu. The PTA has also given a petition to the authorities, said Mr. Mydeen. Besides the school, the Sri Bhoologanathar Temple and a

'paalvadi' (elementary school) are also located in the vicinity, locals point out. A senior official of Tiruchi Corporation told The Hindu that the relocation project had been put on hold momentarily. "A proposal was drawn up but it is yet to be approved. Since then, we have had a new Corporation Commissioner take charge. We will apprise him of the details and will make a decision soon," they said. "We have taken into account the complaints of the nearby residents and other stakeholders and will also provide information on this to the Commissioner," they added.

### **Tamil Nadu: As government readies to pass fishermen bill, disquiet in some quarters**

<https://thefederal.com/states/south/tamil-nadu/as-government-readies-to-pass-fishermen-bill-disquiet-in-some-quarters/>

"The Union government is expected to pass the Indian Marine Fishermen Bill, 2021, during the Monsoon Session, despite opposition in some quarters. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin said on Tuesday that the proposed Bill "has many disturbing clauses". He urged the Centre not to pass the Bill, and instead put it across for wider debate and discussion. Many provisions in the proposed Bill go against the interests of the local fishermen communities and certain clauses infringe upon the rights of states under the State List of the 7th Schedule of Constitution of India, Stalin said in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "As the proposed Bill has many disturbing clauses, like criminalisation and imprisonment of fishermen, use of force against fishermen, levy of charges, levy of huge penalties etc., it has resulted in widespread protests and disquiet..." "I urge you not to move the Bill and also put it across for wider debate and discussions. After obtaining the views of the stakeholders on the Bill in its present form, a decision on moving a fresh Bill that addresses the concerns of the fishermen communities may be taken," Stalin told Modi. The CM said that "while we understand and appreciate the need to protect and preserve the marine ecosystem, we also consider it equally important that the livelihood and interests of the traditional fishermen are clearly protected". Indian vessels will continue to enjoy fishing rights in India's economic zone. India's territorial waters extend up to 12 nautical miles from the coast, and exclusive economic zones extend up to 200 nautical miles. Only foreign vessels found fishing in the maritime zones of India will be subjected to fine or imprisonment, or both. Some activists feel that the Bill wrests the power from state governments through some provisions like Section 19 (authorised officers).

However, the said Section does allow the state government to have a say. "The central government may, by notification, appoint an officer or a subordinate officer of the Coast Guard constituted under the Coast Guard Act, 1978, or any other officer of the Central Government or officer of the State Government in consultation with that Government, as it may consider necessary, as authorised officers for the purposes of this Act," it says. Likewise, Section 9 (monitoring, control and surveillance measures) says: "The central government shall maintain a

system of monitoring, control and surveillance to support the development and management of fisheries activities and ensure the safety and security of fishers and fishing vessels, as prescribed.” It is to be noted that the same kind of suggestion has been recommended by the Sudarshan Committee in 1994.

It said that “periodic review of the deep sea fishing operations should be undertaken”, adding, “Vessel tracking systems be installed in all joint venture, leased and 100 per cent EOU [Export Oriented Unit] deep sea fishing vessels”. Nothing Objectionable in the Bill Speaking to The Federal, M Ilango, chairperson of the Puducherry-based National Fisherfolk Forum, said that there is nothing objectionable in the proposed Bill. “Most of the provisions found in the Bill are already in existence. For example, the Bill talks about getting of licences. Licences in truest sense is nothing but registration. The vessels must be registered by providing information such as the length and width of the vessel, colour, etc. In places like Rameswaram, the fishermen are allowed to enter into sea only after getting tokens. When such kind of rules are already implemented, the fear of fishermen is unnecessary,” he said. “Most of the traditional vessel fishermen don’t go beyond the limit because of the vessel. They will go to maximum 5 nautical miles. In case they go beyond the limit for fishing, they will be fined. According to UNCLOS [United Nations Conventions on the Laws of the Sea], if a vessel has gone beyond the fishing boundary from parent country to another, and if it is found out that the vessel has entered only for fishing and there is no security threat, then the vessel can be pardoned,” added Ilango.

### **Tamil Nadu: Construction work on fishing harbour project picks up at Arcottuthurai**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/construction-work-on-fishing-harbour-project-picks-up-at-arcottuthurai/article35432084.ece>

"Work on construction of a fishing harbour at Arcottuthurai village in Vedaranyam Taluk initiated at the start of this year at a cost of Rs.150 crore has gained momentum gradually. Construction of north and south breakwater structures is in progress, official sources said. On Monday, Minister for Fisheries - Fishermen Welfare and Animal Husbandry Anitha R. Radhakrishnan took stock of the progress of the harbour project designed to handle an annual fish catch of 7,200 tonnes. The project has been planned for completion within two years from the date of start, sources said. The harbour facilities project encompass construction of an auction hall, two net mending yards, an administrative building, ice plant-cum-chilled storage, fuel station, sloping slipway, radio and communication tower, overhead tank with 43,000 litre capacity, security kiosk, surveillance cameras, sewage treatment plant, internal roads/pavements, truck loading platform, vehicle parking area, construction of compound wall and a marine police station. Waterfront infrastructure facilities include breakwaters, diaphragm wall, slipway, dredging for berthing and for safe navigation of fishing vessels, and construction of quay at a length of 700 metre are proposed as part of the developments. The breakwaters have

been constructed to a length of 400 metre out of 1,650 metres on the northern side and 430 metre out of 2,000 metre on the southern side, a senior official said. A diaphragm wall to a length of 220 metre is to be constructed for berthing of fishing boats. The project with a capacity to handle 64 mechanised boats and 376 fibre boats will obviate the need for fishers in Kodiakarai, Maniantheevu, Pushpavanam, Arcottuthurai and other villages to utilise facilities in other fishing harbours. The government is in the process of scaling up infrastructure facilities for handling deep sea catches to dissuade fishers from bottom trawling operations considered to be an unsustainable and unviable fishing practice and simultaneously manage fisheries resources in inshore waters, sources said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Stories That Matter: How a South Indian Island's community radio station saved lives during Cyclone Gaja**

<https://www.thepostscript.org/p/pamban-island-radio-india-cyclone-climate-change>

"The residents of Rameswaram, a tiny fishing town on Pamban Island, are familiar with severe cyclonic storms and natural disasters. A remnant of the land bridge that once connected southern India and Sri Lanka, islands like Pamban have been plagued by tropical cyclones for decades. Scientists say climate change has only made this worse. As the Indian Ocean heats up, cyclonic storms, which are known to increase in intensity over warmer waters, are steadily growing worse, and becoming more frequent. Dhanushkodi, a now-abandoned town on Pamban Island, was devastated by one of the most powerful storms to ever strike India — and that was nearly 60 years ago, in 1964. But on December 4th, 2018, with Cyclone Gaja looming over the island, the fisher community leapt into action and used radio broadcasts to save hundreds of lives. Jockeys at Kadal Osai (meaning “sound or music of the sea”), a four-year-old local community radio station on Pamban Island, and broadcast information about the storm throughout the night. “When I got information that if all boats on the northern side of the island were shifted away, they should be safe from the storm, I immediately got onto the radio and began broadcasting this message repeatedly,” P Lenin, one of the jockeys at Kadal Osai, told Sibi Arasu for a story in Climate Home News, an independent news site covering the climate crisis. “Kadal Osai helped a lot of people during Cyclone Gaja,” says Arasu, a Bengaluru-based environment journalist whose story on Kadal Osai was part of a reporting initiative focused on communities, mainly in developing nations, which are suffering the worst effects of climate change despite contributing very little to it.

“Tamil Nadu [a state in southern India] is at the forefront of climate change, and Rameswaram is surrounded by the sea. So it is frequently battered by strong winds and cyclones,” he added. Arasu, who is intrigued by how local community radio programs have helped local communities, often marginalized or overlooked by mainstream media, spoke to The Postscript about his pursuit

of this story. He discussed the resilience shown by the islanders, and the takeaways for other communities experiencing climate change. The interview has been edited for concision and clarity. The east coast of India has always been prone to cyclones, which are particularly devastating to island towns. But the media tends to cover cyclone-hit urban areas more extensively than it does smaller towns. How did you come by the story of Kadal Osai and Pamban Island? Arasu: There's a group called the CJRF [Climate Justice Resilience Fund], and they have partnered with a publication called Climate Home News. I came across a call for pitches through various newsletters and my freelance reporter network, about how Climate Home News had funds to commission stories on how climate change is affecting people living in the Bay of Bengal. That's what got me thinking about this. When I saw the pitch call, I thought — being from Chennai, and familiar with the Bay of Bengal — it made sense for me to pitch.

I was working on another story about climate change adaptation in the Bay of Bengal region, so I wanted to come up with a few more ideas that would fit Climate Home News, and some of the ideas I came up with then were about how community radio in general, not just Kadal Osai, but other stations as well, have been extremely effective in warning people about the risks of climate change. I think there's another community radio program in Odisha, and there are a few other initiatives that have been extremely effective in helping people evacuate to safer ground when a cyclone or something has happened. So I thought that was a great use of this platform. The thing with community radio is that the range, or the distance over which it can be listened to, is not much. The range is very minimal compared to other radio programs. I think they can go up to about 20-30 kilometers [roughly 12-19 miles], if I'm not mistaken. And community radio is also subject to India's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, which sometimes acts as a hurdle in the effective functioning of radio stations. For instance, one stipulation is that these stations can't cover politics; another is that they have to make sure their program reaches a certain radius from where the station is located. But because of — or maybe despite — all of these conditions, community radio has been a really effective and efficient platform to connect with people who live in regions that are otherwise a bit disconnected, because of reasons like a lack of infrastructure.

Even in Chhattisgarh, there's a great community radio program called CGNet Swara that has provided communication to the Adivasi community [an umbrella term for tribal communities in India] in the region. So I'd also pitched a few other ideas about the effects of climate change in the Bay of Bengal region. But the editors really liked this idea. What made you decide to cover it? Arasu: I had seen a few reports about community radio in the papers and I've also reported other Rameswaram pieces, so, in my work as a journalist, there have been multiple occasions where I have gotten in touch with sources in the area. I'm quite familiar with that region. Once I realized that it was very easy for me to get in touch with the people who run the radio channel, I knew it was a go. The channel is run by Gayatri Usman, who is the manager of sorts, and the funding comes from a fisherperson who is now a successful businessperson. I got in touch with

Gayatri and she was really helpful; she was more than happy for a piece to be done on her radio channel and I spoke to her in great detail. Then she connected me to one of her jockeys, P Lenin. I spoke to him at length as well. He's actually from the fisher community, went on to graduate, and I think he was working in Chennai, but he had decided to come back to his hometown and had taken up this job, and he's been at the radio station for the last two years. He's a very enthusiastic journalist.

I went through some of their episodes on Spotify (I speak Tamil, of course), so I went over their episodes, and spoke to a few of their listeners, both men and women. I had some really productive conversations with them, where they talked about how they relate to the radio station, and feel it truly is [a part of their] own community. It was lovely to speak to all these stakeholders, and after these conversations — that happened over a week — I sent in my draft to the editor of Climate Home News. She got back with some suggestions and questions, and revised the piece to suit an international audience that may not be familiar with Pamban Island or Rameswaram, or India. It was carried on their site soon after. What were your favorite parts of reporting this story? Can you tell us a bit about how your interactions with the islanders went? What did you learn about their lives? Arasu: One happy fallout of this exercise is that, unlike many of the other stories I've done, I've managed to have lasting relationships with the people at Kadal Osai, as well as some of the fisherwomen I spoke to. Some of them have had to find alternate sources of income, because climate change has caused fish stock to deplete. Some of them are making and selling jewelry and other crafts. The government is encouraging them. There's an organization called CMFRI [Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute], where the Rameshwaram branch is encouraging residents to take up seaweed farming. I spoke to the director of the CMFRI about his views on Kadal Osai, because [the station] often gets these experts onto their show for interviews. So I've been in touch with those people ever since, and we have a good relationship. We've been in touch with regards to other stories as well. You spoke of how community radio programs across the world and India have been successful in warning people of the dangers of climate change, and helping to keep communities safe when natural disasters occur. Could you tell us more about some of these programs? Arasu: So there are a few community radio programs that I've heard of, and they do great work. CGNet Swara is one, like I mentioned.

Then there's GraamVaani in Jharkhand [a state in the north of India], and Radio Namaskar in Odisha [a state bordering India's east coast], which has been awarded three community radio awards by the government of India. The Radio Namaskar station is based out of Konark [home to India's famous Sun Temple] in Odisha, and they really helped people during Cyclone Fani. The jockeys informed listeners about the direction from which the cyclone was approaching, which enabled many villagers to travel to safety. So the radio literally saved their lives. Similarly, Kadal Osai also helped a lot of people during Cyclone Gaja. One of India's worst cyclones destroyed the town of Dhanushkodi, which is at the edge of Rameswaram. The cyclone

literally flattened the town. So that region has seen a lot of loss due to natural disasters, and the station, Kadal Osai, is playing a part in helping people become resilient to climate change as well as adapt to it and mitigate the effects. Has the government of India stepped forward to help the people of Pamban Island, offering financial aid or any other form of support? Arasu: I think it differs from case to case.

Maybe in certain situations [people have] received aid, and in others they haven't. I won't be able to give you a general answer. It really depends. How was your story received? What impact would you say it has had? Arasu: I think this story was very well-received. I don't think an international publication had reported on Kadal Osai before; I could be wrong. I think it got good feedback on social media. Climate Home News is a platform that is followed by a lot of people who are in the business of climate change, so I think it made a qualitative impact too, because the people who are dealing with, say, climate negotiations or are doing academic research into it ... I have a feeling this reached a lot of them. While earlier stories might not have reached such a targeted audience, this one did. Are there takeaways or lessons other fishing communities can take from the people of Pamban Island and their widely successful community radio channel? Arasu: The people of Pamban Island and Rameshwaram are extremely entrepreneurial, despite all of the difficulties they face, like the harsh weather and living in a high-security area because of India's maritime boundary line with Sri Lanka. They are very enthusiastic and optimistic people. And they're very aware and vocal about their rights. One lesson other fishing communities across India or elsewhere in the developing world can take away from them is about how these kinds of small initiatives can have a really big footprint. There's also a positive feedback loop where the communities are becoming more empowered, while the station also becomes a more confident media entity, because of the appreciation they are getting. The station itself was started by a fisherperson from the community. The initiative itself was not something that a funding agency or a Western or international organization like the United Nations set up. A local person started and set up the entire initiative. And it's benefiting his own community; you can do things to make your own life better is the lesson here. When reporting the story, what steps, if any, did you take to center diverse voices, and to produce a balanced story? Did you make a conscious effort to reach out to a diverse group of sources? Arasu: I've tried to include as many voices as possible — from Indigenous communities and from women — in my stories, and to have a gender and caste balance wherever possible. For this story, I spoke to fishermen as well as fisherwomen, quite deliberately. In terms of experts, like the CMFRI people, most were men, so I didn't have a choice. At the radio station, I just let them decide who I spoke to. It was their prerogative. But the station is woman-led and is run by Usman, who I spoke to in great detail.

How heavily do the people of Pamban Island rely on fishing to earn a livelihood? What's a typical day in their lives like? Arasu: Fishing is their primary source of livelihood. During the fishing season, I think fishers, if I'm not mistaken, go into the sea before dawn breaks, and spend

a whole day and sometimes a night at sea, and then come back. There are a lot of trawlers in the region. A lot of people work in these large, mechanized trawlers that go deep into the sea. And there are a lot of small-scale fishermen as well; they use catamarans or smaller boats for their fishing activities. There's also a lot of tourism; there's this big Rama temple on the island, so religious tourists come from all over the country and the world to visit. Rameswaram is a part of the Char Dham [four pilgrimage sites in India that are believed to help pilgrims attain "moksha," or salvation].

So there's a lot of footfall, especially from Hindu religious tourists. The island is very long, and not very broad. I think the broadest it is is about 10 kilometers [roughly six miles]. It is heavily affected by climate change because of its location. It borders the Gulf of Mannar, and has great biodiversity in its waters. You mentioned not being to travel for this story, owing to COVID-19 restrictions. Do you think that affected the story? Arasu: I didn't undertake any travel for this story because of COVID restrictions, but I've traveled to the region multiple times before. So I know how the place looks and what the people are like, which helped me set the scene, even though I couldn't travel for this particular story. It would have been amazing if I could have traveled. There's nothing like actually being on the ground while reporting. But given the circumstances, this was OK; I was already familiar with the area and its people.

**Tamil Nadu: Don't move marine fisheries bill in Parliament, it has 'disturbing clauses': MK Stalin to PM Modi**

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/marine-fisheries-bill-parliament-tamil-nadu-cm-mk-stalin-pm-modi-1830840-2021-07-21>

"Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to move the Indian Marine Fishermen Bill, 2021 during the ongoing Monsoon session of Parliament, saying that it has many ""disturbing clauses."" In a letter written to PM Modi, Stalin said that the issue is of grave concern to Tamil Nadu, particularly among the coastal districts of the state. ""Many provisions in the proposed Bill go against the interests of the local fishermen' communities and certain clauses infringe upon the rights conferred to the States under the State List of the 7th Schedule of the Constitution of India,"" he wrote. 'Does not address concerns, well-being of Indian fishermen' the chief minister also said that the Centre has proposed to move the Bill without adequately addressing the concerns and well-being of Indian fishermen who are traditionally engaged in this for their livelihood for generations.

""While we understand and appreciate the need to protect and preserve the marine ecosystem, we also consider it equally important that the livelihood and interests of the traditional fishermen are clearly protected,"" CM Stalin said. 'Proposed Bill has many disturbing clauses' Stalin also claimed that the proposed Bill has many disturbing clauses, such as criminalisation and imprisonment of fishermen, use of force against fishermen, levy of charges, and levy of huge

penalties, which has resulted in widespread protests and disquiet. Urging PM Modi not to move the Bill and also put it across for wider debate and discussions, Stalin wrote, ""After obtaining the views of the stakeholders on the Bill in its present form, a decision on moving a fresh Bill that addresses the concerns of the fishermen's communities, may be taken. Considering the above, I once again urge you not to proceed with the moving of the Indian Marine Fishermen Bill, 2021.""

### **Tamil Nadu: Design for new fish market along Marina Loop Road getting ready**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/design-for-new-fish-market-along-marina-loop-road-getting-ready/article35400224.ece>

"A new design of the proposed state-of-the-art fish market along Marina Loop Road is expected to be finalised shortly. The new design will incorporate various aspects, including a sprawling parking lot for at least 100 vehicles, water supply, modern waste management facility and smart storage spaces for retail fish vendors. Following the directions of the Madras High Court and advice from Municipal Administration Minister K. N. Nehru, Greater Chennai Corporation Commissioner Gagandeep Singh Bedi and Commissioner of Police Shankar Jiwali inspected the Marina Loop Road on Sunday, to explore the possibility of shifting the fish vendors to a new market near behind Santhome Church. During the initial meetings with fishermen a few years ago, the Corporation officials had said that the new fish market would be a temporary structure made of tin sheets on a two-acre area, to be modernised later. The fish vendors along the stretch from Light House to Srinivasapuram opposed the project as they were not convinced about its utility and demanded shops along the Marina Loop Road without any displacement. After the Madras High Court directed the Corporation and the police to evict the fish vendors, the civic body had started exploring options to convince the fish vendors by altering the design of the proposed market, making it more attractive for the fish vendors as well as their customers. Suggestions have been sought from experts and officials on innovative designs for the proposed fish market.

The final design of the market is expected to be cleared after approval from the State government. A Coastal Regulation Zone clearance is also needed. Some experts have suggested a state-of-the-art retail space with adequate water supply, storage facility and waste management system for each vendor. On Sunday, civic officials led by Mr. Bedi proposed a design with parking space for at least 100 vehicles in the proposed fish market. Some experts have suggested the development of air conditioned modern fish market, similar to coastal cities such as Sydney and Dubai, with space for all the 350 fish vendors who will be displaced from the Marina Loop Road. But the Corporation has rejected the proposal for an air-conditioned fish market. "We will consult the Fisheries Department for the designs. We have told them today to get the designs done. We don't want to put up an air-conditioned market as of now. Open skylight will make the

market odour free. It is not the richest of the fishermen who will have their shops there. It will be the local fishermen. Let us see. Of course, we will consult the community also,” said an official of the Corporation. Suggestions have been made for exploring the possibility of getting additional land near the two-acre area of TNSCB to develop a better designed market. A final decision is expected to be taken shortly.

### **Tamil Nadu: Smaller catch lands at Kasimedu harbour**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/smaller-catch-lands-at-kasimedu-harbour/articleshow/84545778.cms>

"The arrival of fish at Kasimedu has come down, with just 50 boats returning ashore during the weekend. Fisheries department sources on Sunday said 400-plus boats had gone to fish in the sea off Krishnapatnam in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh 10 days ago. Balaraman, a vendor at the Kasimedu fishing harbour, said that the catch that arrived on Saturday and Sunday included nearly 10 tonnes of squid, with a 20 kg basket selling for Rs 6,000. "With the increasing cost of diesel, fishermen are incurring huge losses. The state and central governments should do something to reduce the diesel price," he said. Sankara, Podi Navarai and small Vanjiram were among the fish species that arrived at Kasimedu apart from a small quantity of crabs and prawns, he said. A vendor at Chintadripet said about 10 tonnes of fish species like Karuppu Vaaval, Sankara and Nethili and squid arrived at the market on Sunday. While Karuppu Vaaval cost Rs 600 a kg (wholesale); Vanjiram Rs 900 a kg; nethili Rs 200 a kg and Sankara Rs 300 a kg.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen in Rameswaram protest against Centre's Marine Fisheries Draft Bill**

<https://in.news.yahoo.com/fishermen-tamil-nadus-rameswaram-protest-134032735.html>

"Fishermen in Tamil Nadu's Rameswaram on Sunday held a protest against the Centre's proposed Marine Fisheries Bill. While speaking to ANI, President of Rameswaram Fishermen Association, Emerit said, ""Today, we have gathered here at Rameswaram Main beach to protest against the Centre's proposed Marine Fisheries Bill. We will hold an indefinite strike until our demands are met."" ""This bill aims to impose laws against fishermen, like demarcating territorial waters, imposing unnecessary fines, etc,"" said Emerit. Several fishermen at the venue were seen waving black flags to support the protest. The Union fisheries, animal husbandry, and dairying ministry held a video conference on July 15 with officials from coastal constituencies to elicit their views on the draft Indian Marine Fisheries Bill, 2021. Union Fisheries Minister Parshottam Rupala discussed various provisions of the draft Bill. The Indian Marine Fisheries Bill, 2021 is likely to be taken up during the monsoon session of Parliament which will commence on Monday and conclude on August 13.

### **Tamil Nadu: Formalin-laced fish seized in Madurai**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/formalin-laced-fish-seized-in-madurai/articleshow/84423357.cms>

"The food safety department has found that formalin is being used to preserve fish in the stalls in Madurai. A total of 700 kg of stale fish and those laced with formalin were seized by them. Food safety officials said the chemical, which is used to preserve dead bodies, can cause diarrhoea if consumed and if taken for a long period, can lead to serious health problems including cancer. Designated officer for food safety Dr Jayarama Pandian said that they initially conducted a check in the retail fish stalls in Karimedu area, where they found that formalin was used to preserve fish. A total of 630 kg of stale and formalin-laced fishes were seized. "We detected the presence of the chemical by conducting spot tests using a strip available with us. Once the strip comes in contact with the fish, it will change colour in a few seconds if formalin is present. The chemical was not directly applied on fishes, but mixed with the ice used to preserve them," he said. Following this, the team conducted a check at the wholesale fish market functioning at Mattuthavani and found about 70 kg of stale fish. Pandian said that since they conducted a check at Karimedu, the traders at Mattuthavani got alerted and shifted the consignments. He said they let off the traders with a strong warning since it was the first time they were caught indulging in the practice. They will see action like closing down of shops if they repeat the mistake. "We will keep a close watch on the sea food sales in the city and rural areas in the days to come. Surprise checks will be carried out to catch wrongdoers," he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Ennore creek, fishermen along Kosasthalai river facing brunt of SEZ project**

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/tamil-nadu-ennore-creek-fishermen-along-kosasthalai-river-facing-brunt-of-sez-project-1828165-2021-07-14>

"A handheld GPS survey by the 'Save Ennore Creek' campaign has revealed that the ongoing construction by Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Limited (TANGEDCO) as a part of the Ennore Special Economic Zone (SEZ) project has already led to the loss of more than 15 acres of wetlands, including 1.1 acres of the Kosasthalai river. If allowed to proceed, this alignment will claim an additional 2.4 acres of river-spread including mangroves. According to local fisherfolk, Konamudukku Kalvai, which is the area of the river that is being encroached by TANGEDCO, is one of the most biologically productive segments in the area. The presence of mangroves and deep-water habitats make this a sheltered breeding place for prawns. Fishers report a drastic drop in fish catching over the last three months. On 12 July, a three-member team comprising Prof. S. Janakarajan, artist and activists T.M. Krishna and Poovulagin Nanbargal G. Sundarajan visited Ennore and highlighted TANGEDCO's ongoing illegalities. TM Krishna, the Ramen Magasasay award winner, who in 2017 had sung a song titled Porambokku highlighting the encroachment on the Ennore creek, has now rendered a

second song called Porambokku 2 and in the short video says, ""The encroachment has only increased since the last time we visited. I am now sitting on the river.""

Environmentalists, villagers protest recently, a social media post by environmentalist Nityanand Jayaraman has gone viral about a new variety of species in the Kosasthalai river. The river which was once home to over 30 varieties of fish, now only has varieties that are in single digit. Nityanand's post read, ""In 30 years as a toxic tourist, I have travelled to the most abused parts of the world. But nowhere have I seen the sheer impunity with which corporate offenders desecrate a water body as we see it happening in Ennore with the Kosasthalai River's backwaters. On Monday, I met K Veeramani, an inland fisherman from Sivanpadaiveethikuppam, and enquired about his day in the water. He said that he just got some sambal era."" Raghuram, one of the 15 village heads from the Kattukuppam fishing village, says, ""For the last four generations, we are here and our livelihood is based on fishing. But you can see that the main source of our livelihood has been destroyed by all the fly ash and construction going on here."" A minimum of Rs 1000-1500 was earned by these fishermen before all the encroachments that happened here. Raghuram said that apart from having their livelihood destroyed, the water is getting contaminated in a manner that these fishermen have started developing rashes, skin allergies and other complications. Vijay, who is one of the leaders in the Kattukuppam cooperative society, says that even educated youths in the region don't have job opportunities and end up getting into traditional fishing.

The choked river also leads to joblessness. ""Over 5000 families are dependent on the river. The river is our God, our source of livelihood. But the river is choked and debris is put near the river and all the fishes which were earlier found are no longer there now,"" said Vijay. Fear of flood The fishermen are also concerned about the high chances of waterlogging in their neighborhood since the monsoon is around the corner. The Ennore pulikat wetlands are critical to flood security and drinking water security. The vast spread of backwater helps contain water during heavy rains, thereby containing flood situations and also helps in managing groundwater level. Environmentalists say, ""When you start building on these areas, not only will you lose the land's ability to protect you from floods, but you also lose the ability of the land to give you clean drinking water. During the 2019 drinking water crisis, 75 million litres of drinking water was taken from this basin on an everyday basis. This basin's0 freshwater is protected from seawater intrusion because of the Ennore creek.

Environmentalists have alleged multiple violations by TANGEDCO and the Ennore Special Economic Zone (SEZ) project. Minister gives go-ahead However, on July 14, Electricity Minister V Senthil Balaji said that the Ennore SEZ electricity project and stage three of the (NCTPS) project are being carried out only after obtaining clearances from all the departments concerned in the state and Union governments. The time window given by the Union government for the 2x660 MW Ennore SEZ project is till 2023 and the work in the region is

being conducted as per status number 265 of the state government's Public Works Department (PWD), informed Senthil Balaji in a statement. "All the required clearances, including a no-objection certificate, were obtained by the department," read the statement. The minister also added that once the thermal plant is constructed, the temporary roads, constructed for transporting equipment to the plants, will be removed. He also said that pathways for transporting ash slurry are also being constructed after permission from the Union ministry. Environment activist Nityanand Jayaraman has alleged that Minister Senthil Balaji has been put for embarrassment by the TANGEDCO officials. Nityanand said, "The minister of electricity Senthil Balaji has been misled by TANGEDCO officials. Very clearly, TANGEDCO doesn't have the consent to establish under the water act, Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notification or the environmental clearance to lay the ash pipe in Puzhitivakkam.

So there are two separate violations. One is the laying of the ash pipeline to the ash pond and there is no CRZ clearance." "The CRZ clearance is only for foreshore facilities to bring the coal from the port to the plant, to bring sea water to the power plant. All this is on the eastern side. The backwater in the Kosasthalai river is on the western side of the power plant. There is no CRZ clearance applied for any construction," he added. The activist added that the second violation is with the Ennore SEZ which is another 660 MW power plant that is coming up on the ash pond of the NCTP. Nityanand said, "The coal conveyor corridor and seawater intake and outfall corridor are being laid over the main Kosasthalai river. More than one and a half acres have already been encroached on and we suspect that if the work is not stopped, a lot more of the river will be encroached on." "This is illegal because Ennore SEZ does have a CRZ clearance for the coal conveyor but they obtained their approval showing an alignment that is almost entirely on land and what is happening is almost entirely on water," Nityanand added. The fishermen have also planned to pursue compensation claims. "Not only from TANGEDCO, but primarily from them, as they have destroyed over 1000 acres of the backwater in the river and the Buckingham canal by disposing of fly ash. This is in violation of the Green Tribunal's 2016 order when it ordered that TANGEDCO must stop disposing of fly ash into the river. "In 2017 they asked TANGEDCO to remove it and it has been four years and nothing has been done. Fly ash is continuing to be dumped and new violations are taking place in degrading the water body. This has harmed the livelihood, health of fishermen and those who consume it. The fisherfolk are planning to press for compensation from violators," concluded Nityanand.

**Tamil Nadu: 'Tangedco altered alignment of conveyor belt in Ennore'**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/tangedco-altered-alignment-of-conveyor-belt-in-ennore/article35333208.ece>

"Fishermen of Ennore and volunteers of the Save Ennore Creek campaign on Wednesday alleged that the Tangedco had deviated from the original alignment of the coal conveyor belt for which it had obtained clearance and had filled waterways using dredged material and flyash. Urging the State government to stop the work, they said the construction had caused loss of more than 15 acres of wetland, including 1.1 acres of the Kosasthalaiyar river. If allowed to proceed, this alignment would claim another 2.4 acres of river-spread, including mangroves. "Using a handheld GPS device, we have found that they have deviated from the original alignment," said a volunteer. According to fishermen, the Konamudukku Kalvai, where the construction is on, is a biologically productive spot. Fishermen have reported a drastic drop in fish catch over the last three months. "We want these encroachments removed, and we want to be fully compensated for the damage done to our source of livelihood," said R.L. Srinivasan of Kattukuppam village. "Given the encouraging steps taken in the appointment of efficient senior environment and forest staff, we are hopeful that the government will ensure that the law prevails in this case," Save Ennore Creek campaign and the region's fishers said in a statement. A few days ago, a three-member team comprising economist S. Janakarajan, Carnatic vocalist T.M. Krishna and G. Sundarrajan of Poovulagin Nanbargal visited the site.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Lock, seal fish processing unit: HC**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fish/article35332951.ece>

"The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on Wednesday directed Kanniyakumari district administration to lock and seal a fish processing and fish oil manufacturing unit that was said to be functioning without permission. A Division Bench of Justices T.S. Sivagnanam and S. Ananthi directed the authorities to take steps on the petition filed by F. Anderson Xavier of Killiyoor. He said that the fish processing waste from the unit was causing harm to the environment. The waste was dumped in open places, along the seashore and also the sea. This not only affected the marine environment, but also the people living in the area. They complained of breathing and skin related issues, he said. Following an inspection by the authorities, it was found out that no permission certificate was obtained to operate the unit. Though steps were taken to seal the unit, the owners of the unit prevented the authorities from doing so and closed the premises. Several representations have been sent to the authorities by the villagers to lock and seal the unit. The authorities concerned should take appropriate steps to permanently close the fish processing unit taking into account the welfare of the public, he said.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Indian Marine Fisheries Bill: Fisheries ministry to hold virtual meet with MPs from coastal areas**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/draft-indian-marine-fisheries-bill-fisheries-ministry-to-hold-virtual-meet-with-mps-from-coastal-areas/articleshow/84403427.cms>

"The Union fisheries, animal husbandry, and dairying ministry will hold a video conference at 11am on July 15 with the MPs elected from coastal constituencies to elicit their views on the draft Indian Marine Fisheries Bill, 2021. In a letter, Union fisheries minister Parshottam Rupala invited Villupuram MP D Ravikumar to attend the virtual conference to discuss various provisions of the draft Bill. Rupala was optimistic that the inputs and suggestions of the MPs from the coastal areas would address the concerns related to the livelihood of traditional and small-scale fishers besides paving way for sustainable development of marine fisheries in the country. He said Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla mooted the idea of convening a meeting with the MPs from coastal areas to discuss the provisions of the proposed the National Marine Fisheries (Regulation and Management) Bill, 2020 (now renamed as Indian Marine Fisheries Bill, 2021) and register their views and suggestions. Birla mooted the idea during a discussion in February last year on the presence of foreign fishing trawlers in India's exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

### **Tamil Nadu: The Story of Ennore: Reclaiming rights, livelihoods and ecosystems around the Ennore Creek in Tamil Nadu, India**

<https://storyofennore.wordpress.com/2021/07/12/tangedco-has-turned-ennore-creek-into-an-environmental-crime-scene/>

"TANGEDCO's civil works have blocked the flow of the Kosasthalai river and damaged mangroves and the riverbed in two places in Puzhuthivakkam near Ennore.

A three-member team consisting of Prof. Janakarajan, Poovulagin Nanbargal G. Sundarrajan and musician T.M. Krishna that verified the violation at the behest of the Save Ennore Creek campaign and local fisherfolk said TANGEDCO cannot be exempted from the law and should not be allowed to damage waterbodies. Already, more than 1000 acres of the river's backwaters are heavily contaminated with flyash from the leaking pipelines of TANGEDCO. An order of the National Green Tribunal directing TANGEDCO to clear out the flyash has been ignored by the electricity company. Now, a bridge to support an pipeline for carrying coal-ash from Stage III of North Chennai Thermal Power Station to the leaking ash dyke in Seppakkam is being constructed by dumping construction debris and sand on the riverbed and the water courses. The current construction is happening alongside the existing ash pipeline road that has the old and leaking pipelines for TANGEDCO's Stage I and II power plants. TANGEDCO has not obtained environmental clearance or Consent to Operate under Air and Water Acts for this project.

A second bridge is being constructed to carry a coal conveyor belt and seawater from Kamarajar Port to TANGEDCO's Ennore SEZ power plant. Instead of using existing facilities, including the Chettinad Coal Yard – also illegally constructed – and minimising damage to the river,

TANGEDCO is building new facilities that have destroyed mangroves, damaged the river bed, blocked the flow of water and harmed the livelihood of fisherfolk. The ongoing construction is in violation of license conditions that require TANGEDCO to ensure that its civil works do not block the tidal flow of water or harm fisher livelihoods. The inspection team observed that the Ennore backwaters resemble an environmental crime scene, and the TNPCB is clearly missing in action. Pointing out that the backwaters are critical for Chennai's flood and water security, and for the livelihoods of thousands of fisherfolk, the team observed that the TNPCB is incapable of regulating powerful government companies like TANGEDCO. The Government of Tamil Nadu should step in to ensure that state public sector units treat waterbodies with respect and operate within the framework of law.

### **Tamil Nadu: Denied bank loans, fishing boat owners seek aid**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/denied-bank-loans-fishing-boat-owners-seek-financial-aid/article35292887.ece>

"Bogged down by loans, boat owners of Kasimedu have appealed to the State government to provide them financial support. With banks not coming to their rescue, many boat owners say they have been forced to borrow up to Rs. 10 lakh to go on fishing. "Last year, the State government attempted to get us loans through Kissan credit cards. However, the banks refused and the scheme did not take off in the fisheries sector. Exporters, who buy fish from Kasimedu, pay much less than what is due to the boat owners citing various reasons, including their own loans," said community leader M.E. Raghupathi. As a result of the combination of low fish prices and high cost of diesel, only 40% of the boats go on voyages. "Since the voyages have become longer, we need to spend more on diesel, ice, provisions for men and payments. Earlier, we used to have week-long voyages, but now they are for 20-25 days. The boats venture into deeper sea meaning they have to be bigger to withstand the voyages. They cost around Rs. 1 crore, which is no small amount and there is no financial assistance from the formal sector," said Varadhan, another community leader. K. Bharathi of the South Indian Fishermen Association said the need of the hour was setting up a bank exclusively for fishermen. Sources in the department said a meeting of boat owners and exporters would be convened shortly.

### **Tamil Nadu: Declare Kattupalli coast 'high erosion zone' to protect our livelihoods, demands fishermen**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/jul/09/declare-kattupalli-coast-high-erosion-zone-to-protect-our-livelihoods-demand-tn-fishermen-2327834.html>

"With sea erosion threatening to displace them, Pulicat fishermen have demanded that the Tamil Nadu government declare the Kattupalli coast a 'high erosion zone', which would prevent mega projects like the proposed Adani port from using the fragile coastline. Erosion triggered by ports constructed in the southern portion of Kattupalli island is already eating into Korakuppam and Sattankuppam villages. Sattankuppam has decided to evacuate the entire village. As part of their respective environmental clearances, the ports were required to undertake "beach nourishment" by dredging sand accumulated to the south of their breakwaters and depositing it on the northern side. While beach nourishment cannot reverse or arrest erosion, it can reduce the rate of erosion. "But due to lack of enforcement by the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB), not one of the three ports have complied with that condition. As a result, erosion has increased and is affecting all fishing villages on the Kattupalli coast," said R Dhavamani, president of Pulicat Lighthouse Kuppam panchayat, which comprises 15 coastal fishermen villages. Because Kattupalli is a narrow sandy barrier island separating the Bay of Bengal from the Pulicat wetlands and lagoon, erosion can breach the thin strip of sand. This will result in the merging of the Pulicat lagoon and the Bay and destroy the Wildlife Sanctuary.

Dhavamani and other fishermen leaders submitted a formal representation to state fisheries minister Anitha Radhakrishnan during his visit to Pulicat on Thursday to inspect sea erosion. Radhakrishnan hogged the limelight infamously as he was carried by a fisherman after he refused to wet his shoes in ankle deep water. Meanwhile, separate representations were also sent to Environment Minister Siva V Meyyanathan and environment secretary Supriya Sahu. Environmental activist Nityanand Jayaraman told The New Indian Express that there are several scientific studies establishing that Kattupalli coast is eroding and the problem is worsening year on year. The state government should declare the Kattupalli coast a high-eroding zone and insist on existing ports to comply with the stipulations in their environmental clearances to nourish the beach on the northern side. "Ports and harbours are not permitted in high-erosion zones. Notification of this coast as a high-eroding zone on the basis of scientific studies already available will also rightly restrict Adani's plans which will be disastrous for the region," he said. A 2003 study conducted by Anna University's Institute for Ocean Management reported a maximum erosion of 40.60 m north of Kattupalli kuppam and a minimum of 11.13 m north of Kalanji village between 1999 and 2001. That is an erosion rate of between 5.6 and 20.3 m/year. A 2006 study by the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences established that along the north coast of Ennore port, the beachfill area is undergoing severe erosion at the rate of 50m per annum.

The study noted, "Now with the construction of Ennore port, 16 km North of Chennai port, another erosion problem has emerged and similar issues like Chennai port are on the way. If no intervention is planned, threat to ecologically sensitive Pulicat Lake is inevitable." In April this

year, The New Indian Express reported how multiple ports in Chennai have triggered erosion problems in Sriharikota island, which is India's spaceport and a critical facility. M Srinivasulu Reddy, Controller in Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC-Shar), had confirmed to The New Indian Express that Sriharikota barrier island was experiencing a little erosion especially on the northern strip and requested scientists from the Chennai-based National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) to undertake studies and recommend solutions. A top official of NCCR told The New Indian Express that initial assessment shows the coastal areas are subjected to erosion due to both natural and anthropogenic activities. ""The only way to manage the coast is to balance the sediment budget with proper analysis of natural and man-made activities,"" the official said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish arrival picks up at Kasimedu, but prices still high**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/chennai-fish-arrival-picks-up-at-kasimedu-but-prices-still-high/articleshow/84333392.cms>

"The arrival of fish species at the Kasimedu harbour is picking up. Sources in the fisheries department said nearly 80 boats returned to the shore on Sunday after a few days at sea, bringing in more than 60 tonnes of fish. In contrast, more than 50 tonnes of fish belonging to more than half a dozen species, besides squid, prawn and crabs had landed at the harbour last weekend, just after the 60-day east coast fishing ban ended. Balaraman, a vendor at Kasimedu, said Sankara, Navarai, Vanjiram, Seela, Paarai and Koduva were among the varieties in the catch on offer on Sunday. A small quantity of crabs, squids and prawns also arrived, he said. South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association President K Bharathi said large numbers of buyers had begun thronging the place since Saturday night and more came on Sunday morning. However, despite the slight increase in the arrival of fish, the prices at both wholesale and retail markets in the city remained high, he said. At the Chintadripet wholesale market, one of the largest in the city, Sankara sold for ₹400 a kg, while Navarai cost ₹800, Vanjiram ₹900 a kg, Seela ₹550, Paarai ₹500 a kg and Koduva came for ₹450 a kg. A kg of squid cost ₹350. A vendor at the market said all the half-a-dozen fish species that had come to the Kasimedu harbour were on sale. Among them, seer fish (Vanjiram) was in great demand and was priced the highest as most hotels have it on their regular menu. Black pomfret (Karuppu Vaaval), next in popularity, is also in great demand among the fish eating population of Chennai. Seer and black pomfret retailed at ₹1,100 a kg and ₹650 a kg, he added. For more than two months, as the annual fishing ban was in force along the entire east coast to help the various fish species to spawn, the catch arriving in the city was very little and the prices scandalously high.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen warned against using purse seine nets**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/fishermen-warned-against-using-purse-seine-nets/article35182449.ece>

"The Villupuram district administration has warned fishermen of the district against using purse seine nets, which are banned by the State government. The administration said there would be serious legal consequences, besides seizure of boats and catch and withdrawal of welfare schemes. In a press release, Collector D. Mohan said the State government, as per the Fishing Regulation Act, 1983, had banned purse seine nets as it seriously harmed marine life. Officials of the Fisheries Department said several States had imposed a ban on purse seine fishing because it was a highly damaging and ecologically unsustainable method. Fishermen in the district should change their methods and make use of alternatives supported by the government, Mr. Mohan said. If they violate the ban, the boats used for fishing and the catch would be confiscated. Legal proceedings would be initiated against the violators, he said, and added that the welfare schemes being given to fishermen would be withdrawn.

**Tamil Nadu: Fishermen struggle to stay afloat as fuel subsidy gets swallowed in no time**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/jul/04/fishermen-struggle-to-stay-afloat-as-fuel-subsidy-gets-swallowed-in-no-time-2325229.html>

"Fishing is another sector affected by the price hike. Fuel expenditure is proportionate to the size of the boat. There are two types of vessels engaged in fishing at Nagapattinam: Mechanised and motorised (FRPV). Mechanised boats are further classified as mini trawlers (for one-day fishing trips), trawlers (three-day fishing trips) and gillnetters (a week-long fishing trips). The diesel subsidy quota for mechanised boat owners is 1,800 litres a month. These days, mechanised boats exhaust that quota within just 10 days of fishing. The daily expenditure for a mechanised fishing boat comes up to about Rs 1,00,000. It includes Rs 70,000 a day for fuel, with the rest going into items such as ice, food, and other ration supplies. Depending on the number of days the vessel will be at sea, the expenditure for fuel alone could go up to Rs 4,50,000. The profits are shared among the boat owner and the fishermen. "The boat owners spend much of their profit to pay the fishermen. They face losses if the catch is insufficient. A boat owner is responsible for ensuring the livelihood of the fishermen and other workers so that they turn up for work the next day," said S Mohandas, a fishermen's representative from Akkaraipettai. Motorised boats (Fiberglass Reinforced Plastic Vallam) An FRPV fishing trip lasts about a day. There are 25-30 such fishing trips a month. The diesel subsidy for fibreglass boat owners is 300 litres a month. They exhaust that in just eight to 10 fishing trips. The boat owners are thus forced to manage the remaining fishing trips without subsidy. An FRPV owner spends about Rs 7,000 per fishing trip. This includes Rs 4,000 for fuel. The boat owner shares about 70 per cent of the profits with his men. If the fishermen do not fetch their owner a catch worth over Rs 7,000, the boat owner faces a loss and has to spend his savings

to pay his men. “FRPV fishermen are always under pressure to strike a balance between their safety and the fish-to-fuel efficiency. When the availability of fish is low, the fishermen tend to steer onto disputed territories such as the waters around the IMBL,” said M Durgeswaran, a fishermen’s representative from Kodiyakarai.

### **Tamil Nadu: Sri Lankan Navy personnel chase away TN fishermen, ‘damage’ expensive fishing nets**

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/sri-lankan-navy-personnel-chase-away-tn-fishermen-damage-expensive-fishing-nets-278139>

"Sri Lankan Navy personnel damaged about 30 fishing nets, each costing about one lakh rupees and chased them away at gunpoint while they were fishing in Palk Strait, fishermen alleged here on Sunday. When fishermen, who had set out for fishing in as many as 597 boats, Lankan Navy personnel chased them away at gunpoint on Saturday night and “cut the nets up each costing about one lakh rupees,” fishermen association chief Sesu Raja said here. Attacks on Indian fishermen by Lankan Navy personnel have been on the rise and they were facing severe hardship, he said. “Even if we try to sell the boats so that we could quit this profession and venture into some other business, there are no takers for the boats.” The Central and state governments should guarantee the safety and security of fishermen, their boats, nets and gear, he said. PTI

### **Tamil Nadu: Government should fix prices of fish, just like crops: Fishermen**

<https://www.thehansindia.com/news/national/tamilnadu-government-should-fix-prices-of-fish-just-like-crops-fishermen-693694>

"Fishermen's association leader Jesu Raja, heading the association of Rameswaram, Mandapam and Thangachimadam, has said that the state government must fix the prices for fish just like fixing the price for paddy and other produce. He said that export firms were procuring fishes like pomfret, seer and prawns at a paltry rate from the fishermen ranging from Rs 300 to Rs 600 a kilo and selling them in foreign markets at 3 to 4 times the price they buy He said that even as the exporters are making huge profits the fishermen who are braving rough weather in the sea and hard conditions get a paltry sum. While admitting that the export market has provided the fishermen with regular buyers, the benefits are very less. Saju John, who is the president of the All Tamil Nadu Fishermen Welfare Association, told IANS: ""Fishermen are always in difficulty. We venture into the sea, catch fish braving rough weather, rough seas and we end up being paid much less.

The government can take the initiative and fix the prices for fish just like prices are fixed for paddy and other crops. Of course, if there is a huge catch, the prices will come down but even then the government can fix a price range and not allow exploitation in this field, otherwise, the

labour will go waste." The association of Tamil Nadu Marine Products Exporters however said that they are making average payment to the fishermen and most important there are regular buyers. Sivashankaran .M of the exporters association told IANS, "At present, there is a proper balance between the fishermen community and the exporters. We are regular customers and we are paying for the fish according to our means. For a catch to be exported it requires a lot of other paraphernalia and hence we need to balance that also. I can vouch that the exporters and fishermen are having a symbiotic relationship." He added, "If there is any issue, we can discuss and iron out these differences." The fishermen of Tamil Nadu ventured into the sea only on Tuesday night even after the 61 day annual ban ended on June 14 as they had taken time to repair the boats, fishnets etc. Things got delayed as most of the fishermen had not taken even the first jab of the Covid-19 vaccine. Jesu Raja said, "We ventured into the sea only on Tuesday night as the annual maintenance of fishing nets, mechanical work on the boats, and other necessary maintenance work was not done as Covid-19 has created major problems for the fishermen community. Several of the fishermen were yet to take even the first dose of the Covid vaccine."

### **Tamil Nadu: After annual ban ends, fishermen return to shores, but claim poor catch**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/after-annual-ban-ends-fishermen-return-to-shores-but-claim-poor-catch/article35071196.ece>

"After the annual fishing ban ended, the fishermen from the coastal hamlets had ventured into the sea on Tuesday night and returned in the early hours on Thursday. Though the markets were flooded with the catch and crowds thronged to buy them, fishermen leader Jesu Raja said that the catch was not very encouraging. The 61-day annual ban ended on June 14, but the fishermen from Rameswaram, Mandapam and Thangachimadam had not set off into the sea the following day (June 15). For almost a fortnight, the fishermen took time to repair the boats, fishnets and also had to take the Covid-19 vaccine. Above all, the lockdown restrictions, though there were certain relaxations, had made them venture into the Palk Bay for fishing only on June 29 night, he said. On the reasons for the poor catch, Mr. Jesu Raja said that the annual ban period, which was meant for production, was misused by some country boat fishermen, who ventured into the sea. The Fisheries Department officials should have been more vigilant, he said. On the mechanised boat fishermen venturing into the sea without obtaining tokens from the Fisheries Department, Mr. Jesu Raja said that it was unfortunate.

“Our association from five districts including Pudukottai, Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam had passed resolutions urging the fishermen to follow the regulations but they had ventured into the sea on

June 29 night itself,” he said. However, a mechanised boat owner Anthony Jesu from Thangachimadam said that only on the first day after the annual ban ended, fishermen set off in a bid to get the best catch from the seas. The CITU fishermen wing district secretary M. Karunamoorthy said that the Fisheries Department officials should take stern action against those fishermen and seize their mechanised boats, who had not obtained tokens. Venturing into the sea without taking tokens was a high risk, especially, when the Sri Lankan Navy was rude with the fishermen. The State government should determine the price for the fish on the lines of fixation for paddy and other produce, Mr. Jesu Raja said and added that export varieties were being procured by the export firms for a paltry ₹350 per kg, while it was being sold at ₹800 and above by them, he charged. The government should also enhance subsidies for diesel as the price per litre was ₹100. Moreover, the cost of fishnet, repairs and ice had gone up due to several factors, while the export firms procured prawns for a paltry price. The fishermen too had to part with it immediately as they do not have any storage facilities, he pointed out.

**Tamil Nadu: Over 2,500 mechanised boats venture into sea without tokens**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/over-2500-mechanised-boats-venture-into-sea-without-tokens/article35069618.ece>

"A majority of fishermen from five districts – Ramanathapuram, Pudukottai, Tiruvarur, Thanjavur and Nagapattinam (up to Kodiyakarai), ventured into the sea in over 2,500 mechanised boats on Tuesday (June 29) night in violation of resolutions passed by the Federation of Fishermen, which had proposed fishing only from Wednesday morning after obtaining tokens from the Fisheries Department. Up to 3,000 fishermen had ventured into the sea, in 750 mechanised boats from Rameswaram and 550 boats from Mandapam, in Ramanathapuram district, the federation members said. After the annual fishing ban ended on June 14, the fishermen had sought extension of the ban period till June 30 as they had to carry out repair works and other preparations. When the ban was in force, Sri Lankan authorities had dropped bus scrap in the sea, stating that it would help in fish production. However, the fishermen of Tamil Nadu had said it was done with the objective of damaging their boats and nets. Tokens not obtained While it was mandatory for the fishermen to get tokens to venture into the sea, they had not collected tokens this time. CITU Fishermen Workers' Welfare Union district secretary M. Karunamoorthy said the district administration should view the violation seriously as the fishermen risked their lives by not obtaining tokens. The practice of issuing tokens helped to keep a tab on each mechanised boat venturing into the sea with details of the owner and the number of persons on board.

The All Fishermen Welfare Federation, which included members from the five districts, had also passed resolutions stating that the Fisheries Department should take stern action by not allowing such boats to venture into the sea at least for a week, and the government should discontinue

diesel subsidy offered to such fishermen. When contacted, a Fisheries Department official said since the end of the ban period on June 14, the officials had been issuing tokens to boat owners. Assuring to look into the charges that a large number of boats had ventured into the sea from the five districts without obtaining tokens, the official said there were legal provisions to take action against them.

### **Tamil Nadu: Rameswaram fishermen's association wants token system regulated, seeks Collector's intervention**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/rameswaram-fishermens-association-wants-token-system-regulated-seeks-collectors-intervention/article35033330.ece>

"A fishermen association affiliated with the CITU wing in Rameswaram, has appealed to the District Collector to immediately intervene in the issuance of tokens to fishermen venturing into the sea as there were discrepancies in the system. Speaking to reporters here on Tuesday, CITU district president Justin and secretary Karunamoorthy said that mechanised boat owners obtained tokens in the morning and proceeded in their boats into the sea for a very long time. After remaining in the sea for the full day, they would return to shore the following day with the catch. However, over a period of time, the system had not been followed by all the mechanised boat owners, they claimed and added that as a result, some of the fishermen ventured into the sea the previous night itself without obtaining tokens. At a time when the fishing sector faced many issues, especially from the Sri Lankan Navy authorities, such indiscipline and lack of cooperation among some fishermen spoilt the livelihood of the majority of the community, Mr. Karunamoorthy said and added that the Fisheries Department should clearly instruct the timings to the fishermen and those going to sea without following the rules should be taken to task. For instance, the fishermen from the five coastal districts including Nagapattinam are supposed to set off into the sea only on June 30. However, many fishermen were already in their boats for fishing on Tuesday, which was unacceptable.

On many occasions, the officials were informed about it, but there was no tangible action, they charged. Problems in marketing Due to such violations and non-cooperation, only the fish exporting firms benefited, they said. After the annual ban period, when the fishermen ventured into the sea on their own, the catch was so huge that many export varieties were being bought at cheaper prices. Explaining these factors. Mr Karunamoorthy said that returning with the catch, these fishermen had no space for storage or even money to procure ice for preserving the produce. Hence, the export firms benefited by procuring them for paltry sums. Refusing to follow the system by some mechanised boat fishermen resulted in a blow to the country boat fishermen, who too were affected due to the nonchalant attitude of these boat owners, he charged and demanded the District Collector immediately intervene in the issue.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fix diesel subsidy as per boat length, engine capacity: Fishers**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/fix-diesel-subsidy-as-per-boat-length-engine-capacity-fishers/articleshow/83912953.cms>

"The non-completion of repair work on trawlers and deep-sea vessels at Kasimedu fishing harbour has been stated as the main reason for fewer boats putting out to sea, while a few fishermen say the diesel price hike is also forcing many bigger boats to remain ashore. During the past weekend, about 120 bigger boats had ventured into the sea and about 75 returned to the shore on Sunday, managing to bring home only half a dozen varieties of fish in their 80 tonnes to 100 tonnes catch, said the fisheries department sources. A Raghupathy, a boat owner in Kasimedu, said the government provided 1,800 litres of diesel per boat per month. During April and June, when the fishing ban is in force and people are allowed to fish only for 15 days during the 60 days, only 900 litres per boat is provided. This quantity of 1,800 litres of diesel is grossly inadequate as the fuel requirement for a big boat per trip is as much as 5,000 litres, he added. Rations and charges for fishermen travelling on the boat. Pointing to the situation in Karnataka, where the government provides the fuel subsidy based on the length of the boat and engine horsepower, with bigger boats getting up to 5,000 litres per month, Raghupathy said a similar system should be adopted in Tamil Nadu. Fishermen association president K Bharathi said while collecting tax for creating infrastructure like roads and bridges on land is understandable, it makes no sense to demand such amounts in this sector as no such infrastructure has been created in marine waters. Taking this into account, the fishermen should be given diesel without detecting any tax or other levies, he said. Secondly, collection of a green tax should also be stopped. There is no justification for this tax, as it is not spent on any marine ecological friendly green project, he opined. Fish varieties such as Navarai, Podi Sankara, Chinna and Periya Vanjiram, Oosi Kadama and Nethili are among the catch that landed at the fishing harbour this weekend. All of these are part of the same species and have not fetched huge prices, said P Balaraman, a fish vendor at the Kasimedu harbour.

**Tamil Nadu: Foul-smelling foam wash ashore near Rameswaram, fishers suspect chemicals from MV X-Press Pearl**

<https://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-foul-smelling-foam-wash-ashore-near-rameswaram-fishers-suspect-chemicals-from-mv-x-press-pearl-2897846>

"Fishermen in the Rameswaram region of Tamil Nadu's Ramanathapuram district have reported foul-smelling foam and what appears to be polluted water along the coast. Foam and thick-looking polluted mixtures on the surface of water are seen in images and videos. Fishermen in the region suspect that it could be something to do with the X-Press Pearl shipping disaster

that happened off the Sri Lanka Coast. According to Cinnathambi, Coordinator of the traditional fishermen federation, the unusual foam and suspected pollutants are being washed along the shore over the last two days, in the Pamban-Gulf of Mannar region. He adds that such foam is spread almost 50-100 meters in the seawater and it spans a length of several kilometers along the coast. When asked if this was the usual foaming that occurs during the rough seas and monsoon, he told Zee Media that there were also what appeared to be bits of plastic washing ashore. He added that the fishing community was in a state of fear over these suspected pollutants, which did not appear to be weather-related foaming/churning.

The preliminary suspicion among the fisher community points towards the MV X-Press Pearl, which sunk off the Sri Lankan Coast (between Colombo and Negombo), despite successful firefighting efforts by the Indian Coast Guard and Sri Lankan authorities. Fears remain over the contents of its containers and the environmental impact that it could pose for the region. There were several reports of tons of plastic pellets having washed onto Sri Lankan shores, besides the long-term impact of the chemicals being carried hundreds of kilometers away owing to the wind, ocean currents etc. When it caught fire, the container ship was carrying 1486 containers containing chemical cargo, classified under International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG). The ship caught fire around the last week of May and sunk in the first week of June. Among other chemicals, the IMDG cargo consisted of highly inflammable Nitric Acid, Methanol, Methyl Acetate, Sodium Hydroxide and Polystyrene beads. It must be noted that the distance between Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu and the location of sunken ship (off Sri Lanka) is barely 240 kms. It is understood that researchers from the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Mandapam collected samples from the adjoining region that showed this suspicious foam. Zee Media's attempts to reach the institute were not met with a response yet. The story will be updated once an official from CMFRI responds.

### **Tamil Nadu: Sri Lankan Navy opens fire, nine TN fishermen escape unhurt**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/06/25175127/1303048/Sri-Lankan-Navy-opens-fire-nine-TN-fishermen-escape-.vpf>

"At least four boats in which they were on were riddled by bullets fired by the Lankan Navy and one bullet each was recovered from two boats, Arokiyam, fishermen's representative and also a fisher, told reporters here. "Luckily, nine of us escaped unhurt," he said. A fisheries department official said he has received a complaint from fishermen, seeking action to protect them. They had to face the "Lankan bullets" on their return early on Friday and the island Navy

also fired in the air, the representative alleged, adding they had set out for fishing on Thursday in more than 200 boats with 1,500 fishermen. This is the third instance of "Lankan Navy opening fire" on fishermen in recent times and they were fishing on the Indian side of Palk Straits, he said. The two bullets that were found in boats were handed over to fisheries authorities, he added. Video clips of boats riddled by bullets surfaced in the social media as well. Rajya Sabha MP Anbumani Ramadoss tweeted saying though nine fishermen thankfully escaped unhurt, their boats were damaged. The Central government should condemn this and should provide compensation for damaged boats. Condemning the firing, Ramadoss said the Centre should not tolerate such attacks anymore. "To find a permanent solution, the Centre should take legal steps to retrieve Katchatheevu (an islet) that was given to Sri Lanka on a platter," he said. Ramanathapuram MP, K Navas Kani, meanwhile, has written to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, seeking appropriate steps to prevent fishermen from being targeted.

### **Tamil Nadu: 'Govt. can prefer traditional fishermen for inland leases'**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/govt-can-prefer-traditional-fishermen-for-inland-leases/article34941980.ece>

"Several organisations working for the welfare of fishermen have urged the State government to ensure that traditional fishermen are given priority when it comes to giving leases for fishing rights in inland waterbodies. "In many places, officials are conniving with those who are using fishing as a stop gap means to make money. They just ask these men to register as fishermen cooperative societies by roping in one man who knows fishing," said K. Bharathi of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association. He also added that they were not against people of other communities, including Nadars and Vanniyars, who have been fishing traditionally in certain pockets. Ko. Su. Mani, of the Meenavar Makkal Sangam, said now that the department had been renamed to include the welfare of fishermen too, the government should ensure that traditional fishermen get the benefits due to them. "During summer, since waterbodies dry up, they do not have any work and thereby no income. They must be provided a dry-season dole and also a flood-time dole. Their societies should also provide opportunities for life savings like those of sea-faring fishermen," he demanded. They must be provided a dry-season dole and also a flood-time dole Ko. Su. Mani Meenavar Makkal Sangam

### **Tamil Nadu: Crowds throng Kasimedu, Chintadripet fish markets**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/chennai-crowds-throng-kasimedu-chintadripet-fish-markets/articleshow/83705967.cms>

"The Kasimedu fishing harbour and the Chintadripet market were packed on Sunday, the first after the 60-day fishing ban ended, but fewer boats arriving from sea brought a relatively low quantity of catch and the prices were high. Almost completely starved of their favourite

varieties all these days, the crowds thronged markets, throwing caution to the wind. Few maintained the prescribed distance from each other and quite a few were without masks or didn't wear them properly. South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association President K Bharathi said only about 40 tonnes of fish including the popular varieties of Vanjiram and Kanang Keluthi arrived at the harbour along with a large quantity of squid and crabs. Officials in the fisheries department said that normally, around 100 tonnes arrived and on weekends it was more. Another reason for the poor catch, an official said, was that the strong current had led to nets of fishermen, mainly from Nochikkuppam, getting stuck.

During the past week, about 40 deep-sea fishing boats had put out to sea. On Sunday, the number increased slightly to around 80 boats. In the coming week, the number is expected to go up further, added the official. At the Chintadripet market, where only wholesale trade is currently allowed, the quantity available was very little but included the popular Vanjiram and Sankara varieties and crabs, said a trader. And, the wholesale prices of all fish varieties and crabs soared in the market, said a fisheries department official added. "This is the situation at Kasimedu as well as Chintadripet market," he added. And there were few officials to regulate the compliance of Covid-appropriate norms including social distancing and wearing of masks among both buyers and traders to avoid the spread of Covid-19. As a result, the threat of the virus spreading at both the places remained, added the official.

### **Tamil Nadu: Skyrocketing diesel price makes seafood dearer in Chennai**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2021/jun/21/skyrocketing-diesel-price-makes-seafood-dearer-in-chennai-2319165.html>

"As the soaring diesel prices have emptied the pockets of fisherfolk, seafood has become dearer in the city. There has been at least 20 per cent surge in the prices of fish over the last few weeks. Girubakaran Parthiban, a trawler owner from Kasimedu, said that he barely earns any income after the diesel price hike. "One of our boats got to shore yesterday and we sold fish worth around Rs 1,30,000. But, for this we had to fill over 850 litres of diesel in the boat, costing around Rs 85,000. Payment for workers, transportation to the market and ice together came upto Rs 40,000. So, after all this work, we earned a paltry Rs 5,000," he explained. Nearly 1,500 boats, including trawlers, gillnet boats, fibre boats and country boats, operate from Kasimedu fishing harbour. While trawlers and gillnet boats go to the sea for almost 30 days, fibre boats venture on 10-day trips mostly. As a result of the fuel price hike, seafood prices have shot up in the city. Pomfret, which usually costs Rs 350-450 per kg was priced at Rs 500-600 in the retail markets on Sunday. Similarly, anchovies now cost about Rs 300 (previously Rs 250), and seer fish Rs 1,100 (previously Rs 800-1,000). Fisherfolk say the prices will shoot up further once inter-State transport is allowed. "Since we do not have cold storage facilities, fish from Chennai are mostly transported to Bengaluru and Kerala, from where they will be exported.

Once the transport resumes, most fish will be sold to these States, and the prices in TN will further increase due to shortage. Already, the number of boats going to sea has reduced,” said K Selvaraj, one of the fishermen at Kasimedu. Meanwhile, Covid norms, including social distancing and wearing of masks, went for a toss at the fish markets during the weekend.

**Tamil Nadu: Fishers oppose Sri Lankan vehicle dumping in water; experts call move ‘disastrous’**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/jun/16/tamil-nadu-fishers-oppose-sri-lankan-vehicle-dumping-in-water-experts-call-movedisastrous-2317199.html>

"The fishers in Tamil Nadu have objected to Sri Lanka’s initiative to submerge discarded vehicles into Lankan waters, saying their fishing would also be affected. The experts from India also called the move 'irresponsible'. On June 11, the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, in collaboration with the Sri Lankan Navy, submerged 20 degraded and discarded buses near Delft Island ('Neduntheevu') in its northern waters ('Palk Strait'). The move was termed by Sri Lanka as one 'to help create artificial reef conducive to the marine environment'. Tamil Nadu fishers condemned it, saying it will affect their livelihood. The submersion on June 11 was not the first. Sri Lanka has been dropping discarded vehicles for a while. The points of drop are in Sri Lankan waters. Yet, still, Tamil Nadu fishers are concerned. "What is the guarantee that the vehicles will not get drifted underwater, will move towards the Indian waters across International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) and deposited at the bottom of our waters? We saw the Tsunami washing up such objects for several miles and depositing them near our shore in December 2004. Our fishing will get affected. We request the state government to stop this outrageous move and save our waters, our shore and our fishing," said RMP Rajendra Nattar, a fisher-representative from Nagapattinam. Trawling continues to be the primary fishing practice for Tamil Nadu fishers, whereas it is banned in Sri Lanka. Tamil Nadu fishers trawl in Coramandel Waters, Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar, which Sri Lanka also shares. The trawl nets can reach midwater and even the bottom of the sea. Tamil Nadu fishers fear that their trawl nets will get stuck in the submerged vehicles and damaged. They also call the move against India–Sri Lanka maritime boundary agreements (1974 - 1976). The experts approve the reasoning behind the concern of Tamil Nadu fishers. Dr K Murali, the Head of Ocean Engineering Department in IIT - Madras, said, "The drifting of unsupported objects under the water, due to ocean currents is a real phenomenon.

The drifting of debris of the aeroplane MH 370, which crashed in 2014, is an example of drifting induced by ocean currents. The debris drifted for hundreds of kilometres. Natural disasters like tsunamis and cyclones can drastically augment drifting." Tamil Nadu and Puducherry government collaborate with institutes like Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) and M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) like has been dropping structures in the

sea for past two decades. The dropped blocks had become ‘artificial reefs’ over months and promote marine life, the idea which Sri Lanka is trying to explore through discarded vehicles. Dr H Mohamad Kasim, a retired principal scientist from CMFRI, said, ""We spent a lot of research before deploying reef blocks. We analysed the seabed conditions. Each structure we dropped were only about three feet in height, weighed almost a ton and made of hard concrete. We dropped around 200 permeable and hollow blocks closely in deeper points. Thus, we deployed those reefs that and made them resistant against drifting or displacement. But, the vehicles are not similarly designed for this purpose.

They can be overturned and washed away easily through strong ocean currents due to their structural disadvantages."" The experts also call the dumping of vehicles disastrous for the environment and are against the 'international laws on anti-dumping. Dr S Velvizhi, the Head of MSSRF- Fish for All Research Centre in Poompuhar, added, ""Reefs formed out of concrete blocks are harmless to the ecosystem and is favourable to marine life. But, the bodies of vehicles Sri Lanka is dumping are made of corrosive metal materials. Metal rust is toxic to marine life. 'Fish schools' move indiscriminately in the sea across boundaries, so the point of metal dumping is irrelevant. Our seafood through fishing could thus become poisonous. Sea is not a ground for irresponsible dumping, above all."" The Directorate of Fisheries in Tamil Nadu told The New Indian Express that they have responded to the Sri Lankan initiative. Director M Karunakaran IAS said, “We have received information in the regard through various media sources. We have urged the Tamil Nadu state government to bring it to the notice of the Union Government to stop the Sri Lankan initiative.

### **Tamil Nadu: Mechanised boats to resume fishing**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/mechanised-boats-to-resume-fishing-today/article34817530.ece>

"As the 61-day annual fishing ban ends on Monday midnight (June 14), mechanised boats in the district are expected to venture into the sea for fishing in the early hours of Tuesday. The annual ban began on April 15 to facilitate augmentation of marine wealth and all mechanised boats on the east coast were berthed in their bases. The much-awaited resumption of fishing will begin on Tuesday. Of the 420 mechanised fishing boats in the district, 130 vessels based at Tharuvaikulam near here are involved in multiday deep sea stay fishing, while all others operating from Thoothukudi fishing harbour and Vembar go for ‘daily fishing’ between 5 a.m. and 9 p.m. However, officials have planned to allow ‘daily fishing’ being done by mechanised boats in turns to avoid crowding in the harbour, a base for 240 boats, in the wake of COVID-19 norms in force. In a meeting held at Thoothukudi Fishing Harbour on Monday in the presence of Deputy Superintendent of Police Ganesh and Assistant Directors of Fisheries Vijayaraghavan and Anto Princy Vyla, mechanised boat owners and workers have decided that 120 boats will be

allowed on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, while the remaining 120 mechanised crafts will go for fishing on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

“This arrangement has been done to avoid heavy crowding in the fishing harbour, where physical distancing will be ensured while auctioning of fish. Boat owners, workers, auctioning agents and ice suppliers entering the fishing harbour should wear mask, clean their hands with sanitiser and follow all COVID-19 protocols. Body temperature of everyone entering the harbour will be screened,” said a Department of Fisheries official. “Only wholesale traders will be allowed to buy fish. Small traders and the public will not be allowed to enter the fishing harbour,” he said. The meeting has also decided that all of them should get vaccinated at the earliest. When the first day of vaccination started at the harbour on Monday, 50 persons were innoculated. To ensure scrupulous following of COVID-19 protocol and safety of the fishing harbor, watch towers have been erected on the premises. Only wholesale traders will be allowed to buy fish and small traders and public will not be allowed to enter fishing harbour.

### **Tamil Nadu: Eminent personalities express concern over ‘Project Blue’**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/eminent-personalities-express-concern-over-project-blue/article34833549.ece>

"Environmental groups, climate activists, educationists, fishers and a number of citizens have written to Chief Minister M.K. Stalin expressing concern over the ‘Project Blue’ component of Singara Chennai 2.0 proposed by the Greater Chennai Corporation. In their letter, 65 eminent personalities said the project should recognise and protect livelihood rights of fishers. They also pointed out that the similar urban beautification and renewal projects by previous governments were themselves a cause for worry. “Chennai’s beaches are not just objects of beauty and recreation; they are first and foremost livelihood and living spaces for the city’s fisherfolk. Even recreationally, the attraction of our beaches is the availability of open, unbuilt nature, not landscaped spaces and built infrastructure,” they said. While the beaches need to be kept clean, inclusive and safe, and the government’s plans to improve access to the beach, especially to provide infrastructure to differently abled persons were welcome, any improvement to the beach front should be done considering the livelihood needs of fisherfolk and fish vendors and the security of coastal communities, they said. In recent years, efforts were made to evict fish vendors from the Marina Loop Road.

“At a time when the economy is in the dumps, it is foolhardy to rob the livelihoods of self-employed women fishworkers who contribute to the economy with no assistance from the government. If the government wishes to improve working conditions for the women, it has to be done as per their suggestions and not with the objective of transforming prime vending spaces into exclusive recreational zones,” they said. Such creation of exclusive recreational zones would be blatantly discriminatory. They also drew attention to the plan in 2009 to construct an elevated

expressway from Nochikuppam to Kottivakkam, and the 'Integrated Development in Foreshore Estate' plan to evict fisherfolk from Srinivasapuram and Pattinapakkam to accommodate malls, luxury hotels and high-end residential complexes for private parties. These were shelved after public protests. "Project Blue should address the food, shelter, safety and basic needs of coastal residents. This would put us on the real path to becoming a world class city," they said. The letter was signed by retired High Court judge Justice Hariparanthaman, S. Janakarajan, president, South Asian Consortium for Interdisciplinary Water Resources Studies, Ajit Menon, professor, MIDS, artist T.M. Krishna, members of Save Chennai Beaches, Dakshin Foundation, among others.

### **Tamil Nadu: Indian fishers riled by SL moves to create new fish breeding grounds**

<https://island.lk/indian-fishers-riled-by-sl-moves-to-create-new-fish-breeding-grounds/>

"Fishermen from Rameswaran will hold a protest today (16) against Sri Lanka's decision to submerge 20 old buses in the seas off Jaffna to create breeding grounds for fish. Members of 17 fisheries associations in Tamil Nadu and Rameswaran claim that this will affect their yield as more fish will be attracted to the breeding grounds created by submerged buses. The Ministry said that sinking those buses was nothing new and that such buses provided a hard surface for invertebrates to live on, some of which could not live on the sand bottom that is naturally there. "Some fish are not fast swimmers, so they need a structure to provide both food and shelter; they wouldn't, for example, be able to outswim a shark, but they could duck into the shelter instead," a Sri Lankan fisheries association representative said. However N. Devadas, the head of the Indian fishermen's association in Rameswaram, said that they would also hand over a petition against that decision to the Sri Lankan government. Sri Lanka has been submerging old SLTB buses in the deep sea for many years as a part of the Deep Sea Fish Development Project.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishing ban ends, but only 30% vessels likely to put out to sea**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/chennai-fishing-ban-ends-but-only-30-vessels-likely-to-put-out-to-sea/articleshow/83530428.cms>

"The fishing ban ended at midnight on Monday, but only a little more than 30% of deep-sea vessels in the city are expected to put out to sea from Tuesday as a majority of the boats are yet to be repaired, a senior fisheries department official said. Of the nearly 1,200 deepsea fishing vessels attached to the Kasimedu fishing harbour, about 350 are expected to venture into the sea from Tuesday. "It will take another fortnight for the majority of the vessels to become operational," he said. A Ragupathy, a boat owner in Kasimedu, said with no fishing activities for

almost six months in 2020 and a large part of this year, most fishermen didn't have money to take up repairs and the boats are expected to stay moored to the fishing harbour for some time more. The lockdown from April had forced many of the boathands and pilots, most of whom were from either Andhra Pradesh or Odisha, to go home and only after could the operation of deep sea trawlers begin, he said. Currently, the department has allowed only the wholesale fish trade at Kasimedu as part of the effort to avoid the spread of coronavirus. Now, with the lifting of the fishing ban, the government is expected to make an announcement regarding the retail sale at Kasimedu on which 70% of the city's fish-eating population depends for fish and other marine life, said the official. A trader at the Chintadripet fish market, one of the largest in the city, said the arrival of fish was expected to become normal from the coming weekend when the deep-sea fishing boats that have put out to sea are expected to return to the shore. Besides, no one can expect the arrival of a huge catch within just a day or two of the ban ending, he said. "It will take some time for things to stabilise."

**Annual ban period ends, but fishermen in Tamil Nadu, India, fret over lack of clarity on sale, export**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/City/2021/06/15043757/1301014/Annual-ban-period-ends-but-fishermen-fret-over-lack-vpf>

"Though there is no restriction on fishing after the ban period, fishermen are going to face multiple issues, including sale and export of fish, and high price of diesel. They don't know whether the fish they catch will be sold and will be exported during the pandemic time," K Bharathi, president, South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association, told DT Next. The 61-day annual fishing ban period started on April 14 and will end on Monday night. However, the situation before and after the ban period are not the same. Before the ban period, there were no restrictions. But now, due to the pandemic lockdown and restriction in sale, fishermen are confused whether to venture for fishing or not. Pointing out the restrictions on the sale of fish, Bharathi said the State government permitted only wholesale traders into fishing markets. When mechanised boat fishermen enter Kasimedu fishing harbour, there would be chaos due to the restrictions imposed as part of the lockdown, he added.

Apart from that, Kerala is an important market for the catch from Chennai. Now, however, the fishermen are not sure whether the fish would be allowed into Kerala. Last year, the catch from Tamil Nadu were thrown on the road by Kerala officials on many occasions citing restrictions. Similar doubts persist among fishermen from Nagapattinam coast to Rameswaram, as majority of the catch is exported, said V Kumaravel from Vangakadal Meenavar Sangam. In the absence of clarity from the union government whether export would be allowed, many from the region are not ready to venture to the sea, he said. "Though there is no ban on export of fish, there is no clear permission from countries that have to receive the fish from Tamil Nadu," Kumaravel

added. When asked about the lack of clarity about export of fish, a senior official from Fisheries Department, who took charge only recently, said that State government would fully cooperate with the fishermen, and assured that any issue brought to their notice would be sorted out.

### **Tamil Nadu: Kin of fishermen seek minister's help**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/kin-of-fishermen-seek-ministers-help/articleshow/83470297.cms>

"The kin of eight fishermen from Kanyakumari district who went missing in Cyclone Phyan in the Arabian Sea in November, 2009 and relatives of nine Indian fishermen convicted in Iran for entering their territorial waters petitioned fisheries minister Anitha R Radhakrishnan, in Tuticorin, on Saturday seeking government intervention to help them. Eight fishermen from Thoothoor village have been missing since Cyclone Phyan hit their boat on the November 11, 2009. They said the men could not be traced despite fighting a legal battle and making representations to the state and Union governments. They sought death certificates for the men as they are missing for more than seven years. The kin who are suffering economically also sought relief from the chief minister's public relief funds. I

n a separate representation, families of the nine fishermen from Kanyakumari detained in Iran said they were working in Kuwait and were detained by the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps Navy of Iran on charges of trespassing into their waters on January 17, 2020. They were also convicted by the Iranian judiciary for three years and lodged in the Bushehr Jail. The kin spent Rs 8.65 lakh for an advocate in Iran but the men could not be released. The families urged the state government to intervene and bring the men back to India without delay. They also sought financial support from the government as they are struggling without income.

### **Tamil Nadu: Losing Ground: The uncounted costs of coastal erosion**

<https://caravanmagazine.in/environment/coastal-erosion-costs-ports-sagarmala>

"WHEN DESINGU WAS BORN, in 1967, there was a wide beach opposite his village, facing the Bay of Bengal on the outskirts of Chennai. By the time he turned ten, the beach had shrunk so much that the waves crashed near his home. So Desingu's family and others in Nalla Thanneer Odai Kuppam—or NTO Kuppam, as the locals call it—dismantled their thatch-roofed huts, collected their belongings and moved a few more metres inland. A few years later, the sea had come even farther in. Desingu's family and their neighbours moved again, then again and again—four times in all. Some homes were abandoned to the sea. Sitting under the roof of a

roadside temple one summer morning in 2019, Desingu stared at the tiny beach where his village once stood. “As erosion happened, line by line we had to shift inwards,” he told me. “Our old houses probably have fish in them now.”

On the last of these moves, in 1990, NTO Kuppam was squeezed onto the small strip of beach that remained between the sea and a coastal highway connecting to the nearby Chennai Port. As families grew, many had to build new homes on the other side of the highway, against the walls of giant cylindrical tanks put up to store imports of edible oil. In 2011, the residents were warned of a port-led project to widen the highway. They were told to leave, and offered flats in apartment blocks to be built by the state government as an effort at rehabilitation. Desingu’s family and around a hundred others refused to go, saying they had no money to pay rent elsewhere and that fishing—their only livelihood—would be difficult if they did not live by the sea.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen want priority in COVID-19 vaccination, ask for extension on fishing ban**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishermen-want-priority-in-covid-19-vaccination-ask-for-extension-on-fishing-ban/article34760750.ece>

"Fishermen associations in Rameswaram have appealed to the Tamil Nadu government to immediately administer the COVID-19 vaccine to all fishermen. At a meeting on Tuesday, the TN Coastal Mechanised Boat Fishermen Welfare Association’s general secretary, N. J. Bose, moved a resolution stating that fishermen shall venture into the sea from July 1, though the annual fishing ban comes to an end on June 14. Briefing reporters, Jesu Raja, a fishermen association leader, said that a large number of fishermen had tested positive for COVID-19 during the second wave and some had died. Under such circumstances, it would be welcome, if the government administered the vaccine doses for the fishermen on priority.

The meeting, he said, discussed the 45-day annual fishing ban period, which comes to an end on June 14. While they can venture into the sea from June 15, the fishermen however, unanimously decided to postpone fishing activities by at least a fortnight, Mr Jesu Raja said and added that when the fishermen reached shores with the catch, there may be a crowd in the markets to buy fish.”We are apprehensive that the virus may again spread due to this. Hence, it would be better to postpone the date of lifting the ban from June 15 to July 1,” he added. The fishers appealed to the government to extend the fishing ban by another 15 days and announce July 1 as the new date to venture into the sea for all the fishermen in the larger public interest. The meeting also thanked Chief Minister M K Stalin for announcing ₹20 lakh each as compensation to the families of 21 fishermen who were missing since the Tauktae cyclone.

### **Tamil Nadu: Kasimedu fishermen upbeat about the new season**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/kasimedu-fishermen-upbeat-about-the-new-season/article34756086.ece>

"Fishermen with mechanised boats in Kasimedu fishing harbour have been gearing up to venture into the sea on June 15, when the annual 61-day fishing ban ends. "The ban has just begun on the west coast, meaning our fish will be in great demand. Each boat will return with catches between seven and ten tonnes and there is great expectation about the catch and the rates we would get," said M.E. Raghupathy, a fishing community leader. With restrictions on sale of fish likely to be eased in a few days, community leaders want the government to ensure issuance of e-passes for workers. "We are worried about the passes and want the government to allow reopening of shops selling spare parts, wood and nets for us to repair the boats as quickly as possible," he added. E. Varadhan, another community leader, said he was worried about the prevailing diesel prices, which had crossed Rs.90 a litre. "The government should waive taxes for fishing boats. Many of us don't have the wherewithal to leave on voyages. This would come as a great relief to us. Similarly, we want the government to take steps to get good rates for export-quality fish. At present, we are sending our fish to Kerala from where it is exported," he said. To leave on a 10-day voyage, a boat would require around Rs.5 lakh to fill diesel, Rs.80,000 worth provisions for the men, and ice and nets added to that. Meanwhile, a section of mechanised boat owners has sought an extension in the fishing ban stating that they are unable to carry out repairs to boats. Tajuddin of Mallipattinam said that the ban could be extended for another 15 days so that they can repair and stock their boats by then. However, a stipulation is that boats from Karaikal and Puducherry too should not venture into the sea, said a release here.

### **Tamil Nadu: Cyclone Tauktae: Solatium for kin of 21 missing fishermen**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/solatium-for-kin-of-21-missing-fishermen/article34712555.ece>

"Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Wednesday announced a solatium of Rs. 20 lakh to families of each of the 21 fishermen, reported missing in the Arabian Sea during Cyclone Tauktae. These fishermen from Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai and Kanniyakumari districts went missing in two incidents during Cyclone Tauktae last month and the search and rescue operations, involving the Coast Guard, could not locate them. Considering the poor financial conditions of the families of these fishermen, the Chief Minister has sanctioned Rs. 4.20 crore to be paid as solatium, an official release said. Following an alert issued by the India Meteorological Department on May 13 about Cyclone Tauktae, 246 fishing boats in the Arabian

Sea returned to safety. However, there were reports of two incidents wherein 21 fishermen went missing. A boat from Nagapattinam drowned near Lakshadweep and nine fishermen on board went missing. During a search and rescue operation that followed, Coast Guard ship ICGS Vikram and two helicopters were involved. Another fishing boat with 23 fishermen that undertook the search too could not locate the missing fishermen. In another incident, a boat from Kozhikode in Kerala left Beypore fishing harbour on May 5 and went missing during the cyclone. Of the 16 fishermen on board, 12 were from Kanniyakumari district. The Coast Guard undertook a search to locate the missing fishermen. Despite continuous efforts involving the Coast Guard's ship and aircraft, the missing fishermen could not be located. Mr. Stalin had written to Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh urging to locate the missing fishermen in both these incidents.

### **Tamil Nadu: 23 fishermen who survived Cyclone Tauktae reach Nagai**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/may/31/23-fishermen-who-survived-cyclone-tauktae-reach-nagai-2309711.html>

"The 23 fishermen from the district who survived Cyclone Tauktae's fury in the Arabian Sea on May 15, returned home on Sunday. They have requested relief for the families of their nine missing colleagues whose boat, however, allegedly capsized. The fishermen who returned had set sail in the two deep-sea fishing boats, 'Rakesh - 1' and 'Rakesh - 2'. They had a hard time making their return ever since the fateful day. "We spent three days in the Lakshadweep islands, left from there on May 18 and searched the point where nine of our colleagues in 'Murugan Thunai' called us for help for a couple of days. Then, we landed in Cochin on May 21. As our families had wanted to see us soon, we left Cochin for Rameswaram on May 23. We were stuck around Palk Bay from May 25 to May 28 due to heavy rains from Cyclone Yaas. We left Rameshwaram after the Bascule Bridge opened, and we finally got home, " said S Ravichandran, the owner of 'Rakesh - 2'.

At least nine fishermen who were onboard 'Murugan Thunai' are still missing. The deep-sea fishing boat allegedly capsized in the turbulent Arabian Sea from an approaching Cyclone Tauktae in the wee hours of May 15. 'Murugan Thunai' was in the company of 'Rakesh - 1' and 'Rakesh - 2' till May 15 until the cyclone separated them. 'Murugan Thunai' allegedly sustained catastrophic damages and drowned a few nautical miles before reaching Lakshadweep. Search operations to find the missing men are undergoing since then. The fishermen who landed in Nagapattinam alleged that they were made to wait in Palk Bay in rough weather by the Fisheries department until Pamban Bascule Bridge near Ramanathapuram was opened. It is the only route for vessels travelling towards south India and passing through Palk Strait. If the vessels cannot get through the Bascule, they have to turn back and circle Sri Lanka, which would translate to thousands of nautical miles. The Fisheries department said the Pamban Bascule Bridge could not

be opened at will. “The Centre controls the Bascule Bridge’s clearance, and multiple departments in the State and the Centre administer it. It opens only once a month. Thus, it took a couple of days to get special clearance for those two boats,” an official said. “We request the State government to provide adequate relief for the grieving families of the fishers on ‘Murugan Thunai’ boat,” said S Muthuvel, a crew member of ‘Rakesh - 1’, who reached Nagai.

### **Tamil Nadu: No hike in ban relief disappoints fishermen, Oppn**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/05/31020454/1297732/No-hike-in-ban-relief-disappoints-fishermen-Oppn.vpf>

“Former chief minister J Jayalithaa increased the compensation for fishing ban period from Rs 500 to Rs 5,000. Before elections, Stalin promised to increase the compensation from Rs 5,000 to Rs 8,000, but announced the same Rs 5,000 as fishing ban period compensation. DMK never delivers what it promises,” said former fisheries minister D Jayakumar. During the fishing ban period, fishermen are given Rs 5,000 per head for the entire ban period of nearly 61 days and there were continuous demands from the fishing community to increase the compensation. “COVID-19 along with the recent cyclones have further toughened the lives of fishermen. The state should provide at least Rs 15,000 for ban period and to bring back the damaged boats,” said P Justin Antony, founder president, International Fishermen Development Trust. Another concern for fishermen this year is the cyclones. “Due to the recent Cyclone Tauktae many of the Kanniyakumari fishermen are still struck in states such as Karnataka and Maharashtra and their boats have been damaged. The process of repairing boats is on and it will take another week to 10 days for their return which will coincide with the commencement of fishing ban period on western coast,” he said. He also said that if the ban period is postponed to June 15, fishermen will be able to return to their native places. When asked about the demands, a Fisheries Department official, on request of anonymity, said that the decision to postpone fishing ban period cannot be taken by state as it should be taken by the Centre and jointly by other states in western coast. Regarding increase in relief, the announcement should be made by the CM, he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Announces Rs 5,000 assistance to 1.72 lakh fishermen**

<http://www.uniindia.com/fishing-ban-tn-announces-rs-5-000-assistance-to-1-72-lakh-fishermen/south/news/2402858.html>

"TN announces Rs 5,000 assistance to 1.72 lakh fishermen Chennai, May 23 (UNI) Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Sunday announced an assistance of Rs 5,000 each to 1.72 lakh fishermen across the State to sustain their livelihood in view of the annual deep sea fishing ban in force. The 61-day fishing ban is in force in 13 East coast districts from April 14 and it would come into force in West Coast region from June one to July 31. An official release here said

1,46,598 fishermen in the East Coast comprising Tiruvallur, Chennai, Kancheepuram, Villuppuram, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur, Thanjavur, Pudukottai, Ramanathapuram, Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and part of Kanyakumari and 25,402 fishermen in Western Coast of Kanyakumari would be benefitted by this. The fishing ban assistance will be credited directly to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries, according to Fisheries Minister Anitha Radhakrishnan. As per the orders of Mr Stalin, the Government issued an order sanctioning Rs 86 crore to provide Rs 5,000 assistance to 1.72 lakh fishermen in the state. The ban period was enforced by the State government from Tiruvallur district in the North to Kanyakumari district in the South, under the provisions of Centre's Deep Sea Fishing Regulation Act, 2001.

It would remain in force till June 14 to facilitate breeding of fishes and conservation of fish stock in marine ecology in the East Coast region. During the ban period, fishermen would mend their nets and take up and overhauling works of their boats. Overhauling of engines, dry docking, carpentry works and painting of vessels would be carried out during the ban period for which the boat owners would spend around Rs two lakhs to Rs five lakhs every year.

#### **Tamil Nadu: CM urges defence minister to expedite search for 16 missing fishermen**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/tamil-nadu-cm-urges-defence-minister-to-expedite-search-for-16-missing-fishermen/articleshow/82882673.cms>

"Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin on Sunday wrote to defence Minister Rajnath Singh to expedite search for 16 Indian fishermen -- 12 from Kanyakumari district and four from West Bengal – who went missing during cyclone Tauktae while they were fishing in the Arabian Sea. On May 5, the 16 fishermen went fishing on a fishing vessel from the Beypore fishing harbour in Kerala. The 16 fishermen could not be contacted after cyclone Tauktae. The Indian Coast Guard launched a search for them. Stalin said the families of the missing fishermen and fisherfolk were deeply distressed and anxious as there was no news about them till date – even days after the extremely severe cyclone made its landfall and hit Gujarat on May 17. He requested the defence minister to take steps to rescue them immediately. On Saturday, the kin of the missing fishermen from Kanyakumari district made a representation to the defence and fisheries ministers and CMs of Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Kerala through the district collector to rescue the fishermen. The missing Kanyakumari fishermen are Arockia Rabi, Mahendra, Sahaya Antony, Antony and Alexander of Colachel, Anthoniadimai and Ratheese Benojan of Muttom, George Thilagan and Vijayan of Agastheeswaram, Michael Jackson of Kadiyapattanam, Sahaya Kabilan of Thuckalay and Rajan of Melpuram. The fishermen from West Bengal are Sudheer, Sushan Das, Sambu Das and Krishnan.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Kasivilangi fish market to be closed till May 31**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/kasivilangi-fish-market-to-be-closed-till-may-31/article34611082.ece>

"The Kasivilangi fish market has been closed until May 31 for retail and wholesale transactions. The decision was taken by the vendors to prevent the spread of the infection at the market, where crowding of customers is noticeable every weekend. Speaking to The Hindu , V. Rajendran, president, Kasivilangi Market Fish Vendors Welfare Association, said the decision to close the venue was taken after witnessing increasing crowds on Fridays and Saturdays before the Sunday lockdown. "We learn from the media that more than 1,500 people test positive in the district every day. Of them, many were the city limits. This has caused apprehension and we have chosen to close down the market," he said. "Though the closure will entail heavy losses, the decision was made to ensure that we our customers stay safe. The market can become a hotspot for spread of the infection as many rush to purchase fish,"" he pointed out. The customers would purchase fish at inflated prices in view of the 60-day fishing ban, and social distancing norms were ignored in the market. "We do request them to maintain COVID-19 safety protocol but things get difficult to handle and we were afraid of the consequences," Mr. Rajendran said. The market was opened in October lastafter residents of Puthur and nearby Thennur areas raised multiple complaints about the unhygienic conditions at Puthur fish market. The Puthur market, located amid residential buildings and hospitals, was an eysore for residents and patients, who claimed that it posed a potential health hazard. "We moved from there with much difficulty. We do not want to be blamed for creating a COVID-19 hotspot,"" said Mr. Rajendran.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fisheries minister meets kin of 9 missing fishermen**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/05/18181834/1295097/Fisheries-minister-meets-kin-of-9-missing-fishermen.vpf>

"Tamil Nadu Fisheries Minister Anitha R Radhakrishnan on Tuesday visited the families of nine fishermen who went missing while fishing off the Kochi coast due to Cyclone Tauktae. The fishermen, all belonging to Samnathanpettaiin Nagapattinam district, ventured into the sea from Kochi on April 29 and while returning in the early hours of May 14, were caught in the storm and went missing. The Coast Guard and Indian Navy are engaged in search operations, and all possible efforts are being made to trace them, the minister said. The minister also handed over Rs 50,000 to each family as financial assistance from the DMK party funds.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish prices in Chennai to go up further**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/fish-prices-in-chennai-to-go-up-further/articleshow/82750127.cms>

"Fish prices in Chennai are set to go up further as aqua-culturists in Andhra are unable to despatch their produce to the city. Since the fishing ban kicked in, city residents were dependent on the Rohu, Katla and Mrigal varieties — all raised on private farms in Nellore in Andhra Pradesh and brought to Chennai by road. Now, with Covid-19 cases in the city rising, lorry drivers from AP are refusing to operate vehicles to Chennai, resulting in prices of fish going up at the markets at Vaanagaram, Pattalam, Chintadripet and Kaavankarai near Red Hills. The city's requirements are mainly met by the catch coming to the harbour. But, since the beginning of the lockdown that has kept fishermen indoors, fresh water fish raised on farms in the neighbouring state have sustained the city. That too has dried up now. Shankar, a vendor at the Pattalam market, said arrivals from Andhra Pradesh had reduced since the lockdown was declared. A trader at Vaanagaram, the largest market where both wholesale and retail trade occur, said the average of 50 lorry-loads of fish arriving daily had dropped to just 10 since last week. Kannan Pasupathiraj, proprietor of Chennai-based Fresh Fish, said that when marine fish were available in the market, those sourced from farms in the neighbouring market used to retail at between Rs 100 a kg and Rs 150 a kg. Now they are being sold at Rs 250 a kg, he added.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Cyclone Tauktae: Efforts on to alert TN fishers**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/05/13153027/1293940/Cyclone-Tauktae-Efforts-on-to-alert-TN-fishers.vpf>

"The Tamil Nadu fisheries department state Commissioner J. Jayakanthan told IANS: ""Most of the fishermen are from the western coast of Kanyakumari since the annual fishing ban is in effect in eastern coast."" Fishing officials said that while only 84 vessels have gone into the sea from Thengapattanam coast, 150 fishing boats of Kanyakumari have ventured into the sea from Kerala coast. The department is trying to contact them over the satellite phones provided to them by the state government as they move in clusters on high sea. Local churches and the coordination centres opened by the government are also helping. The fisheries officials said that the fishermen have been advised to touch base at the nearest coast and the department has already coordinated with these coastal belts of various state governments to accommodate the fishermen who reach their shores. The Indian Meteorological Department(IMD) has forecast the depression is likely to intensify into a cyclone about 100 nautical miles (185km) from the North Kerala coast and move northward till Karachi in Pakistan. The southern states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu are witnessing heavy rains and thunder storms following a depression in the Arabian Sea.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Cyclone Tauktae: Efforts on to alert fishermen**

<https://www.indiatvnews.com/news/india/cyclone-tauktae-efforts-alert-tamil-nadu-fishermen-704389>

"Tamil Nadu fisheries department is trying to alert around 2,500 fishers out in the Arabian sea about a depression which may intensify into Cyclone Tauktae. The Tamil Nadu fisheries department state Commissioner J Jayakanthan told IANS: ""Most of the fishermen are from the western coast of Kanyakumari since the annual fishing ban is in effect in eastern coast."" Fishing officials said that while only 84 vessels have gone into the sea from Thengapattanam coast, 150 fishing boats of Kanyakumari have ventured into the sea from Kerala coast. The department is trying to contact them over the satellite phones provided to them by the state government as they move in clusters on high sea. Local churches and the coordination centres opened by the government are also helping. The fisheries officials said that the fishermen have been advised to touch base at the nearest coast and the department has already coordinated with these coastal belts of various state governments to accommodate the fishermen who reach their shores. The Indian Meteorological Department(IMD) has forecast the depression is likely to intensify into a cyclone about 100 nautical miles (185 km) from the North Kerala coast and move northward till Karachi in Pakistan. The southern states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu are witnessing heavy rains and thunderstorms following a depression in the Arabian Sea.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Steps taken to prevent crowds at Kasimedu Fishing Harbour**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/steps-taken-to-prevent-crowds-at-kasimedu-fishing-harbour/article34530736.ece>

"To ensure availability of fish in all local markets in and around the city, the Fisheries Department has asked fishermen from Chennai, Tiruvallur and Chengalpattu districts to land country craft in their respective landing centres and everyone need not come to Kasimedu. Adequate local supply "Since the Greater Chennai Corporation has allowed shops on platforms and vending from vehicles, local fish markets will have enough supply. This will keep crowds away from the Kasimedu Fishing Harbour," a source in the department said. On Monday five tonnes of fish landed at Kasimedu, where the department along with the police and the Corporation has created a new auction space for street vendors to buy fish. "Since the annual 61-day ban is currently on, only country craft venture into sea to fish. Retail sale happens separately. We have also ensured that the auctioneers and shops are spaced six-feet apart. This will help prevent crowding at Kasimedu," another source said. The harbour usually gets crowded in the mornings. After lockdown restrictions, the fish markets have been directed to remain closed on the weekends. Fishermen are also happy since prices of catch, including kola, maththi, seer and crab, have gone up due to fall in supply as mechanised boats have remained onshore.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen protest against encroaching shrimp farms**

<https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2021/05/01/labo-m01.html>

"Coastal fishermen in Tamil Nadu demonstrated at the offices of the Fisheries Department and the Coastal Aquaculture Authority in Chennai on April 21. They were demanding the government stop shrimp hatcheries being established close to the shore and near the high tide line. The protesting fishermen said vast tracts of common land meant for use by fishing villages were being usurped by the shrimp farming industry. The demonstration was organised by the Tamil Nadu Meenavar Iyakkangalin Orunginaippu Kuzhu, an umbrella association of fishermen organisations.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen, mariners pitch for AIS-fitted GPS navigator in boats**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fishermen-mariners-pitch-for-ais-fitted-gps-navigator-in-boats/article34442553.ece>

"With increasing incidents of mechanised boat-ship collision, resulting in loss of human lives, fishermen and other stakeholders feel that the Centre and States should help in installation of GPS navigator with automatic identification system (AIS) in boats to prevent fatal accidents in high seas. The GPS navigator with AIS fitted in deep sea fishing boats displays information about other vessels nearby, which will be helpful to fishermen in the event of any emergency. Besides, the boats can send and receive alert/rescue messages. The equipment also shows accurate GPS location, worldwide map, track and locate gillnet and long-line hooks with GPS buoys. If the onshore control room of the Department of Fisheries is connected with the system in boats that are beyond 400 or 500 nautical miles, any distress call can be attended to and appropriate action taken in real time. "Since we are losing a good number of fishermen in deep sea accidents involving ships and mechanised fishing boats in the recent past, installation of GPS Navigator with AIS will effectively avert such mishaps since it will send an alert to oncoming crafts including ships," says Sunil Sabariar of Vallavilai, who holds M.Tech. degree in Computer Science and Technology. He says governments should help fishermen buy the life-saving gadget costing between Rs.37,000 and Rs.60,000.

A group of mariners, who participated in a meeting recently organised by International Fishermen Development Trust at Chinnathurai in western Kanniyakumari, support the proposal of giving grant for fitting the system in mechanised fishing boats involved in deep sea fishing. Meanwhile, fishermen of the lost-and-found boat 'Mercedes' are expected to reach Thaengaipattinam fishing harbour by Sunday. According to driver and owner of the boat, Franklin, the fishnet of his vessel has not suffered any damage. "However, our crews have suffered minor internal injuries," he said over the phone. The boat, which is being escorted by an Indian Coast Guard Ship from Lakshadweep, has adequate fuel and food, Mr. Franklin added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Kin of dead fishermen urge authorities to detain Singaporean boat**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2021/apr/30/kin-of-dead-fishermen-urge-authorities-to-detain-singaporean-boat-2296573.html>

"Denied fair and proper compensation and not even a single word of remorse, the family of two Tamil fishermen whose bodies were retrieved after their mechanised boat IFB Rabha was hit by Singapore flagship vessel MV APL Le Havre, have served a legal notice to the authorities to detain the vessel. Sumathi, wife of Henlin Alexander and daughter of Dasan Channappa, whose bodies were retrieved, has served a legal notice to Ministry of External Affairs, Director General of Shipping, Shipping Secretary and Indian Coast Guard seeking their intervention to initiate negotiations with the shipping company or P&I club or Flag State Administration to ensure that fair and proper compensation is paid to the victims' family as the accident took place due to the ship's rash and negligent navigation by violating Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972.

In her representation, Sumathi pointed out to the authorities that the collision by the foreign ship caused damage to the Indian Citizen as per sections 443 and 444 of the M.S.Act, and hence the ship MV APL Le Havre should be detained till a fair and proper compensation is determined and settled to the victims' families. "We request you not to allow the ship to leave the waters of India, till a rightful compensation is settled," she said. There were 14 fishermen seven each from West Bengal and Tamil Nadu in the mechanised boat IFB Rabah, owned by Mamentakathu Jaffar of Beypore in Kozhikode, when the collision happened 40 nautical miles west of new Mangalore on April 11, 2021. While two members of the crew survived, bodies of three fishermen were retrieved, and the fate of the others is unknown.

When Express contacted Director General of Shipping Amitabh Kumar, he said an investigation by police is ongoing. Sumathi, mother of a nineyear- old and a seven-year-old children and taking care of an aged mother, lost both the breadwinners of the family, whose bodies were handed over to her and thereafter no details were shared by the Fishing Boat owner. With no male member to take care, the family is left to struggle on its own. "Usually, whenever my husband and father sail together, they are back by evening. This time they did not return. We had been totally dependent on them for everything. How will I take care of my boys now?" she says. Sumathi says the shipping company has not even sent a condolence to the victims' families so far, nor have they contacted the grieving family on humanitarian grounds. She alleged that she was contacted by the boat owner and by some middle men to settle for a meagre compensation. Blaming the merchant vessel for negligence, Sumathi, in the legal notice, stated that her husband sailed as serang (Skipper) for past nine years and he was highly skilled and well-experienced, and never encountered any such incident in the high seas. "The rash and negligent navigation and failure to comply with the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 (COLREGs) resulted in the MV APL Le Havre killing the fishermen," the legal notice stated.

**Tamil Nadu: 11 fishermen in missing fishing boat safe, being brought back to Kanyakumari: Coast Guard**

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/11-tn-fishermen-in-missing-fishing-boat-safe-being-brought-back-to-kanyakumari-coast-guard/2073334>

"Eleven Tamil Nadu fishermen who went missing after their boat was allegedly hit by a ship off the Oman coast last week are safe and they are being brought to Kanyakumari, the Indian Coast Guard said on Thursday. ""@IndiaCoastGuard ship Vikram escorting fishing boat Mercedes with 11 crew about 25 NM from Suheli Par #Lakshadweep. Ship alongwith FB likely to arrive at Thengapattanam harbour #Kanyakumari #TamilNadu on 01 May"", the Coast Guard said in a tweet on Thursday. In a tweet on Wednesday afternoon, the Coast Guard said in a sea-air coordinated operation ICG Dornier located and established communication with the missing Indian fishing boat Mercedes 200 NM NW of #Minicoy. ""All 11 crew safe. FB reportedly missing since 24 Apr & search by #ICG and IN ships & aircraft was in progress,"" it had said. The South Asian Fishermen Fraternity (SAFF) said the owner of the fishing boat, Joseph Franklin, had spoken to his wife over satellite phone Wednesday morning.

Based on the information provided by her, the Coast Guard carried out searches and managed to locate them. SAFF general secretary Fr Churchil said the cabin of their boat had gone off following an accident in the sea. One of the tiny boats attached to the fishing vessel was also damaged in the accident. ""Since the system of the boat was OK in its basement, they managed to sail back. But they could not communicate with anybody because their communication system was not functioning,"" he told P T I. Churchil said the satellite phone started working after five days after the accident and it helped Franklin contact his wife. The incident came to light on April 24 after their friends in a companion boat found the parts of mangled remains of the fishing boat around 600 nautical miles (over 1,100 kms) off the Goa coast. The Coast Guard immediately rushed a ship from Mumbai on Saturday evening for carrying out rescue operations following a missing complaint received from fishermen organisations. South Asian Fishermen Fraternity (SAFF) said 11 fisherfolk from Kanyakumari district in Tamil Nadu had ventured into deep sea from Thengapattanam Fisheries Harbour, on April 9 in a mechanised boat. SAFF had said the fishermen were in touch with other fishermen till Friday noon.

**Tamil Nadu: Trace missing fishermen, say kin**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/missing-fishermens-families-submit-petition-to-collector/article34419108.ece>

"The families of two fishermen, who went missing 10 days ago, submitted a petition to Collector Dinesh Ponraj Oliver on Monday seeking help in locating them. Accompanied by village elders, panchayat president and their children, Vijaya, 21, wife of Vedamanickam, and

Thesarus, 26, wife of Balamurugan appealed to the Collector for assistance in the hour of crisis. The sight of Ms. Vijaya with her four-month-old child was moving. On April 11, fourteen fishermen — seven from Tamil Nadu and the rest from West Bengal and Assam — ventured into the sea from Kozhikode jetty. On April 14, a Singapore cargo ship allegedly collided with their boat off Mangalore coast. Two fishermen, Velmurugan from Kannirajapuram in Ramanathapuram and Sunil Das from West Bengal were rescued by the cargo ship. The Indian Coast Guard's surveillance team recovered seven bodies.

The fate of the remaining five fishermen is not known till date. The Collector said the administration was in touch with naval authorities and the State government would take it up with the Centre. He informed media persons that the government had sanctioned relief of Rs. 2 lakh to the family of a fisherman killed in the collision. Meanwhile, Tamil Nadu AITUC Fishermen's Association submitted a memorandum to the Collector and urged the State government to file a case against the Singapore cargo ship claiming compensation for the legal heirs of the fishermen. State president Muruganandam and secretary C R Senthivel said the government should engage scuba divers to find the fishermen, sanction compensation of Rs. 5 crore to the families and impound the ship until then.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen seek increased dole during ban period**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishermen-seek-increased-dole-during-ban-period/article34418739.ece>

"Various fishermen organisations have urged the government to increase the dole given during the 61-day long annual fishing ban, which is currently on. The amount is provided since fishermen are usually without work during the ban, which is meant for mechanised boats. "The ₹5,000 given is not enough to run a family for 61 days. The government is asking us to stay away from fishing, which is why it began giving us the dole. Families that are below the poverty line, are members of fishermen cooperative societies and live in fishing villages are given the assistance," said Nanjil Ravi, Akhila Indhiya Meenavar Sangam. K. Bharathi, South India Fishermen Welfare Association, said the amount was not enough. "The current amount barely helps cover food expenses. With no income whatsoever, workers and other labourers, who get work due to the mechanised boats, depend on this amount," he explained. A former official of the Fisheries Department said not many States provided such a dole. "A section of mechanised boat workers are questioning the rationale behind giving this assistance to those fishing using country craft since they are in no way affected by the ban," he said. An industry expert suggested that instead of giving them this amount for free, some kind of work could be provided like under the 100-days rural guarantee scheme being given in the agriculture sector, he said.

#### **Tamil Nadu: 11 fishermen from Kanyakumari goes missing in sea**

<https://keralakaumudi.com/en/news/news.php?id=535824&u>

"Eleven Tamil Nadu fishermen went missing after their boat was allegedly hit by a ship off the Oman coast, prompting the Indian Coast Guard to deploy a vessel to launch search and rescue operations. Quoting fishermen in other boats, fishermen association leader Charles George said in Kochi that the mangled remains of the fishing boat from Tamil Nadu were found 600 nautical miles (over 1,100 kms) off the Goa coast on Saturday. Defence sources said the Coast Guard has sent a ship from Mumbai on Saturday evening for carrying out rescue operations following the missing complaint received from the fishermen organisations. The Coast Guard vessel is expected to reach the spot on Monday, the sources said in Kochi. However, there is no official information from the government on the nature of the reported accident. South Asian Fishermen Fraternity (SAFF) said 11 fisherfolks from Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu had ventured into deep sea from Thengapattanam Fisheries Harbour, on April 9 in a mechanised boat. In its complaint to Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre of the Coast Guard, Mumbai, the SAFF said the broken pieces of the fishing boat were found floating in the sea on April 24. "They searched for the 11 fishermen onboard in the fishing boat Mercedes, but couldn't find anyone. They found pieces of a country boat in a distance. Hence we fear that some accident might have taken place in the deep sea to the fishing boat and eleven fishermen who were onboard are missing", it said, seeking necessary action. SAFF said the fishermen were in touch with other fishermen till Friday noon.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen protest against hatcheries being too close to high tide line**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishermen-protest-against-hatcheries-being-too-close-to-high-tide-line/article34388744.ece>

"Fishermen organisations on Wednesday urged the government not to permit shrimp hatcheries to set up structures too close to the shore. Staging a protest at the office of the Fisheries Department at Nandanam, where the Coastal Aquaculture Authority (CAA) is also located, representatives of the Tamil Nadu Meenavar Iyakkangalin Orunginaippu Kuzhu alleged that the hatcheries that grew shrimp seeds meant for farms were setting up structures too close to the high tide line. "These units have approvals only from the CAA and have no other regulating authority. They let out effluents," they alleged. They said vast tracts of common lands meant for use by fishing villages were being usurped by these industries. D. Ramraj, president, All India Shrimp Hatcheries Association, said the shrimp larvae were mostly fed algae and compound feed and not any chemicals. "They are very sensitive live organisms and cannot be given any chemicals. The discharge from the hatcheries are monitored and are well within limits. Breeding

fish, shrimp or any marine species requires sea water and sea front access and therefore a hatchery has been notified as a permitted activity under the CRZ regulations right from 1991 onwards,” he said. Sources in the CAA said most shrimp hatcheries were located within 2 km of high tide line. All these hatcheries fell under its jurisdiction and it regulated all their activities, starting from construction to monitoring their operations. Over 10 hatcheries that violated the provisions of the CAA Act, 2005, and its rules and regulations had been deregistered and closed by the CAA.

### **Tamil Nadu: HC rejects plea to let fishermen use banned nets**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/hc-rejects-plea-to-let-fishermen-use-banned-nets/article34371461.ece>

"The Madras High Court on Tuesday dismissed a public interest litigation petition, which sought to exempt a section of fishermen from using the banned purse seine nets. The court refused to grant any such exemption after observing that the court would not interfere in an informed decision taken by the State government to ban the nets in toto to conserve marine resources. Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy rejected the PIL petition filed by Fishermen Care, a private organisation, after observing that the State government, in its counter affidavit, had categorically stated that it was only the affluent fishermen owning mechanised fishing boats who use purse seine nets to scoop out fish from the territorial waters. The judges said it was the prerogative of the executive to take decisions in public interest and for the long-term benefits of fishermen and that the scope of judicial review would not allow the court to supplant its views over the executive opinion founded on expert advice. Observing that the government had provided cogent reasons for having banned the use of purse seine nets, the Bench refused to interfere in such a decision. They also pointed out that another Division Bench of the High Court had, on February 5, 2019, upheld the validity of a Government Order banning the use of purse seine nets.

### **Tamil Nadu: Hatcheries permitted within 200m of shore**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2021/apr/21/hatcheries-permitted-within-200m-of-shore-2292620.html>

"The Coastal Aquaculture Authority (CAA) has allowed establishment of aquaculture hatcheries within 200m from the High Tide Line (HTL), despite reports of coastal pollution and objections by the fishermen. The decision was taken at CAA's 65th meeting held last month and an official order was issued recently. "CAA has resolved to permanently exempt establishment of coastal aquaculture hatcheries within 200m from the HTL from the provision of subsection 8(a) of Section 13 of CAA Act 2005, to facilitate the operation of coastal aquaculture hatcheries," the order, accessed by Express, reads. V Kripa, Member Secretary of CAA, said "Considering the

need for seawater access for operation of coastal aquaculture hatcheries, the CAA has permitted establishment of coastal aquaculture hatcheries along the coast of India by according exemption. Now, to redress the apprehensions, the CAA in its 65th meeting in exercise of the powers conferred on this Authority resolved to permanently exempt the establishment of coastal aquaculture hatcheries within 200m from the HTL.” Recently, in reply to an RTI application filed by environmental activist Pooja Kumar of Coastal Resource Centre, Tamil Nadu Coastal Zone Management Authority and Department of Environment confirmed that between 2005 and 2019, they have neither issued nor discussed in any of the meetings regarding granting CRZ clearance to shrimp hatcheries. The Coastal Resource Centre has also published a 33-page report titled “Below the Radar” based on site verification, according to which 62 of the 65 hatcheries were operational within 200m of the HTL in blatant violation of the provisions in the CAA Act and none of the hatcheries have valid Consent to Establish or Operate under Water and Air Acts. The worst is four hatcheries are sitting on ecologically sensitive CRZ 1A areas (sand dunes).

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen killed in collision laid to rest**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/fishermen-killed-in-collision-laid-to-rest/articleshow/82092379.cms>

"The bodies of fishermen Alexander, 38, and his father-in-law Dhason, 65, who were killed in the collision involving Singapore flagged cargo vessel MV APL Le HARVEY and fishing boat Rabha from Kerala late on Monday night, were laid to rest at Colachel in Kanyakumari district on Thursday. Meanwhile, Tuticorin MP Kanimozhi wrote to home minister Amit Shah and defence minister Rajnath Singh to expedite the search and rescue operations. The duo was among 14 fishermen - seven each from Tamil Nadu and West Bengal - who went fishing from Beypore in Kerala on Sunday night. The collision left three people dead and nine missing. S Velmurugan, 37, of Ramanathapuram and Sunil Dhas of West Bengal are the only two to be rescued alive. Alexander is survived by his widow D Sumathi, 32, and two sons aged nine and seven years. Dhason has four children, including two daughters of which Sumathi is the youngest.

Velmurugan, who reached Colachel from Mangaluru was sent to his native village Kannirajapuram in Ramanathapuram district. “I don’t know how I am going to face my family and villagers,” he lamented as his relatives Palani, Balamurugan and Manickam are still missing. A fisheries official from Ramanathapuram has headed to Mangaluru to coordinate the rescue of the missing fishermen. Fisheries officials here quoting officials in Kerala said that the remains of the damaged boat is nearly 100m deep, making the search and rescue difficult. Officials added that the state government has written to the director general of shipping to engage divers to search for the missing men. The government has also pressed for adequate compensation for the kin of the deceased and the survivors. Sumathi in a representation to the director of fisheries said

the shipping company and those on board the ship have to be booked for murder. D Rani, wife of fisherman Denison from Tuticorin district, who also went missing made a representation to the government to search for her missing husband and his fellow workers and to ensure the safety of fishermen from such accidents. The Meenavar Orunginaippu Sankam also sought adequate compensation. "Most of the victims are the sole breadwinners of their family," general secretary of the association, Johnson Charles said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Shift annual ban on fishing to Nov and December**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/shift-annual-ban-on-fishing-to-nov-and-december/articleshow/82092385.cms>

"Thousands of mechanised boats and trawler boats between Ramanathapuram and Kanyakumari coasts stayed off the sea as the 61-day annual fishing ban commenced on Friday. Fishermen appealed to the government to reconsider their long-pending demand of shifting the annual ban to November and December. Deep sea fishermen of Tuticorin and Rameswaram said that they remained off the sea for more than 135 days last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the cyclone alerts during the monsoon. Pointing out at the frequent weather alerts asking them not to go fishing during the northeast monsoon, they reiterated their demand of shifting the ban to that period. Fishermen also said that their livelihood has been affected due to the diesel price rise and urged the government to reduce it. Fishermen of Tuticorin accused fishing boats from Kerala of fishing along their shores when the native mechanised boats remain off the sea and urged the government to put an end to it. They also pressed for increasing the dole given by the government to Rs 15,000 per fisherman, against the existing practice of Rs 5,000 for the family of a fisherman for the entire two-month ban. Traditional and fibre boats that can fish during the ban anticipate higher price for their catch due to the drop in catch as bigger boats will not go fishing.

### **Tamil Nadu: Northeast monsoon ideal time for annual ban: Fishermen**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/04/15023446/1287677/Northeast-monsoon-ideal-time-for-annual-ban-Fishermen.vpf>

"Fishermen have been urging the state government to reschedule the ban period from October to December because during that time fishing would be a tough task. On the contrary, the state government is adamant and does not heed our demands," Nanjil P Ravi, National Executive president, All India Fishermen Association, told DT Next. The concept of fishing ban period was introduced in 2001 to restrict fishermen from entering the sea to enable reproduction of marine species and to increase the marine resources. Initially, the ban period for east coast states was fixed from April 15 to May 30 and for west coast from June 1 to July 14. Subsequently, the fishing ban period was increased from 45 days to 61 days for both the coasts.

For the current year, the ban period is set to commence from Wednesday night. During this period, mechanised boats with an engine capacity of over 28 horsepower would not be permitted and fibre boats alone would be allowed into sea.

However, fishermen in Tamil Nadu complain that the ban period was unfair to east coast fishermen when compared to western coast. “For western coast fishermen the ban period coincides with the southwest monsoon season and they fish in the remaining 9 or 10 months without any hassle. But, fishermen in eastern coast cannot undertake fishing for two months of ban period and during the northeast monsoon season,” pointed out K Bharathi, president, South Indian Welfare Association. Fishermen also urge the state to carry out a scientific study about the reproduction of marine species. When asked about the demands, an official attached to Fisheries Department, on request of anonymity, said that the decision to reschedule the fishing ban period has to be taken by all the other coastal states in the east together and the proposal has to be sent to Centre. However, the final decision would be taken by the Centre.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen want annual ban to be put off by 15 days**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishermen-want-annual-ban-to-be-put-off-by-15-days/article34240465.ece>

"Various fishermen associations have urged the State government to defer the annual fishing ban for mechanised boats by at least 15 days. The 61-day-long ban on the East Coast usually comes into force from April 15. In representations submitted to Fisheries Department officials, the associations said they had been badly affected by the lockdown and a 15-day extension of fishing time would allow them to bring in some catch. “This is the time when the seas are calm and the yellow fin tuna is in abundance,” said a fisherman. The fishermen sought relief since all the boats had returned early from their voyages so that the men could cast their vote. “We have lost this voyage. If we are to venture into the sea again, we need more time and the extension would help us,” said a boat owner. Fisheries Department sources said that the fishermen had also sought a change in the ban period, and all their requests were being looked into. However, with the Central government recently issuing a notification announcing the ban in waters covering India’s Exclusive Economic Zone for both East and West Coasts for all coastal States, boat owners think in such a situation their pleas are likely to remain unanswered. A former official of the department explained that the ban is usually imposed for conservation and effective management of marine resources and also for sea safety reasons. Traditional non-motorised craft are usually exempted from the ban.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Fish prices in Chennai set to rise as fewer boats set sail into sea**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/fish-prices-in-chennai-set-to-rise-as-fewer-boats-set-sail-into-sea/articleshow/81883226.cms>

"Fish prices in Chennai are set to rise this weekend owing to a fall in supply in the market as a smaller number of boats could set sail into the sea due to rough weather this week. A senior official in the fisheries department said normally around 100 boats venture into the sea every day, bringing in about 200 to 250 tonnes of fish. ""This week, only about 30 to 40 boats could set sail from Kasimedu fishing harbour, bringing down the catch to only 80 tonnes a day. It is a normal phenomenon during this time of year."" A Ragupathi, a boat owner, said the temperature of surface water goes up this time of the year, leading to gusty wind. ""So, it is not advisable to sail out into the sea,"" he said. Anbu, a trader at Chintadripet fish market which caters to both retail and wholesale buyers, said as the supply of fish has fallen, prices of popular varieties of fish are bound to go up. ""Vanjiarm, sankara, nethili, paarai, and karuppu vaaval will definitely be costlier. Prices of these fish are expected to go up by at least 50 to 100 per kg this weekend,"" he said. Vanjiram was priced at 1,000 per kg last week, which is expected to go up to 1,200/kg this weekend. Sankara was sold at 300/kg and is expected to be sold at 350/kg this time. Nethili, which sold for 250/kg last week, will be costlier by 75. Paarai's price (600/kg last week) will cost 650/kg. Karuppu vaaval (600/kg last week) will be costlier by 25. Prices of both crabs and prawns will also go up, he said, adding that with the reduction in the catch from Chennai coastline, fish are arriving from Mangaluru and Malpe in Karnataka.

### **Tamil Nadu: Why residents are protesting plan to reduce Pulicat sanctuary buffer zone**

<https://scroll.in/article/991044/adani-will-gain-why-tn-residents-are-protesting-plan-to-reduce-pulicat-sanctuary-buffer-zone>

"A new proposal by the Tamil Nadu forest department to reduce the mandatory 10-km eco-sensitive zone or ESZ around the Pulicat Lake Wildlife Sanctuary near Chennai has sparked fresh protests from members of the fishing community, scientists and wildlife experts. If it is allowed, the proposal will smooth the way for the expansion of the Kattupalli port 2.1 km south of Lake Pulicat Wildlife Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu's Thiruvallur district by the Adani group, activists and fisherfolk say. This will threaten the livelihoods of tens of thousands of people. In December, Marine Infrastructure Developer Private Limited owned by Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd detailed its plans to expand the 136.28-hectare Kattupalli port facility in a Draft Comprehensive Environment Impact Assessment Report for the Revised Master Plan submitted to the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. Based on the proposal, there was to be a public hearing in January. But it was cancelled due to the Covid 19 pandemic. According to the executive summary of the plan, the expansion of the Kattupalli port

will be carried out on a total area of 2,472.85 ha. In addition to the existing area of the port, it will include 927.11 ha of government land and 613.31 ha of private land. It also proposes to reclaim 796.15 hectares from the sea. Six villages will be affected. The proposed area of expansion will acquire land that falls within the sanctuary's 10-km buffer zone, said Yuvan Aves, of the Chennai Climate Action Group.

Priority wetlands Lake Pulicat is India's second-largest brackish water body after Chilika lake in Odisha. The proposal to reduce the ESZ around the Pulicat Lake Wildlife Sanctuary from 10 km to 500 metres is still in process, said Tamil Nadu chief wildlife warden, Syed Muzammil Abbas. He declined to give details unless this reporter met him in person and has not responded to an email with questions about the plan. A news report in the New Indian Express said the proposal was sent to the expert appraisal committee for ESZ in the environment ministry. The Coastal Resource Centre, a community organisation, in February filed an application seeking details of the proposal under the Right to Information Act, but it has not yet received a response. Pulicat Lake Wildlife Sanctuary was declared a bird sanctuary and marine protected area in 1980. It has been identified as one of the five major mangrove areas in Tamil Nadu by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. In addition, the Union government has listed it as one of 14 "priority wetlands" in Tamil Nadu and as an "important coastal and marine biodiversity area". The idea of reducing the ESZ around the Pulicat sanctuary was first proposed by the state forest department in March 2019. It sent a proposal to the Union environment ministry to cut the ESZ from 10 km to zero.

The proposal was rejected by the ministry's expert appraisal committee for ESZ. In the executive summary of its port expansion plan, Marine Infrastructure Developer said that the Tamil Nadu government had decided not to propose any eco sensitive zone for Pulicat Birds Sanctuary "as per the minutes of 34th ESZ Expert Committee Meeting for the declaration of Eco Sensitive Zone around Wildlife Sanctuaries/National Park held on 06th March 2019, in the MoEF&CC [Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change]". It added that the government of Tamil Nadu said that there was "no ecological requirement of any other buffer area for the conservation management of the sanctuary which is only seasonal in nature at the time of arrival of birds". It did not mention that the proposal for a zero-km ESZ had been rejected by the environment ministry in 2019. Adani's response Asked about the Tamil Nadu forest department's proposal to reduce the mandatory 10-km ESZ, a spokesperson for Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd said in an email message that the Tamil Nadu government had notified the boundaries of the sanctuary in 1980, implying that there was no need for an ESZ. "The Pulicat Wildlife Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu side boundaries were notified vide G.O. Ms. No.1247, Forests and Fisheries dated September 22, 1980," the spokesperson said.

"The areas (village boundaries) covered and, also the areas included by the boundaries described above shall be the 'Pulicat Lake Birds' Sanctuary." The spokesperson reiterated the claims in the

executive summary. “The same has accordingly been disclosed in the Draft EIA [Environmental Impact Assessment] and Executive Summary reports submitted to TNPCB [Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board] during December 2020,” the spokesperson said. Lake Pulicat is located in an area where sea erosion is taking place, said Meerasa, a social worker from Jamilabad village in the Pulicat lake area. The fisherfolk fear that construction of the port will increase the erosion and that the narrow strip of sand separating the sea from the lake will disappear. If this barrier shrinks, the risk of salinity ingress will be increased and even the groundwater could turn salty, they fear. The expansion of the port will hurt the livelihoods of the area’s fishermen, Meerasa said. Here, people have small boats not trawlers, he said. How will they go to the deeper sea? About one lakh people are dependent on the lake for their livelihoods, from Ennore in Tamil Nadu to Sulupet in Andhra Pradesh, he said. Residents of about 15 villages in the area fish in the sea, while people in 60 to 70 villages fish in the lake, he said. In the 250-hectare mangrove forests by the sea, women wade upto three feet into the water to pick fish, prawns and mud crabs. Seafood from the lake sells for higher prices and is exported. These are the areas that will be reclaimed for the port, Meerasa added. Lost livelihoods For the last two decades, Meerasa has been engaged in restoring the mangroves. In fact, the lake gets its name for the Tamil word for mangroves: ”Pazhavercadu”. “We recorded 1,200 families fishing in this area and women have been handpicking fish for the last 30 years,” he said. More than 2,000 women from Ennore to Arambakam in Thiruvallur district do this kind of work. They earn Rs 500 to Rs 700 daily. “There is also a huge harvest of tiger prawns from here,” he said. Once the port comes up, what is the future for these women, agricultural labourers and fisherfolk, Meerasa wondered. Rajalakshmi from Goonankuppam, a village of 2,000 people, said that fishing was the backbone of their economy and they did not have any other skills. “What will we do if we cannot fish?” she asked. “That is the only thing we know. We are protesting against the port and it should not come here as it will affect all of us.”

Communities have been protesting against the proposed port expansion since September 2019 when over 1,500 people held a rally in the area’s fishing villages. Since then, there have been a number of protest actions and memorandums submitted to the authorities. Students in more than 50 schools and colleges wrote a letter to the Tamil Nadu chief minister demanding that the project be scrapped. In addition, 108 scientists and experts in a letter to the chief minister explained the seeming irregularities in locating the port so close to Lake Pulicat and the severe impacts of building a port in an area where the shoreline is changing and the ecosystem is already fragile. The Environment Impact Assessment for the project notes that the shoreline is receding at the rate of 8.6 metres a year.

The projects will double this rate, the experts said. The Coastal Regulation Zone Notification prohibits building ports in high-erosion zones – defined as shorelines experiencing erosion at rates greater than 1 metre a year. Company disputes claim However, the Adani spokesperson said that ports and harbour projects are permissible as per the Coastal Regulation Zone

notifications of 2011 and 2019 and the Environment Impact Assessment notification of 2006. “The Terms of Reference for the project has been granted by MoEF&CC [Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change] after evaluating the project proposal and site visit and recommendation by an expert sub-committee of MoEF&CC,” the spokesperson said. “The activities proposed are permissible and in line to applicable regulations. The areas selected for reclamation are falling under medium accretion, low accretion and low erosion. Therefore, areas with high erodibility have been avoided and all steps shall be taken to ensure a stable coast.” In a statement released on March 16, fisherfolk from Pulicat and 38 wildlife activists and scientists have criticised the forest department’s plan to reduce the buffer zone. A committee of residents from 15 fishing villages and concerned citizens have written to the Union government’s expert committee on eco sensitive zones condemning the move that they say “is designed solely to benefit polluting industries proposed to be set up in the Ennore Pulicat wetlands”. News of the proposed dilution of the ESZ was featured in The Times of India in February but the community has no more information on this. They feel the forest department failed to take the fishing community into confidence and said the move was suspicious as “as the only parties that are likely to benefit from such a move are companies that wish to take over lands and waterbodies in the region to set up polluting industries”. The committee pointed out that polluting activities such as ports and harbours are prohibited within the ESZ. Adani’s port expansion proposal falls entirely within the current 10 km ESZ, they claimed.

The fisherfolk suggested that the forest department’s move may be linked to the fact that the government of Tamil Nadu has notified a proposal to build the Ponneri Industrial Township Area within the existing ESZ and covering the Ennore-Pulicat wetlands. “The location of this industrial township is contrary to siting guidelines prescribed in Central Pollution Control Board’s Industrial Siting Atlas and principles of wise use and land-use planning,” the letter said. ‘No fishing area’ Another factor that is angering the fishing community is the demand by Adani in August 2019 to declare their fishing grounds near Lake Pulicat a no-fishing area. The Adani company justified this demand to the National Hydrographic Office in Dehradun in 2019, within a year of buying a 97% stake in Marine Infrastructure Developer Private Limited. It said in a letter that “vessels arriving and departing the port need safe entry and safe egress route. However, there are times when the fishing boats lay fishing nets across the approach channel, anchorage area, port basin including nest to vessels at the berths. This poses a serious security concern and safety hazard to the ships calling at the port.”

According to a statement released in response to the proposal, the fishing community said, “The area sought to be declared as No Fishing Zone in the 2019 letter is about 7.7 sq km. That is an area 112 times the size of Chepauk stadium [in Chennai] just for the existing 330 acre Kattupalli port. If the existing 1.3 sq km (330 acre) port requires a 7.7 sq km No Fishing Zone, an 8 sq km port (2,000 acres) will require nearly 50 sq km or an area nearly 700 times the size of Chepauk Stadium. That is what the fisherfolk are being asked to give up so that Adani can benefit.” The

Adani spokesperson said that the port had requested the notification of the zone only with the intent of keeping the fishermen out of harm's way and bearing their safety in mind. "The fishing is carried out in the deep sea and not in the vicinity of the port infrastructure as alleged," the spokesperson said. "The documents circulating the media also indicate the same. We sternly deny the baseless allegations that the port is attempting to deny fishing rights to fishermen." The spokesperson added that no impact is envisaged on the fishing grounds owing to the proposed expansion.

"However, to further enhance the livelihoods of the fishermen, Multipurpose Artificial Fish Habitats for the enhancement of biodiversity, fish production, and sustained livelihood are being proposed in the vicinity of the surrounding villages," the spokesperson said. Kattupalli village has already lost its land to the port and the desalination plant for water supply to Chennai. In addition, its residents say that the jobs promised to them in Kattupalli port have not materialised. Since March 15, the panchayat of Kattupalli Kuppam has been protesting to demand some 140 promised jobs.

According to the Revised Master Plan development for the Kattupalli port, no resettlement and rehabilitation is envisaged for the expansion of the port. The development of the Revised Master Plan will neither affect the fishing activities nor restrict the movement of local fishermen and boats, the executive summary said. The Adani spokesperson added: "No R&R implies that no land owned by individuals is being proposed for acquisition for the expansion project and therefore no resettlement measures are being proposed for the project. However, as a socially and environmentally conscious corporate entity, Katupalli Port has been working closely with the local community through the Adani Foundation since 2018." The spokesperson said, "Various interventions such as providing insulated ice boxes to fishermen, installation of high mast lights in Fishermen villages and providing tarpaulins for roofing of thatched huts have been implemented in consultation with the local populace bearing their requirements in mind." In addition, the port expansion is expected to generate 15,000 direct and indirect jobs during the construction and operations phases.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fisherfolk fear looming threat of corporatisation and livelihood issues**

<https://www.newsclick.in/TN-Elections-Fisherfolk-Fear-Looming-Threat-Corporatisation-Livelihood-Issues>

"The 1,076 km long coastline of Tamil Nadu houses more than 600 fishing villages. An estimated 10 lakh people depend directly or indirectly on the resources from the sea, making it one of most important sectors in bringing financial resources to the state and the country. However, the ambitious Sagarmala and Bharatmala projects are perceived as potential threats to the very existence of the fisherfolk, due to possible adverse impacts on biodiversity, resources and resultant corporatisation of the industry. The introduction of the National Fisheries Policy,

2020, has only amplified the apprehensions of the community, which accuses the Union government of favouring the corporates in getting hold over the fishing industry. The unrelenting support of the state government on such policy issues has also caused dissatisfaction among the fishing community. The increasing prices of diesel, the fuel used for fishing boats have only added to the agony of the community, shattered by the reduction in demand within and outside the country post the relaxation of the lockdown. Fisheries Policy Creates Apprehension The coastline of Tamil Nadu spreads both in the eastern and western coast and is known for its rich biodiversity. The coast is also known for coastal habitats like mangroves, corals, seaweeds, seagrass beds, salt marshes, mudflats, and sand dunes. The state ranked third in marine fish production during 2017-18, while the foreign exchange earned stood at Rs 5,591 crore in 2018-19 from exports as per the State Fisheries Policy note 2020-21. The state government, led by the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) continues to claim its ardent support for the traditional fishing rights of the fishermen, but the policies of the Union government are alleged of being framed in favour of the corporates. The National Fisheries Policy, 2020, has accommodated the marine fisheries, inland fisheries and aquaculture along with mariculture, which had separate policy documents until recently.

“The new policy fails to consider the livelihood issues of the fishing community and concentrates only on the commercial aspects, that too is weighed heavily in favour of the corporates,” alleged R Loganathan of the Tamil Nadu Fisherman Workers’ Union. “This policy would hand over the fishing industry to the corporates. The reduction in jurisdiction of the states to 12 nautical miles will result in centralisation of power and the voice of the fishermen will diminish in the near future,” Loganathan added. Licencing would be made mandatory to fish beyond the 12 nautical mile boundary, which would push the traditional fishermen away from the industry. The cost involved in obtaining the licences and further encouragement for mariculture will reduce their scope in fishing. Further, the entrance of large corporates would also result in large vessels depleting the resources at a very fast pace. The fishing community across Tamil Nadu continue to oppose the policy, which they allege was pushed under the guise of the COVID-19 induced lockdown.

**Looming Threat of The Sagarmala Project** The Sagarmala project aims to set up new mega ports, modernising India's existing ports, developing Coastal Economic Zones (CEZs) and coastal economic units, enhancing port connectivity via road, rail, multi-modal logistics parks, pipelines & waterways and promoting coastal community development. The project plans to exploit the 7,517 km long coastline and 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways. “This project could lead to massive loss of the resources and damage to the ecosystem,” Loganathan claimed. “The linking of inland waterways is highly dangerous as the sea water intrusion will endanger the river water and the groundwater table. The rivers in Tamil Nadu are rainfed and hence the linking could lead to salinisation of the river water, affecting agriculture directly,” he added. The fisher folk have been alleging the Sagarmala project and Blue economy (based on

exploitation of marine and coastal resources) of legitimising the encroachment of sea and the resources by the corporates. One such project, the establishment of transshipment container terminal in Kanyakumari has been stopped owing to concerted effort of the fisherfolk and farmers. While the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) seems to be keen on executing the project, the incumbent AIADMK is against it.

A large section of the fisherfolk had voted in favour of the AIADMK on previous occasions, but the party may witness a change of fortunes this time. The apprehension of the community cannot be neglected as they were not engaged in any dialogues before implementing many schemes along the coastline including the dedicated shipping corridor. **Livelihood Issues Remain Unattended** The increase in the price of diesel in the last six years has taken a severe toll on the fishermen. With reduced demand within the country and for exports, the community is staring at increased expenditure and reduction in income. “The diesel price has increased by around Rs 20/ in the last one year. This effectively means that a fishing boat has to incur an additional expense of Rs 2 lakh per month for the 10,000 litres diesel consumed for the trips. With decreasing demand, we are facing severe financial constraints,” a fisherman from Chennai said.

The community has been demanding to bring diesel within the ambit of the GST, to lower the prices. The community also alleges a history of neglect by the Union and state governments instead of executing big promises made during the elections. The welfare board setup for the fishermen is inactive and the state government distributed Rs 1,000 for three months through the cooperative societies during the lockdown. But, the lockdown was followed by the fishing ban. The students from the fisherfolk community suffered a massive setback after the online and televised classes became the order of the day after the lockdown began. The lack of smartphones and inefficient televised classes forced them out of getting access to education. The reopening of schools, at least in the next academic year may not succeed in attracting all the students back to its fold. A variety of factors, from policies of the Union government, ably supported by the AIADMK led state government have adversely affected the fishing community in the last four years. While, the BJP-AIADMK alliance suffered a literal rout in the 2019 general elections, the palpable discontent with the Union and state governments among fisherfolk is likely to be reflected in the polling scheduled for April 6.

### **Tamil Nadu: Govt backtracks from Kanyakumari Transshipment project**

<https://www.sify.com/news/govt-backtracks-from-kanyakumari-transshipment-project-news-national-vdzhOvcifaife.html>

"The Shipping and Port Ministry of the Government of India is backtracking from the much celebrated transshipment project in Kanyakumari amid stiff opposition from local fishermen community. The fisherman is worried that with the commencement of the project,

there would be a sharp decline in the catch thus affecting their livelihood. The Port Trust has already withdrawn the expression of interest it had called for construction of the Private, Public, Participatory (PPP) model of Transshipment project. The Kanyakumari transshipment project has become a major election issue in Tamil Nadu after the Tuticorn port had released advertisements in major news papers calling for Expression of Interest from private players for the construction of the port. The Union government had planned to construct an international transshipment hub in the PPP mode in the area between Kovalam and Thenthamarakulam. The central government had initiated the process to complete the project in three stages. Several organisations including many fisherman organisations had come out on the streets against the transshipment project at Kanyakumari. It may be recalled that an office for the proposed Transshipment project was opened in Kanyakumari before the 2019 general elections. In the 2019 polls, Congress candidate H. Vasanthakumar had promised the people of Kanyakumari that if he was elected he would not allow the construction of the port. The then Union minister of state for Shipping, Pon Radhakrishnan was the NDA candidate from Kanyakumari Lok Sabha elections in 2019. He was trounced by Vasanthakumar by a margin of around 3 lakh votes from the constituency which he had won by around 1 lakh votes in 2014. After the passing away of Vasanthakumar, Kanyakumari is facing a bypoll and Pon Radhakrishnan is locking horns with the son of late Vasanthkumar, Vijay Vasanth who has promised the electorate that he would not allow the building of the Transshipment project. Sensing political reversals in the Kanyakumari, Colachel, Nagercoil and adjacent assembly seats, the ruling AIADMK has also distanced itself from the project with Dalavai Sundaram categorically ruling out the project in Kanyakumari. BJP leader and Lok Sabha candidate of the party for Kanyakumari by-elections Radhakrishnan told IANS: ""Projects which the people don't want will not be foisted upon them and as there is stiff opposition to this project and Government of India will not go ahead with this.""

**Tamil Nadu: Fishermen Killing: “Investigate matter, decide on compensation within 8 weeks: Madras High Court to UOI, State**

<https://www.livelaw.in/news-updates/killing-fishermen-investigate-matter-decide-on-compensation-within-8-weeks-madras-high-court-171668>

"While dealing with a plea filed in connection with 4 local fishermen who have been killed apparently at the hands of the Sri Lankan navy, the Madras High Court on Monday (23rd March) directed the State & Centre to bring the matter to a logical end by giving it a due closure. The Bench of Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy was hearing the plea by an association named Fisherman Care, who sought compensation and jobs for the family of the deceased fishermen. Also, it was prayed in the plea that an appropriate police station be designated so as to conduct the investigation into the deaths of the four fishermen. Demand for compensation and government jobs for the legal heirs The Court gave liberty to the Petitioner/ Fisherman Care to make an appropriate representation to the Department of Fisheries

of the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare for such agency to consider the same. The Court also permitted that a similar representation may be made to the Department of the Animal Husbandry and Fisheries under the State Government. Demand for an investigation into the matter at the outset, the Court noted the stand of the Union that the incident took place in international waters or, at the very least, beyond the territorial waters of India. Though the petitioner contended that the appropriate police station should be one in Chennai, the FIR had been lodged in Rameshwaram and the Nagapattinam police authorities are apparently looking into the matter.

With this, the plea was disposed of with a direction that if the petitioner's representation is made to the Union or the State within four weeks, the relevant Secretaries heading the particular departments should consider the same and communicate a reasoned decision to the petitioner and to the families of the deceased fishermen within eight weeks of the receipt thereof. In related news, the Madras High Court recently asked the Union of India to persuade the Sri Lankan authorities to desist from taking extreme measures in case Indian fishermen, accidentally or otherwise, stray into Sri Lankan waters without 'being jingoistic or parochial in the matter'. Case title - Fisherman Care v. The Union of India and others [W.P.No.7436 of 2021]

#### **Tamil Nadu: Provide relief, jobs to kin of fishers killed in SL waters: HC**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2021/03/23022622/1282521/Provide-relief-jobs-to-kin-of-fishers-killed-in-SL-.vpf>

"The first bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy offered the direction on a plea moved by Fishermen Care. It also sought for a direction to entrust the investigation to the Harbour police in Chennai, which is the competent authority to investigate such deaths beyond the territorial waters as per a Home Department notification, and not the local police as it has been done in this case. Directing the petitioner to make a representation to the Union Agriculture Ministry and State fisheries department for grant of compensation and employment, the bench sought the governments to provide compensation and jobs within eight weeks. Regarding the transfer of investigation from Nagapattinam police to the Harbour police, the bench directed the State and Centre to specify the actual agency that would head the investigation and provide closure to the families so that the fishermen family were aware of the circumstances in which they died. Fishermen care had submitted that the four fishermen killed at the hands of Sri Lankan Navy for allegedly straying beyond the territorial waters of India.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Six fishermen injured in "attack" by Lankan pirates**

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/six-tn-fishermen-injured-in-attack-by-lankan-pirates/2051809>

"Six Tamil Nadu fishermen sustained injuries after being attacked mid-sea allegedly by a group of Sri Lankan pirates off Kodiakarai coast. According to Coastal Security Group police, the fishermen from Seruthur hamlet in the district were attacked when they were fishing about 13 knots South East of Kodiakarai coast on Monday night. They had ventured into the sea from Kodiakarai on March 21. Fifteen Lankan pirates came in two fast crafts and "attacked" the Tamil fishermen with iron rods, snatched all valuables including fish catch, fishing nets, GPS equipment and pushed them into the water, before fleeing the scene, they said. The injured fishermen were struggling in the water for nearly an hour. Another group of Nagapattinam fishermen passing through the spot rescued and brought them to shore this morning. The fishermen have been admitted to government hospitals in Nagapattinam and Vailankanni, they added. Fisheries department officials and CSG police conducted enquiries and are investigating. Three days ago a group of three fishermen from Vellapallam in Nagapattinam faced a similar attack by the Lankan pirates.

**Tamil Nadu: Fisherfolk in two villages announce poll boycott condemning ban on purse seine nets**

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/fisherfolk-in-two-tn-villages-announce-poll-boycott-condemning-ban-on-purse-seine-nets/2051430>

"Hundreds of fishermen belonging to Chandrapadi and Thirumullaivasal villages in Mayiladuthurai district have announced that they would boycott the April 6 assembly polls in protest against the ban on purse seine nets. With a view to preserving the fishing resources, the Tamil Nadu government banned fishing using purse seine nets in the year 2000 under the provisions of the Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulations Act, 1983. The ban was upheld by the Madras High Court in 2018. Since then fisheries authorities are strictly enforcing the ban. Stating that the ban was affecting their livelihood, fishermen of the two villages have long been demanding lifting of the ban. Pressing the demand, hundreds of people, including a large number of women, resorted to a hunger strike at Chandrapadi and Thirumullaivasal separately on Monday. They have announced that they would boycott the assembly polls. Chandrapadi belongs to the Poompuhar assembly constituency and Thirumullaivasal falls under Sirkazhi segment.

**Tamil Nadu: Supply constraints, fuel price send up wholesale fish price**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/City/2021/03/20041806/1281917/Supply-constraints-fuel-price-send-up-wholesale-fish-.vpf>

"The pandemic has hit the market badly, with a lot of the labour force not being able to venture out to sea. The rise in diesel price has not only made venturing into sea more expensive, but transportation costs for supply from other states like Kerala and Andhra Pradesh has also

gone up,” said Nanjil Ravi of the Akhila Indhiya Meenavar Sangam. Vanjaram is going for Rs 590 per kg compared to Rs 570 per kg earlier, while Seela fish is selling for Rs 400 per kg as against Rs 360 per kg for which it was earlier being sold. Sankara fish has increased to Rs 770 per kg from Rs 750. The price of crab has increased from Rs 170 per kg to Rs 220 per kg, while it has increased to Rs 220 per basket of squid from Rs 170 per basket. Prawns are selling for Rs 400 per kg. According to Ravi, the overall supply of fish has reduced as well. From an earlier supply averaging to 150 tonnes on weekdays and nearly double of that on the weekends, the currently supply is only less than 100 tonnes on weekdays. Ravi added that the prices would continue to rise until transport costs decrease.

### **Tamil Nadu: Tiruvottiyur, a highly industrialised, coastal region awaits answers**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/tiruvottiyur-constituency-watch/article34078733.ece>

"A long coastline and scores of industries have shaped the identity of Tiruvottiyur constituency. The latest infrastructural addition, the Metro, has undoubtedly changed the skyline of a segment of this constituency — starting from Kaladipet to Wimco Nagar — but at the ground level, a number of issues, such as industrial pollution and factors affecting the livelihood of fisherfolk, still remain unaddressed. Nearly 20 fishing villages and a number of highly industrialised areas make up a major portion of Tiruvottiyur in Tiruvallur. The constituency includes areas such as Tiruvottiyur, Manali, Chinnasekkadu, Ernavoor and Kathivakkam. The coastline extending from the fishing villages of Nalla Thaneer Odai Kuppam to Nettukuppam, Thalankuppam, falls in the constituency.

With fisherfolk having a significant vote bank, the constituency will see a former councillor and a former Member of Legislative Assembly from the two Dravidian parties contest for the seat. K.P. Sankar, brother of DMK MLA and former Fisheries Minister K.P.P. Samy, who passed away in 2020 leaving the seat vacant, and K. Kuppen of the AIADMK are in the fray. Both candidates evoked a mixed response among a cross-section of residents, who will also see Naam Tamilar Katchi's chief coordinator Seeman in the fray. How members of the fishing community vote would be one of the major deciding factors, leaders of the fishing community said. "The fishing community definitely has a big role. This constituency is among nearly 37 constituencies in 13 districts that has a high presence of fisherfolk. We need better representation as some of our issues remain unresolved. The Ennore Creek should be protected. There is indiscriminate discharge of effluents by industries and environment monitoring is poor. There is no denying that

we need developmental activities but the Kattupalli port expansion project will hit the fishing industry badly here too,” K. Bharathi, president of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association, said. The port project, P.R. Mahendran of Nalla Thaneer Odai Kuppam, said, would have an adverse impact on their livelihood.

“Already, the number of people taking up fishing have dwindled over the years. We get a good catch of crab and prawns every January. We call it the ‘Pongal bonus’ but if the port is expanded, it will be against the natural course, resulting in dwindling marine life. When will they understand that it is a question of our livelihood,” he said. Demands to deepen the Ennore estuary are still pending. The estuary was polluted with fly ash from industries. V. Desingh, of Nettukuppam, another fishing village, said it involved the livelihood of 30,000 to 40,000 fishermen. “Our lives are endangered, and materials, including fishing nets and boats, worth lakhs of rupees are damaged in tidal action, raising the need for deepening the estuary,” he said. Industrial pollution remains a cause of concern for residents in Manali, Tiruvottiyur and Ennore. “We grapple with air pollution. Many residents suffer from respiratory problems,” a resident of Tiruvottiyur said. Industrial pollution has not spared even the groundwater, added Annadurai of Manali. “We are purchasing water from private lorries.

Applications for Metrowater connections for households have been pending for nearly seven years. Many say Manali, a highly industrial area, is an unfit place for people to live, and this is true on many grounds.” The road in Chinnasekkadu was in a bad condition and had not been laid in nearly 10 years. A government hospital with specialities was another need. Palani, a shopkeeper in Wimco Nagar, said, “Tiruvottiyur has a number of private hospitals but many cannot afford to pay for healthcare. We need to visit Chinna Stanley (Government Peripheral Hospital, Tondiarpet) or the Government Stanley Medical College Hospital. Access to healthcare will improve if a government hospital is set up here.”

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishers oppose move on Pulicat**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishermen-oppose-shrinking-of-pulicate-buffer-zone/article34086927.ece>

"Fishermen of Pulicat lake and environmentalists have criticised the alleged move of the State Forest Department to reduce the protective buffer around Pulicat Wildlife Sanctuary from 10 km to 500 m. They expressed their shock in letters to the Union Government’s Expert Committee on Eco Sensitive Zones condemning the move which, they say, is designed solely to benefit polluting industries proposed to be set up in the Ennore-Pulicat wetlands. The letters were in response to a media article announcing the Forest Department’s intent. In March 2019, the department approached the Expert Committee of the Union Environment Ministry seeking a notification to reduce the zone from 10 km to 0 km, which, however, was not approved. The fishermen said the current move to reduce the zone to a mere 500 m was a bad idea since it

would only benefit private companies that were likely to come up there. These industries would end up polluting the lake and its surroundings, said C. Parandhaman of Light House Kuppam. Activist G. Sundarrajan said that reduction of the zone would end up damaging the lake, birds and animals. “It is home to thousands of migratory birds and to crabs, shrimps and fish that are exclusive to the lake, which is spread over two States. The livelihood of fishermen depending on the lake, too, would be lost,” he said. The fishermen and the activists have urged the government to not reduce the buffer zone.

### **Tamil Nadu and Assam: Nine fishermen stranded in Arabian Sea**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/nine-tamil-nadu-and-assam-fishermen-stranded-in-arabian-sea/articleshow/81471096.cms>

"Nine fishermen on board a deep sea multi-day fishing vessel were stranded in the Arabian Sea and are awaiting help after their boat developed a technical snag. Activist P Justin Antony of International Fishermen Development Trust said that the issue has been taken to the notice of the union fisheries minister, Indian coast guard, navy and the chief minister's office. The nine fishermen include four from Kanyakumari and five from Assam. The Kanyakumari fishermen have been identified as Surling 60, Sajin 32, Sujin Kumar 19, and Kejin, 26, all from Thoothoor. The activist said that the fishermen went fishing in the multi day fishing vessel bearing registration number TN-15-MM-384 from the Cochin harbour on February 25. On Wednesday, the engine suffered a technical snag and could not be fixed as an important component was damaged off the Lakshadweep Coast at a distance of 270 nautical miles (500km) from Cochin. With no other boats close to them for help they informed the owner of the boat Benziger through satellite phone in the boat. A fisheries department official said that their boat is stranded beyond the Lakshadweep. “Their nearest land is Agatti Island in Lakshadweep that is 70 nautical miles (130km) away. We have informed the Coast Guard, Chennai, to help them and are awaiting a positive response,” the official added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Kattupalli fishermen stage protest again, demand jobs be made permanent**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/kattupalli-fishermen-stage-protest-again-demand-jobs-be-made-permanent/article34073860.ece>

"A little over a month after their last protest, residents of Kattupalli fishing hamlet in Tiruvallur district on Monday, staged a protest, blocking access to a private port from the land and sea, demanding that the jobs of 140 of persons from the village be made permanent. The villagers, who staged the blockade from morning till well after noon, said that the promised meeting between officials and workers did not happen after last month's protest. "We need to be paid proper salaries since we have been shifted lock, stock and barrel from our village and have lost our livelihoods. We cannot survive on meagre salaries," said Kannan, one of the fishermen. The fishermen were also protesting the plan of the port seeking to declare a large area as a no-fishing zone. They withdrew the protest after Revenue Department officials intervened.

### **Tamil Nadu: No objection to joint probe with India into deaths of fishermen**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/no-objection-to-joint-probe-with-india-into-deaths-of-fishermen/articleshow/81458856.cms>

"As the Tamil Nadu police began investigation into the January 18 killing of four Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan waters, the probe instituted by the island nation in early February remains at a standstill. Minister of fisheries and aquatic resources Douglas Devananda, the only Sri Lankan Tamil minister of cabinet rank in the Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Mahinda Rajapaksa government, had launched an aggressive initiative to stop transgressions of the India-Sri Lanka maritime boundary. In an interview with Jaya Menon and M K Ananth, the minister said it was imperative to rein in bottom trawling by Tamil Nadu fishermen as it would destroy marine wealth of not just Sri Lanka, but India too. Q: What led to the death of the four fishermen? The Indian fishermen have given contradictory views from what the Sri Lankan Navy has stated. The autopsy report revealed there were no bullet injuries or signs of torture on the bodies of the deceased as was claimed by the Indian side. I wanted the postmortem examinations to be performed in India. But since the incident took place in Sri Lankan waters the postmortems were performed in Sri Lanka as stated by the attorney general (Sattama Athibar).

High official representatives from the Indian embassy had supervised it. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has constituted a team to investigate the incident. I believe the report will reveal the truth. Q: Will the inquiry be a fair one? Certainly, it will be a fair one. As a responsible government we are obliged to find the truth and reveal it. Q: Fishermen witness to the January 18 incident say the boats used by them are too small to damage SL naval vessels, as stated in the official statement. Yes. But at the same time, SL Navy patrol boats are made of fibre. Indian fishing vessels are made of wood and iron frame, and it is reported that they can cause damage to

Sri Lankan Navy boats. Q: Is it possible to include authorities from India (especially from Tamil Nadu) to make it a joint probe to ensure fair play? If the Indian government desires a joint probe, we won't have any objections to it. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa would like a transparent probe to settle the matter. I was made fisheries minister to ensure betterment of fishing community in the North Eastern Province, to strengthen the relationship between north and south and to strengthen ties with India – especially with Tamil Nadu. So, it is everyone's expectation to smoothly resolve the incident. Q: Pelting stones, hurling bottles, cutting off nets and opening fire are some of methods of the Lankan Navy to dissuade Indian fishermen from transgressing the boundary. Videos of the same have also been circulated in India. Are they not against the permitted modes of tackling intrusion into international waters? These incidents have taken place in Sri Lankan waters close to the Lankan coast. No such incident took place in international waters. So, these incidents don't go with the agreements pertaining to international waters. There is also a strict order that the Navy should not use guns against Indian fishermen even for self-defence. I saw a video on Tamil news channels showing efforts taken to expel Indian fishermen from Sri Lankan waters. But, it did not show any nets being cut nor use of guns.

The period when the video you said was released, incidents of Indian fishermen crossing the border were on the rise. We contacted the Navy and were informed that because of Covid-19 no arrests were being made. Using this opportunity, Indian fishermen were crossing over. The government asked the Navy to take a firm stand to prevent these intrusions. In recent times, the arrests of Indian fishermen have been carried out in accordance with the legal framework of Sri Lanka. Q: TN fishermen feel there is nothing wrong in fishing beyond the IMBL — a traditional practice carried out for decades based on mutual goodwill. Your government calls it poaching. Roller boats with trawling nets were introduced less than 30 years ago in south India, especially in Tamil Nadu. Some investors into these boats believed to be having a political backing, wanted their trade to flourish and paid huge salaries to traditional fishermen and engaged them in roller boats. Due to the use of roller boats the fish wealth in the Indian waters depleted and they began to turn their attention across the border.

As there were restrictions for Sri Lankan fishermen to fish in the Northern sea due to the civil war and as the focus of our navy was on the war, nobody was concerned about Indian roller boats fishing in Sri Lankan waters. Q: TN fishermen say they have no option but to venture into Lankan waters as the sea bed in Indian territorial waters is shallow and rocky. I cannot accept that the Indian sea is not conducive for fish to live. You should understand that the bottom trawling nets used by roller boats are destroying marine wealth including coral reef conducive for fish breeding and fishlings that are not ready to be caught. That is why many countries including Sri Lanka have banned this fishing practice. Without foresight, adapting the wrong fishing method has destroyed India's marine wealth and they are engaged in destroying Sri Lanka's marine wealth. As a solution and alternative, the Government of India is encouraging

deep sea fishing and is providing assistance for it. But Indian roller boat owners are not showing interest in it. Q: In October 2020, you were reported as being ""pleased to hear about the happy news"" when describing the Sri Lankan navy attacks on Tamil Nadu fishermen. Is that correct?

I wish to clarify that I had only mentioned that I expressed my happiness that the Sri Lankan navy had started taking action, it was not over attacks on Tamil fishermen. Q: In 2012, you threatened to come to Rameswaram with 5,000 fishermen and hold a mid-sea protest against 'poaching' by TN fishermen. Why did you back off? Yes. I had said that. But it could not be executed due to the change in political scenario at that time. Q: So, what is the permanent solution to end these frequent skirmishes? As I have been insisting, Indian boats should stop crossing the border and engaging in illegal fishing practices. The two countries should then comply with a common mechanism to find a smooth solution for this issue. We cannot permit trawling method of fishing as it will destroy the future of Sri Lankan as well as Indian fishermen. Roller boat owners should immediately ditch this method of fishing. Q: Do you see an end to this problem? Yes, I definitely do.

### **Tamil Nadu: 'Sea Belongs to Fishermen': Locals against Adani Port expansion**

<https://www.thequint.com/my-report/fishermen-and-activists-protest-against-adani-port-in-chennai-at-kattupalli-near-ennore-creek>

"Adani Port and SEZ had proposed a revised development plan for the Kattupalli Port, Tamil Nadu in 2018. According to the Environmental Impact Assessment, the development plan mentions that the construction period of the harbour will be spread over 20 years. Adani Port will be expanding the existing L&T port of 330 acres to 6,111 acres. Out of which 2,000 acres will be occupied in the sea by dumping sand and stones. The expansion of the port is said to occupy the wetlands of the barrier island near Pulicat. Residents of Pulicat are protesting against the expansion of the port, fearing loss of livelihood and biodiversity of the area. Livelihood of Fishermen in Question Fishing is a major occupation of people living in 14 villages, that is situated in the Pulicat Lagoon. The Pulicat Lake is rich in marine diversity, as it is a natural brackish water. Fishermen of the Pulicat dread that their livelihood will be in danger if the project comes up there. Several social activists and climate change groups in Chennai claim that the Adani Port project is illegal and unethical.

The revised project plan is prohibited under Coastal Regulation Zone Notifications 2011 and 2019, as ports are not permitted to be set up in high-erosion zones. People of the village are protesting against the expansion of the port, as it will impact the wetlands and destroy the ecologically fragile lake, which also serves as a wildlife sanctuary. Environmentalists allege that the conversion of this wetland into an industrial area will have a drastic impact on water security in Chennai. As the entire area of the proposed plan is a coastal stretch, it falls under the high eroding zone, which in turn acts as a treat to sea erosion, where flooding is high during the

monsoon season. During the Kattupalli Port construction, people living along the shore were forced to evacuate. Yashodha amma, a well known woman of the Kattupalli kuppam has been fighting against the corporate company for 12 years now, as she was promised a permanent job. Hoping that her future generation will have a better livelihood, she decided to leave the town along with the other thousands of people of Kattupalli. Protesting against industrial development project plans, people of Pulicat are striving to sustain their livelihood, and are trying to protect the natural ecosystem of the place, where they have been living for generations. Public Hearing Against Adani Port and SEZ Postponed Based on a petition filed by the fishermen of Pulicat in Madras High Court, the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board had announced a public hearing for the petitions filed by the Opposition political party on the revised port plan on 22 January 2021. But the meet was postponed citing COVID-19 norms. Social Activist Nityanand Jeyaraman stated that the court has not yet announced a new date for public hearing. Adani Port and SEZ Limited's Response to The Quint Roy Paul, Associate Vice President, Corporate Brand Custodian of Adani Group responded to The Quint's query. He said that the proposed expansion project at Kattupalli will exclude the ecologically vulnerable areas, which are not permissible, bearing in mind the sustenance of the localised ecological needs.

### **Tamil Nadu: NCCR researchers find microplastics in seven popular fish varieties**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/chennai-nccr-researchers-find-microplastics-in-seven-popular-fish-varieties/articleshow/81404973.cms>

"The fish on your plate may contain tiny specks of plastic from your face scrub. Researchers from city-based National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) found microplastics in 80% of samples of seven popular fish species sold at Pattinapakkam near the Marina, one of the four major fish landing centres in the city. The microplastics detected in the gills and gut of Indian Mackerel, Greater Lizardfish, Humphead Snapper, Barracuda and Golden Snapper were between 1.93mm and 2.03mm in the form of fibres, fragments, films or nurdles. Most of the microplastic was red in colour. NCCR scientist Pravakar Mishra said this was because fish see red as food particles. "We found a high presence of small particles of plastics in the surface seawater during our study in Bay of Bengal from Pulicat lake to Odisha coast," said Mishra, who heads the team researching microplastics. "The gut portion where we found microplastics is mostly removed in bigger fishes before consumption but leaching of the chemicals from the plastics could still go up the food chain to humans," he added. The varying shapes and types of microplastics come from varying sources. The researchers said nurdles, which are considered primary microplastics, come from cosmetics and face wash. Fibres may come from clothes washed at home, filament may come from breaking down of larger plastics and films are from polythene bags. Earlier studies in the city have shown presence of microplastics in other seafood such as mussels, squid, prawns and crabs. While the effect of consuming microplastic-contaminated seafood on human health is not yet fully known, NCCR is conducting toxicity

studies on various marine organisms. Soon samples will be collected from major fish landing centres across the country.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fisheries sector needs improvement**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fisheries-sector-needs-improvement/article34023929.ece>

"With fish landings remaining flat for several years in a row, experts in the fisheries sector say the focus should now be on quality and value addition so that the men who toil in the seas off the Tamil Nadu coast will get a better income. "Over the past five years, fish production has not increased much, hovering around 6.9 lakh tonnes per year, and marine fishermen are spending more on getting bigger boats, nets and equipment. They are forced to get engines with a higher horsepower that can drag the nets at the bottom of the sea," said an expert, who did not want to be named. Fishermen, especially those operating out of the Kasimedu fishing harbour in Chennai, have been urging the government to establish a fish park near the harbour so that fish being landed here could be processed for export markets. Recently, the Centre announced in the Union Budget that the Kasimedu harbour would get some facilities, but it is not clear what facilities will come up. "At present, fish from Chennai is being sent to Kerala to be processed and then exported, which means we are losing out on income from exports. Further, the price that we get is quite low, compared with other fishing harbours. The harbour only has auction halls, open spaces to sell fish in retail and space to repair nets. In fact, going by international standards, sanitation is not up to the mark. We even lack toilets and drinking water. Unless these facilities are upgraded, we cannot export from here," said Nanjil Ravi of the Akhila Indhiya Meenavar Sangam. Price of catch U. Arulanandam, president, Rameswaram Fishermen Association, said tuna, a major catch among those from deep sea, was being sold for as high as \$1,000 a kg in Japan. "With every improvement in quality, the price of the catch will increase. Fish from here is sent to Vietnam where it is processed and sold for a higher price," he said, adding that while the processing facilities were established, care must be taken to ensure that local needs were met.

"Every fishing harbour has its unique catch. Uniform facilities would not be of much help," he said. To increase the income of fishermen, the Tamil Nadu government is trying to encourage deep sea fishing. Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar said this would help build resources close to the coast, thereby benefiting artisanal fishermen. "Already over 60 deep sea vessels have been built and handed over to the fishermen. There are two subsidy schemes for their purchase. For those in the Mandapam area, the subsidy amount is higher. The concept of mother ship, which was introduced in 2014, would help fishermen of deep sea vessels since it would process the catch in the sea and bring it to the coast. However, there have been no takers for this," he explained. He also pointed out that his government had spent over Rs.1,500 crore for improving

infrastructure in the State in the last five years. "We currently rank number one in fish production in the country," he said.

**Tamil Nadu: New fishing harbours will help mechanised vessels undertake deep sea fishing**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/new-fishing-harbours-will-help-mechanised-vessels-undertake-deep-sea-fishing/article33965008.ece>

"The slew of fishing harbour projects under various stages of construction in Nagapattinam and Mayiladuthurai districts are expected to pave way for hundreds of mechanised fishing boats to undertake deep sea fishing. Since mechanised fishing boats have caused depletion of precious marine fishery resources, the harbour projects envisage an end to bottom trawling. The harbours will have the requisite infrastructure facilities to handle tuna and deep sea catches, officials said. A Fishing Harbour at Poompuhar in Mayiladuthurai district that was constructed at a cost of Rs.148 crore under a Centrally sponsored scheme was put to use a year back. The fishing harbour at Tranquebar under Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF) to the tune of Rs.120 crore is designed with a northern breakwater to a length of 330 metres, southern breakwater up to 1,060 metres and other land side facilities for the hygienic handling of catches. The fishing harbour at Tranquebar will fulfil the long-term aspirations of the people of Tharangambadi and coastal villages like Chinnamedu, Chinnangudi, Thazhampettai, Pudupettai, Perumalpettai, Vellakoil, Kuttiyandiyur, Chandrapadi, and Chinnoorpettai.

The FIDF sanction of Rs.100 crore was made for the fishing harbour with modern facilities at Vellapallam village in Nagapattinam district. Earlier this year, the work on construction of a fishing harbour at Arcottuthurai in Nagapattinam district at an estimated cost of Rs.150 crore was initiated for the benefit of several hundreds of fishermen of Kameswaram, Vilunthamavadi, Vanavanmahadevi, Vellapallam, Naluvadhpathi and Pushpavanam villages. The new fishing harbours have been planned as protected fishing harbour basins in order to facilitate fishing operation in all weather conditions, a senior official said. The project for construction of the mini harbour in Nambiyar Nagar was initiated last November under self-sufficiency scheme of the State Government, to ease congestion at the Nagapattinam fishing harbour. The residents of the coastal village have contributed Rs.11.43 crore as their one-third share for the over Rs.34 crore project.

**Tamil Nadu: Plea for release of eight fishermen held in Maldives**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/plea-for-release-of-eight-fishermen-held-in-maldives/article33965375.ece>

"With notification for the election to the Legislative Assembly announced, the model code of conduct came into force on February 26. Under such circumstances, the weekly grievances

meeting held at the Collectorate was suspended until further orders. Officials, however, installed a box in which the petitions could be dropped. On Monday, a delegation representing Tharuvaikulam Fishermen Welfare Association led by its president Anthony arrived at the Collectorate and insisted on submitting a petition to the Collector personally. Collector K Senthil Raj said he would look into the petition. Later, the fishermen told reporters that colleagues from their hamlet set off into the sea from Kanniyakumari for fishing. As they were sailing southwards, an unexpected wind took their mechanised boat into the territorial waters of Maldives.

A surveillance team from Maldives and naval authorities seized the boat and arrested the fishermen. "For no fault of the fishermen, they have been detained for the last 10 days." Mr. Anthony said, "We have made a request to the Collector to at least send our petition to the Central government, who alone can take action." Stone quarry In another petition, villagers from Srivaikundam, Keezhur, Naduvor and other hamlets came to the Collectorate and pleaded with officials to suspend the licence issued to a stone quarry in their area. About 100 villagers claimed that the quarry site was not only causing pollution, but also creating tremor-like experience during odd hours. They threatened to boycott the poll if the officials failed to look into their grievance within a week's time.

### **Tamil Nadu: New harbours are expected to give a fillip to deep sea fishing**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/new-harbours-are-expected-to-give-a-fillip-to-deep-sea-fishing/article33967412.ece#>

"The slew of fishing harbour projects under various stages of construction in Nagapattinam and Mayiladuthurai districts are expected to pave way for hundreds of mechanised fishing boats to undertake deep sea fishing. Since mechanised fishing boats have caused depletion of precious marine fishery resources, the harbour projects envisage an end to bottom trawling. The harbours will have the requisite infrastructure facilities to handle tuna and deep sea catches, officials said. A fishing harbour at Poompuhar in Mayiladuthurai district that was constructed at a cost of Rs. 148 crore under a Centrally sponsored scheme was put to use a year back. The fishing harbour at Tranquebar under Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF) to the tune of Rs. 120 crore is designed with a northern breakwater to a length of 330 metres, southern breakwater up to 1,060 metres and other land side facilities for the hygienic handling of catches.

The fishing harbour at Tranquebar will fulfil the long-term aspirations of the people of Tharangambadi and coastal villages like Chinnamedu, Chinnangudi, Thazhampettai, Pudupettai, Perumalpettai, Vellakoil, Kuttiyandiyur, Chandrapadi, and Chinnoorpettai. The FIDF sanction of Rs. 100 crore was made for the fishing harbour with modern facilities at Vellapallam village in Nagapattinam district. Earlier this year, the work on construction of a fishing harbour at

Arcottuthurai in Nagapattinam district at a estimated cost of Rs. 150 crore was initiated for the benefit of several hundreds of fishermen of Kameswaram, Vilunthamavadi, Vanavanmahadevi, Vellapallam, Naluvadhpathi and Pushpavanam villages. The project for construction of the mini harbour in Nambiyar Nagar was initiated last November. The residents of the coastal village have contributed Rs. 11.43 crore as their one-third share for the over Rs. 34 crore project.

### **Tamil Nadu: Kin seek Centre's intervention for release of nine fishermen from Iranian prison**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/kin-seek-centres-intervention-for-release-of-nine-tamil-nadu-fishermen-from-iranian-prison/articleshow/81111243.cms>

"Kin of nine fishermen from Kanyakumari district have sought the intervention of the Centre for their release from an Iranian prison where they have been lodged for more than 13 months. The men working in Kuwait were detained on charges of entering Iran's waters in January 2020. Their relatives lamented that efforts taken by them and money spent had gone in vain. The nine fishermen are Albert Ravi, 38, of Midalam, Godwin John Weldon, 40, Arockia Ligin, 24, Joseph Besky, 50, and Jesudas, 27, of Arockiapuram, Daynas, 40, of Mel Midalam, Sahaya Vijay, 22, of Pallam, Michael Adimai, 45, of Chinna Vilai and Velington, 36, of Kottilpadu all from Kanyakumari district. P Justin Antony of International Fishermen Development Trust said the men went fishing from Fahaheel in Kuwait in three boats owned by their Kuwait employer Olith on January 15, 2020. On January 17, they were detained by Iranian authorities in deep sea on charges of entering their waters and were lodged in the Bushehr prison in Iran. Arockia Ligin's mother A Carmel Rani, 47, said that her son is the only earning member of the family and shoulders the responsibility of repaying loans to the tune of Rs 7 lakh the fisher family had obtained for the wedding of his two elder sisters. "He had worked in Kuwait for two years and came on holidays in 2019 before returning in November that year," she said. The 24-year-old last texted his family before going for fishing and the family was worried as they did not receive his call.

"After checking with boys from our village who are working as fishermen there, we came to know about the arrest. We have only seen a picture of him in the prison and couldn't speak to him from then," she said. Families of the men believed that their employer would take them out of the prison and did not initiate any steps to make representations to the government here. "After waiting for six months in vain we petitioned (late) Kanyakumari MP H Vasanthakumar, fisheries officials and the Kanyakumari district collector mid-last year," she added. Rani said they had tried to engage a lawyer in Iran through known persons here and ended spending Rs

90,000 each, but in vain. Mariaprema, the mother of Jesudas, died in June but her son could not attend the funeral. Those detained are the lone earning member of most families, thereby affecting the kin economically and psychologically. Justin Antony said that on Friday they made a representation on this issue in person to the Kanyakumari district collector and also written to the Prime Minister, the chief minister, the external affairs minister, the Indian ambassador to Iran and the Indian ambassador to Kuwait for the speedy release and return of the fishermen.

### **Tamil Nadu: Low arrival pushes prices of fish up at Kasimedu harbour**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/low-arrival-pushes-prices-of-fish-up-at-kasimedu-harbour/articleshow/81082885.cms>

"Fish prices at Kasimedu harbour have gone up as the arrival of fish has dipped during the past fortnight as fewer trawlers have been venturing into the sea from the harbor. Fishermen at Kasimedu and Royapuram said hike in diesel price forced many of them not to venture into the waters. Fish vendor P Balraman from Kasimedu said seela, kizhanga, vanjiram, sankara, vavva are some of the varieties that used to land in large quantities at the harbour. During weekdays, about 150 tonnes of fish used to land at Kasimedu and on weekends the figure would double. It is not even 100 tonnes during weekdays now, he said. At Kasimedu, one basket (18kg) of seela fish used to sell at 250. It is now priced at 400. A basket of kizhanga which would sell at 2,500 is now priced at 4,500. The price of vanjiram rose from 500 to 800 a kg. Sankara is selling at 350 a basket from 280 a couple of weeks ago. Crab price too has gone up to 3,000 a basket from 1,800. In the retail market, prices of these varieties vary from area to area. Transportation cost from the harbour to each area results in further hike in prices, he said. Meanwhile, the situation is totally different at Chintadripet fish market. Trader Anbu from the market said the arrival of fish to this market is more, when compared to Kasimedu. Fish from Kerala and Andhra Pradesh arrive in good numbers there resulting in reduction in prices, he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Coast Guard rescues five fishermen off Karaikal**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/5-fishermen-rescued-by-coast-guard-after-boat-develops-snap/article33866813.ece>

"The Indian Coast Guard Region (East) on Wednesday rescued five fishermen in distress at sea after their boat was stranded 205 nautical miles east of Porto Nova, Karaikal coast, due to an engine breakdown. The Andaman and Nicobar-registered fishing boat, Madhana Sea Foods, was reported to be in distress. A sea-air coordinated rescue operation was swiftly launched. A Coast Guard Dornier aircraft was launched and ICGS Annie Besant sailed from Chennai to undertake a search and rescue operation. Additionally, the International Safety Net was activated to alert passing merchant vessels in the area about the stranded vessel, a Defence press release said. The

ICG aircraft located the vessel and ICGS Annie Besant undertook damage control to arrest flooding in the engine room of the boat and towed the boat to safety.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fisherman feared drowned in Pulicat lake**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/chennai-fisherman-feared-drowned-in-pulicat-lake/articleshow/81081338.cms>

"A fisherman was feared drowned after a boat capsized in Pulicat lake on Wednesday. The fisherman was identified as Shivakumar, 42, of Arangamkuppam in Pulicat. He and his friends Viji, Arumugham, Sathish and Madhavan were fishing in the lake and had netted a huge catch. Police said the boat capsized after hitting another boat. While the others managed to hold on to the boat, Viji and Shivakumar fell into the water and struggled to stay afloat. The two fishermen managed to pull Viji to safety but could not trace Shivakumar. ""We suspect that the missing fisherman might have got trapped in a big fishing net. The boat was also overloaded with fish,"" said a rescue official. Fishermen are still searching for Shivakumar.

### **Tamil Nadu: Now, crop insurance likely for highly vulnerable shrimp farmers**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/feb/15/now-crop-insurance-likely-for-highly-vulnerable-shrimp-farmers-2264400.html>

"The Chennai-based Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA) is working on modalities to introduce crop insurance for shrimp farmers who are highly vulnerable to big losses. A consultation meeting was recently organised at CIBA to develop a pragmatic crop insurance product for shrimp aquaculture. Officials from leading insurance companies, farmers, farmer representatives, scientists and other stakeholders participated in the meeting. KK Vijayan, director, CIBA, told The New Indian Express the shrimp farming industry in India has transformed from a traditional fishing system to a capital oriented semi-intensive system. Availability of large areas of suitable coastal land has led to phenomenal growth of this industry. Official statistics show shrimp farming accounts for about 70 per cent of Indian seafood exports revenue to the tune of Rs 35,000 crore. ""However, it is an investment intensive and risk laden farming activity mainly due to viral disease outbreaks and crop losses. After white spot disease caused extensive damage globally in 1994 and the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) declared crop holiday in 1995, there hasn't been any insurance cover for

shrimp farmers, although the industry has evolved greatly with sustainable practices," Vijayan said.

Adoption of better management practices, bio-security measures including aquatic health management and use of Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) shrimp seeds, helped to tackle the disease issues in the Indian shrimp farming clusters. Institutional support in the form of bank credit and insurance would further support the farmers in adoption of good aquaculture practices and ensure sustainability of the production system," Vijayan argued. Insurance companies have been reluctant to provide insurance cover to shrimp farming for the last two decades, assuming that it is a risky venture. "CIBA has been sensitizing insurance companies and facilitating them with scientific data that shrimp farming with adoption of better management practices is sustainable and needs institutional support, such as suitable insurance products," the official said. T Ravisankar, principal scientist from Social Sciences Division, CIBA, said institutional insurance was the need of the hour for shrimp farming and it would create a win-win situation for both insurance companies and farmers. He said that during the stakeholders meeting Allianz Insurance, New India Assurance and ICICI General Insurance exchanged views with the farmers who detailed their coverage requirements, adding that the majority of the farmers would avail the insurance package. C A Srinivasan, Vice President, Allianz Insurance, said the meeting was a good start to develop suitable insurance products. "There would be further discussion on premium and other aspects," he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: A tour of unloved fishes**

<https://www.hakaimagazine.com/features/a-tour-of-unloved-fishes/>

"Behind a lighthouse on Marina Beach in Chennai, the capital of India's southeastern state Tamil Nadu, two clashing scenes play out. On one side, early morning walkers wander the vast expanse of sand embracing the sea. On the other, opposite a row of identical green and pink buildings where the local fishing community lives, the atmosphere is frantic. Fishers are pulling in their boats and folding their nets on the beach. Vendors aggressively clean their fish stalls with water and brooms, readying them for customers. The fish that the sellers begin to stack into slippery pyramids on their tables represent a mix—some of it landed on this beach by small-scale fishers, while the rest was caught by industrial trawlers operating farther away. That combination makes this open-air market an ideal place for a lesson in sustainable seafood, explains marine geographer Divya Karnad of Ashoka University in Sonapat, northern India. She's addressing a group of college students and professionals from Chennai who have gathered at the lighthouse this February morning for a Fishploration event—a scientifically guided walk through fish markets that aims to help urban seafood eaters in India make more sustainable choices. Many city consumers tend to be familiar with just a few varieties of high-value fish like seerfish and pomfret, Karnad says. This partly has to do with where they get their fish from. City consumers

are increasingly relying on supermarkets and online stores that predominantly stock popular seafood varieties.

Most restaurants, too, have just a few types of fish on their menus. The result is a mismatch between what small-scale fishers can provide and what people frequently seek out, says Karnad. “I feel like at least with the younger generation, they’re totally disconnected.” This rings true for Yogabhavani Manogaran, who works at Barclays bank. A regular fish eater, Manogaran has long steered clear of fish markets, letting her father do the shopping. But today, she’s eager to get a clearer perspective on what the city’s beachside market has to offer. “Because I eat fish regularly, I want to know if I’m doing it ethically,” she tells me. Building a connection with seafood and buying more responsibly requires three things, Karnad tells the Fishploration participants: identifying fish correctly; understanding which varieties are in season and okay to eat—that is, choosing non-threatened species that aren’t breeding that month; and recognizing how the fish was caught, to avoid destructive fishing practices. “You should be able to go out and identify exactly what fish you’re eating because the greater diversity of fish you eat, the healthier it is for you and for the ocean,” she says.

To help the participants identify fish, Karnad hands out A3-sized posters displaying more than 50 marine species from India’s east coast that are safe to eat in February. Karnad has compiled this guide for every month of the year and for both of the country’s coasts as part of InSeason Fish, a collective she started with her wildlife biologist husband, Chaitanya Krishna, and friends to create awareness about seafood sustainability. InSeason Fish’s website also lists species that should be avoided each month. To make the lists, the team scoured official government data and scientific studies for details on species’ breeding seasons. For about 10 percent of the species, the team corroborated the scientific information with knowledge from local sellers, who are mostly women. The fisherwomen are the ones who cut the fish and see when the eggs are inside, so they know when the breeding season is, Karnad explains. Where scientific data wasn’t robust enough, such as for threadfin bream and ribbonfish, Karnad’s team relied mainly on the fishing communities’ knowledge. A participant asks if anchovies will be available today. “Everything will be available,” Karnad says. “The question is whether you want to eat it throughout the year.” After the briefing, we split into two smaller groups, led by Karnad and Krishna, and head to the seaward side stalls first, making our way through the swarming crowd. With the help of our guides, we identify big seerfish, pomfret, tuna, prawn, squid, and some sharks, cross-referencing what we see with the poster in our hands. A couple of stalls have piles of rays that Karnad hasn’t included in the lists or on the website.

“We have not put them because they are so difficult to distinguish, so we ourselves get confused,” she says. Many rays are also threatened, she told me the previous evening over a cup of coffee, and we need to encourage eating species that are not. Nearly every beachside vendor we ask confirms, after some prodding, that much of the seafood on their tables is from

Kasimedu, Chennai's main fishing harbor, about 12 kilometers away. "A truck comes from Kasimedu every day and we buy fish from that," says Rani, a vendor who goes by a single name, through an interpreter. Lata Velan, another vendor, who has several dogfish and a milk shark on sale—both on InSeason Fish's avoid list for February—goes to Kasimedu to buy fish for her stall, she says. Ironically, some of the fish the women have purchased from Kasimedu may have originated on Marina Beach. Small-scale fishers are increasingly selling their high-value catches like seerfish to traders at harbors such as Kasimedu for export, S. Velvizhi, a marine researcher at M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation in Chennai, who's not involved with Fishploration, later tells me.

At the harbors, fishers are assured a sale at a good price, unlike in the local markets where customers are less reliable. But then, on busier market days, the fishers' own family members or neighbors might pick up the same fish and bring it back to their stalls. "They feel like unless they have a seerfish on their table nobody is even going to look at the table," Karnad says. Much of the catch at Kasimedu comes from large mechanized boats like trawlers, widely regarded as a destructive form of fishing that involves dragging weighted nets along the seafloor. Some of the largest trawlers can stay out at sea for weeks at a stretch in pursuit of commercially valuable species, which are then kept frozen until sale. As we walk, Karnad points out clues to look for when trying to identify a fish that has been previously frozen—pale gills, rather than red; cloudy eyes instead of clear; and fins that are slightly bent out of shape from being crammed into boxes. By contrast, the fishing practices of Tamil Nadu's beach-landing fishers, like those of Marina Beach's fishers, are more ocean-friendly, and the catch is much fresher, Karnad says.

This is because the fishers stay out at sea in small fiberglass boats for just a few hours every night, keeping their nets in water for a short duration, which means that the fish reach the market within hours. This practice aligns with recommendations for reducing by-catch given by international organizations, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. A short soak time, in theory, lets fishers monitor what they're catching, allowing them to release endangered species and unwanted catch while the animals are still alive. If nets are kept in water for too long, more animals are likely to die and decay in the nets, making them unsalable. Many of the beach-landing fishing villages in Tamil Nadu also voluntarily establish temporary no-catch areas, Karnad says, so they have an area to fall back on when other fishing grounds are depleted. Karnad's team has found through surveys that while Chennai's small-scale fishers go out to sea hoping to catch more varieties that are of higher economic value, they end up catching a diverse mix of more than 100 different species in a month.

These include some highly valued fish, as well as several less-valued varieties like lizardfish or silverbelly that mostly get sold within villages for local consumption or are dried and sold as fish meal for the poultry industry. We see an indication of this lack of enthusiasm for so-called low-value fish on the other side of the road where the market continues. Sandwiched between parked

scooters and cars, some vendors have spread tarpaulins to display small silverbelly, parrotfish, threadfin bream, sole, anchovy, crab, and conch—all caught during last night’s fishing trip in this part of the sea. Few customers cross to this part of the market, sticking instead to the bigger beachside stalls, which predominantly have Kasimedu fish for sale. When Karnad has encouraged fishers to sell the mix of fish they can catch during each season and not go after high-value fish alone, they’ve been understandably reluctant. “They said that you have to give us guarantee that people are actually going to buy from us,” Karnad says.

Those conversations sparked the realization that to support sustainable fishing, she would also need to promote lesser-known species to the public. The diversity of fish at the market is already a revelation for Manogaran. “I thought there were only four to five varieties of fish, but now what I was able to witness here was that there are more than 40 to 50,” she says. For Sathya Priya Ganeshkumar, a university student and a vegetarian, it is the ability to observe the dynamics of fishing as a livelihood up close that’s drawn her to the walk. “This is my first time in a fish market,” she says. “I’m interested in labor [issues] generally, so I was fascinated by all this.” Her interests align with one of Karnad’s secondary goals: she not only wants to introduce people to the diversity of non-threatened, seasonal fish caught by more sustainable small-scale fishers, but also to get participants to interact with the fishing community.

“There’s a deeper connection when you actually meet the fishermen,” says Karnad. “What we’ve heard from participants is that the next time they’re faced with the decision of what fish to eat, they remember the people they met.” After our walk, some of us head to the fishing hamlet of Semmancheri on Kovalam Beach, a 45-minute drive from Marina Beach, for a scrumptious homemade lunch of rice with masala squid, tamarind-based halfbeak curry, and fried halfbeak. The seafood was freshly caught that morning by R. Ramadoss, a 40-something small-scale fisher, and cooked by his wife, Thangam. The squid is safe to eat in February, according to the InSeason Fish poster. The halfbeak, whose breeding seasons Karnad has yet to confirm, isn’t listed. As we eat, Ramadoss tells us how he started fishing with his father as an 11-year-old. He tells us about the fish he supplies to local hotels and restaurants; the metal cabinet he found in a shipwreck 10 years ago that adorns his living room; and his four children, who after having eaten fish throughout the week, crave chicken biryani on Sundays. This visit to Ramadoss’s house is a second component of Fishploration that Karnad added in 2018. Participants visit a small-scale fisher family after the market tour and share a meal. Changing consumer behavior takes more than a single walk and meal, Karnad recognizes. “[B]ecause we’re doing it at such a small scale, it’s not having the level of impact that would be ideal to really change the conversation about seafood,” she admits.

When I speak with Yugraj Yadava, director of the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation, who is not involved in Fishploration, he expresses doubt that consumer preferences will ever shift enough to reduce pressure on high-value fish. He anticipates

species like seerfish and pomfret will remain coveted. “Fishers will always try to target these fish,” he says. Even when consumers want to change their habits, there can be barriers. Some former participants of Fishploration say they still struggle with correctly identifying fish, for example. Shivani Unakar, a freelance researcher based in Bengaluru, has started asking her fish vendor for a species by its local name that she looks up on InSeason Fish rather than trying to spot the safe options herself. “Visually, it’s very hard for me to identify at the fish market,” she says. Popularizing a diverse seafood menu also requires people to experiment with unfamiliar fish. The larger, fleshy seerfish and pomfret, with fewer and bigger bones, are easier to fry or cook into curries. “But cooking the smaller, bony fish and eating them is something we need to learn, and I don’t think I know as yet where to start,” says Mihir Ranganathan, a freelance marketer on my tour.

To keep driving forward with their goal of shifting buyer behavior, Karnad’s team has added new initiatives. They’re documenting recipes for the lesser-known fish varieties, for instance, and are collaborating with chefs and restaurateurs to get them to offer more diverse, in-season fish varieties sourced locally from small-scale fishers. The learning curve to becoming a more mindful seafood consumer can seem steep. But Karnad’s work is helping city people take the first steps. At the end of our afternoon at Ramadoss’s home, as everyone gets ready to leave, I jot down the recipe for the mouth-watering tangy halfbeak curry. Walking through the fish market, with the poster in hand, opened my eyes to the diversity of seafood I could be eating, yet it was meeting Ramadoss’s family that showed me how to savor it.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishing ban: Vembar fishers accuse officials of partiality**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/feb/16/fishing-ban-vembar-fishers-accuse-officials-of-partiality-2264709.html>

"It has been more than a month now since the Fisheries department had restricted Vembar mechanised fishing vessels from venturing into the sea, owing to a complaint from a few Tharuvaikulam country boat fishers that their fishnets were damaged by Vembar vessels. At this juncture, the Vembar fishermen are accusing the officials of favouring Tharuvaikulam fishers. The prohibition has affected a daily business of Rs 1.5 crore at Vembar Fishing Harbour, say Vembar Mechanised Fishermen Welfare Association functionaries. Vembar Fishing Harbour has 56 mechanised fishing trawlers that generate a cumulative business of over Rs 1.5 crore. The vessels provide bread and butter to more than 800 families, a fishermen association member says. It was on January 13 the officials restricted Vembar fishers from entering the sea. The complaint from Tharuvaikulam fishers was then taken to police and also to a court. Though the fishers were allowed to operate the vessels the next day, the officials prohibited them yet again, citing another similar complaint from Keezhavaipar fishermen. Vembar fishers said the Assistant

Director of Fisheries, who held talks between the parties concerned, had stopped the supply of subsidised diesel to Vembar fishers since January 14.

According to a complaint given by Keezhavaipar fishermen to the Assistant Director of Fisheries, a Vembar mechanised vessel had damaged the fishnets of a few Tharuvaikulam fishers. We demand `11 lakh compensation, the complaint read. Speaking to TNIE, Association President Antony Raj said the association was ready to pay `1.10 lakh as compensation to Keezhavaippar fishermen, since ""the complaint was vague"". ""However, they demand `3 lakh as compensation without having any evidence. The complaint does not mention the mechanised vessel that allegedly damaged the nets,"" he said, adding that most of the complaints were fabricated. The association's former president, who was a part of the talks, said the fishers had gone nine times for talks to the fisheries department office so far since the ban.

The country boat fishermen from adjacent hamlets often give baseless complaints against our fishers, but we still give them 10 percent of their claim on behalf of the association, Selvaraj said, adding that it was the first time the fisheries department had prohibited an entire fleet from entering the sea. The association said officials should ban the vessels that damage the fishnets but not the entire fleet. We suspect that the officials are favouring the country boat fishers as both parties are of the same community, the association members alleged. Meanwhile Vembar fishermen alleged that officials were remaining as spectators on country boat fishermen using banned purse seine nets. When asked, Assistant Director of Fisheries told TNIE that the mechanised vessels would be allowed for fishing once both parties arrive at a conclusion on compensation. The officials refused to comment on why the entire fleet is being banned.

**Tamil Nadu: '15,000 tonnes of dry fish worth Rs.500 cr. lying in warehouses'**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/15000-tonnes-of-dry-fish-worth-500-cr-lying-in-warehouses/article33844303.ece>

"Fishermen have appealed to the Central government to immediately hold talks with the Sri Lankan authorities and help lift the ban imposed on dry fish exports from India to the island nation as nearly 15,000 metric tons of dry fish valued at Rs.500 crore was lying in warehouses since November 2020. AITUC fishermen association state president S. Muruganandam told The Hindu on Monday that the Sri Lankan government had banned import of dry fish from India since November 2020. The fishermen in coastal districts in Tamil Nadu, who ventured into the sea, procured superior quality fish, meant exclusively for exports. Almost 20 to 25 % of the produce was bought by the exporters, who processed and exported them as dry fish to Sri Lanka and other countries.

Among the dry fish, 'maasi', 'katta' and 'nethili' were the most sought after varieties in Sri Lanka. However, the island nation's ban had crippled exports since November last year and the

goods were lying in Thoothukudi warehouses, he said. Though no reasons were assigned by officials for the ban, Mr. Muruganandam claimed that dry fish was being exported by Pakistan and Maldives to Sri Lanka. Before November 2020, the Sri Lankan government had imposed additional taxes on imports of dry fish from India and subsequently they banned it. "It is almost 100 days now and our goods are lying in the warehouses in Thoothukudi," he added. As a result, many fishermen were yet to get their wages and some of the exporters too have been unable to keep up their financial commitments with the banks, he said and hoped that the Centre would intervene with the Sri Lankan authorities and get the ban lifted. Moreover, the fishermen also expected the State government to give them adequate space in the warehouses to stock the dry fish without imposing charges until the goods were exported.

### **Tamil Nadu: Pulicat declared eco-sensitive zone**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/pulicat-declared-eco-sensitive-zone/articleshow/80914721.cms>

"The Pulicat bird sanctuary in Tiruvallur district has been declared an ecologically sensitive zone to ensure total protection. A senior Chennai wildlife official said the demarcated area, within a 500 metre radius, will include the villages of Elavur, Injur, Selliabedu, Uppanavoyal, Periaveppathur, Kolor, Poovami, Tirupalaivanam, Pralayambakkam, Andarmadam and Thangal Perumkulam. A map of the villages and the Pulicat lake, under the zone, will be sent to the Union ministry of environment, forests and climate change (MoEFCC) for approval. Once the demarcation is notified by the state and the Centre, wildlife officials will come out with guidelines for residents of the 11 villages where several activities including shrimp farming are undertaken. On Tuesday last, wildlife officials held a meeting in Tiruvallur in which representatives from the revenue department, fisheries, elected panchayat heads and other stakeholders participated. A senior wildlife official said a map of the area is to be prepared before any sanctuary or tiger reserve is declared a protected area and sent to the MoEFCC for its nod. In case the Union ministry rejects the proposal, an area of 10m radius will become ESZ by default, the official said. In 2019, the authorities declared a '0' kilometre of the Pulicat sanctuary ESZ, effectively meaning there would be no eco-sensitive zone, and sent it to the MoEFCC which rejected the proposal.

### **Tamil Nadu: Rising diesel prices worry fishers**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/rising-diesel-prices-worry-fishers/article33832892.ece>

"Fishermen, reeling under the impact of spiralling prices of fuel, have urged the government to increase their monthly quota of subsidised diesel. Fishermen said mechanised boats use up to 8,000 litres of diesel per deep sea voyage and in many cases, boat owners are

lamenting that they were incurring losses. “My boat is back from a trip and I have to pay Rs.2 lakh but I have only Rs.1 lakh in hand. I am unable to repay my loan amount of Rs.50,000 a month taken towards buying nets,” said M.E. Raghupati, a boat owner and a fishing community leader in Kasimedu. He said Karnataka had increased the subsidy cap on the number of litres according to the engine capacity. “This could be easily emulated here. We need to check how much is allocated as subsidy each year and how much is left unspent and that amount could be given to fishermen who depend on diesel to run their boats,” he added. Long dry period K. Bharathi, of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association, said the associations were in discussion as to what to ask of the government. “Many of the fibre reinforced plastic boats have not gone for fishing since men don’t have money for diesel at the present rate. The government should consider a cap on diesel prices for fishermen. That would help and be easy since we tank up at designated bunks inside fishing harbours,” he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishing hamlet residents seek permanent jobs**

[https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2021/feb/12/fishing-hamlet-residents-  
seek-permanent-jobs-2262885.html](https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2021/feb/12/fishing-hamlet-residents-seek-permanent-jobs-2262885.html)

"Residents of Kattupalli fishing hamlet on Thursday staged a protest in front of facilities formerly owned by L&T, demanding that the company make jobs of 140 persons from the village permanent, as per agreement. The residents, who were allegedly evicted for construction of the port, said that they were promised permanent jobs within a year to 18 months of appointment; 10 years have passed and nothing has been done. The villagers blocked traffic to the port early on Thursday morning. By around 11 am, revenue department officials reached the spot and held talks with the protesters. A spokesperson from Larsen & Toubro told Express that the land where the company was, has been sold to another private organisation and said that the responsibility of providing permanent jobs was also shifted.

### **Tamil Nadu: Local fishers refuse to give up hope**

[https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-  
nadu/2021/feb/09/savemuthupetmangroves-local-fishers-refuse-to-give-up-hope-  
2261439.html](https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/feb/09/savemuthupetmangroves-local-fishers-refuse-to-give-up-hope-2261439.html)

"Muthupet forest is the only place in the country where a unique “canal fishing” is practised, that serves the dual purpose of providing livelihood for local fishers and keep mangroves in good health. There are about 120 natural canals and 79 man-made fishing canals, each measuring 500 metres to 4 km. These were dug about a couple hundred years ago. M Shankar (50), a fourth-generation fisherman and the president of Village Forest Council in Maravakkadu, said that out of these 200 canals, only 15 to 20 were functional currently, and that all others had filled up with silt. “Gaja cyclone turned the entire Muthupet forest into a

graveyard. Besides uprooting trees, the storm covered all the canals with 3-foot-deep silt. To revive the forest, these 200 canals have to be desilted and we will not let our forest die,” said Shankar. For the past 25 years, Shankar has been mobilising his community to carry out mangrove plantation on 5,000 hectares, with the help of the forest department. Shankar and his community have so far dug 3,000 feeder canals, which bring water into the degraded areas and help regeneration of mangroves.

In Palanjur and Thamarankottai reserve forest, there is still healthy mangrove-cover, thanks to his efforts. Now, these canals are also covered in silt. A Madurai-based NGO, Dhan Foundation, has come forward to desilt at least 50 canals. T Asaithampi, coordinator of Coastal Conservation and Livelihood Development Programme, said the foundation has plans to pump in Rs 5 crore for canal desilting. Lack of funds delaying restoration work. It’s been nearly 18 months since the Tamil Nadu forest department has submitted a proposal seeking funds under the National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change, from the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC). “We are still awaiting a nod from the ministry,” Syed Muzammil Abbas, Chief Wildlife Warden and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) of Tamil Nadu told Express. The delay is attributed to the Covid pandemic and the department is yet to get even the annual Budget for mangrove restoration, for the year 2020-21, sources said. As per the detailed project report, a sum of Rs 25 crore has been sought from the ministry for Muthupet mangrove forest restoration. The project has eight components. Primarily, the funds will be utilised for removal of invasive prosopis juliflora from the mangrove area, regeneration of mangrove biodiversity on 2,500 hectares of degraded area in Muthupet forest range, and desilting old canals to maintain the existing mangrove plantation.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish stagnant as Sri Lanka bans dry fish import**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fish/article33812775.ece>

"Tamil Nadu exporters of Maldivian fish ('maasi karuvaadu') are in a spicy situation as Sri Lanka, the major consumer of this dry seafood, has banned its import from India since November last. After the Union Government started giving attractive subsidy for constructing mechanised boats for multi-day deep sea tuna fishing, the number of boats involved in this fishing has increased sharply over the past few years. Consequently, the arrival of tuna in all fish landing centres of the State increased manifold to attract a good number of people towards making Maldivian fish with tuna. Though fresh tuna is also being exported, 17% of the total catch of tuna is diverted for making Maldivian fish, which is produced in Thoothukudi, Nagapattinam, Chennai, Ramanathapuram and other districts. After washing the tuna thoroughly, the entire digestive system of the fish is removed and cleaned again with water before being boiled. Then the boiled fish is dried hygienically for 8 to 10 days and packed for export.

After Sri Lanka's ban came into force on November 5 last, the Maldivian fish manufacturers, workers of these manufacturing units and those who were getting indirect employment are in deep trouble. Maldivian fish producers of Thoothukudi district, who were exporting an average of 20 tonnes of 'maasi karuvaadu' everyday to Sri Lanka, are in big soup after the island nation's ban even as the neighbour continues to import this dry fish from Maldives, Pakistan and Iran. "When Maldives too faced the ban, the country's External Affairs Minister visited Sri Lanka and ensured the immediate repeal of the ban. Though our External Affairs Minister visited Sri Lanka recently, the ban on Maldivian fish apparently did not figure in his talks with his Sri Lankan counterpart. So, we're in deep trouble as Maldivian fish worth over Rs.500 crore, meant for export to Sri Lanka, is lying across the country," says P. Antony Selvasekar of Tharuvaikulam, one of the major Maldivian fish producer and first-generation entrepreneur, whose godown has 'maasi karuvaadu' worth Rs.1.50 crore due to the ban.

"For the loan I have availed for this business venture, I am paying Rs.2 lakh a month as interest alone," he says. With the Maldivian fish manufacturers abstaining from purchase due to the ban, one kg of tuna, which was sold for Rs.70, has dropped to Rs.50 a kg now at Tharuvaikulam, which receives 100 tonnes of tuna a day on an average. Each manufacturing unit, which has employed a minimum of 60 workers, are idle and labourers have been left unemployed for the past two months. While the labourers have no work, the traders who were buying the 'tuna waste' for making broiler feed, are also out of business now. "So, the State Government should take up this serious problem with the Centre for repealing the ban at the earliest, which will fetch huge amount of foreign exchange while ensuring the livelihood of thousands of people here," said Mr. Selvasekar.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen want Sri Lanka to lift ban on dry fish imports**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishermen-want-sri-lanka-to-lift-ban-on-dry-fish-imports/article33777345.ece>

"Fishermen and traders of Kasimedu want the Sri Lankan government to lift the ban on karuvaadu (dry fish) imports from India. The Kasimedu fishing harbour sends around 500 tonnes of dry fish to Thoothukudi, from where it is sent to Sri Lanka. Nanjil Ravi of Akhila Indhiya Meenavar Sangam said there were at least 10 traders, who depended on the dry fish trade with the island nation. "The ban on dry fish imports from India was supposed to be only for 100 days and it began in November. The time limit is over now, which is why we are asking that the ban be lifted," he said. Many types of Dry fish, including maasi karuvaadu, made from Yellowfin and Skipjack tuna, thena koni and nethili, are processed and sent from Kasimedu. "About 150 containers of dry fish at the Thoothukudi harbour are waiting to be sent to Sri Lanka.

The government is asking us to take up deep sea fishing but if we do not have the market for our catch, what is the use? Fishermen have stopped going on deep sea trips since we already have a

lot of unsold dry fish,” a trader said. He also said Sri Lanka had been buying dry fish from other countries. “Usually, the dry fish sent from here is repacked and sent to other countries. Even that has stopped now,” he added. Officials in the Fisheries Department said it was an internal policy decision of the Sri Lankan government. “It was supposed to protect their economy that has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Union Commerce Department has taken this up with the Sri Lankan government. We have requested them to lift the ban,” he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: As threats increase, community’s efforts to save Pulicat lake continues**

<https://india.mongabay.com/2021/02/as-threats-increase-communitys-efforts-to-save-pulicat-lake-continues/>

"Meerasa’s story is one of displacement. The son of a boat maker and a resident of Dhonirevu (Karimanal island), one of many villages around the Pulicat lake, Meerasa and his parents were evicted from their home in 1985 during ISRO’s Sriharikota expansion. Meerasa now lives in Jameelabad and has worked in conservation since he graduated from school. But with industrial expansion around Pulicat lake threatening the land and the mangrove forests that surround them, Meerasa fears that history might be repeating itself. About 50 km north of Chennai, Tamil Nadu, is Pulicat lake, the second largest brackish water ecosystem in India. Known as Pazhaverkadu, meaning “forest of the rooted fruit”, Pulicat Lake was once covered by dense mangrove trees. But over the centuries — from mangroves being hacked for the construction of the Dutch fort in the 1600s, to the gradual clearing of forests owing to spreading urbanisation and industrial expansion — the mangroves of Pulicat have now been reduced to sporadic patches along the coast.

And the mangrove destruction for industrial expansions have both severely affected biodiversity and endangered the livelihood of the fisherfolk who depend on the mangrove ecosystem. “Around 1,200 families are completely dependent on the mangroves for their income. They make between 100 to 300 rupees a day during the summer season, and 1,500 to 2000 rupees a day during the monsoon season.” Meerasa says. “Fishing that involves tiger prawns and mud crabs are very lucrative, with a kilo of mud crabs costing as much as 1,500 rupees and tiger prawns costing about 1,200 rupees. Both the tiger prawns and mud crabs need the mangroves to thrive. They provide them with shade as well as feed in the form of falling leaves, and are critical to the livelihood of the fishing communities.” Meerasa says. The mangroves have many uses, for starters, many marine species use them as nurseries during the early stage of their lives. The mangrove tree shedding, along with the accumulation of bacteria, provides young marine life with plenty of food, as well as a thick refuge to hide from larger animals.

“The Pulicat lagoon ecosystem is highly threatened by natural and anthropogenic factors. Over the years, the mangrove species diversity has significantly reduced, thereby threatening many microniches of a range of fauna that use these habitats as nurseries. Some noteworthy species

that breed in mangroves are flathead mullet, the iconic edible oyster *Crassostrea madrasensis* and Brachyuran crabs.” says Riddhika Ramesh, a scientist at the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History. According to a report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2007, fisheries lose about 480 kg in annual production for every hectare of forest that is destroyed. The mangroves, while acting as nurseries, preserve the fish stock in the long term, ensuring a reliable source of income for the people who depend on it. Mangroves also provide the community with timber, have enabled ecotourism, and protect the coasts from flooding.

“Many waterlogged muddy areas of mangrove habitat are now transformed to vast arid areas which are dominated by invasive plant species *Prosopis juliflora* and *Casuarina equisetifolia* along the fringes of the lagoon. With increasing aridity from reduced rainfall and rise in summer temperature, reduced seawater exchange in the northern part of the lagoon and hypersaline conditions of the lake has made restoration of mangrove species challenging. It is because of this highly complex process that we are losing the biological integrity of a brackish water lagoon system.” Ramesh says. Yuvan Aves, a naturalist and educator says the wetlands of Pulicat are important because of the mosaic of different ecologies that can be found here. The Kosasthalai, Arani, and Kalangi rivers that empty into this lagoon make it possible for riverine floodplains, tidal flats, salt pans, mangroves, tropical dry evergreen forests, backwaters, coastal sand dunes, sandy beaches and the large Pulicat ecosystem itself to exist. He goes on to add that the mangroves of Pulicat lake also acts as a natural buffer against floods. “The bioregion is Chennai’s largest flood catchment area and cyclonic buffer zone, for a city that’s constantly frequented by cyclones, it’s important that this land is preserved,” Aves says. “The Kattupalli megaport expansion will also put one-fourth of Chennai’s drinking water that comes from the wellfields and other sources at risk, and would put over 10 lakh people under serious water stress.”

Meerasa has been involved in restoring mangroves of Pulicat Lake, raising awareness among the community, and conserving the wetland ecosystem for over two decades. Illustration by Harmeeet Rahal for Mongabay. “This is our land and I know that no one else but us will fight for it” Meerasa remembers when his family was evicted from their village Dhonirevu in May 1985. “Before we were asked to vacate, there was at least a kilometer separating two villages, but once the relocation began, they started stuffing us in the free space between the villages. The overpopulation led to scarcity of water, the overfishing created a strain on the lake, and there were resentment and communal riots between the existing and resettled communities.” Meerasa fears that the expansion plan of the Kattupalli port would have similar consequences. In addition, it threatens around 500 hectares of mangroves, resulting in displacement and loss of livelihood of hundreds of fishing families.

“I became active because this is our land and I know that no one else but us will fight for it,” Meerasa says, talking about his inspiration to protect the mangroves. Driven by a sense of duty to protect the ecosystem that has allowed him and his community their livelihoods, Meerasa started working with CReNIEO (The Center for Research on New International Economic Order), a rural development nonprofit organisation, right after school. “As far as I can remember, all the efforts to protect the lake have been community-driven. On August 5, 2002, when the Enoor North Thermal power station (North Chennai Thermal Power Station near Ennore Port) released hot water into the lake, fishes, prawns and crabs died by the hundreds. I remember walking into the lake when it was 43.5 degrees Celsius as opposed to the summer high of 35 degrees Celsius. It was the community that protested for five straight days and got the power station to cool the water and change the direction of the flow before sending it back into the river. This motivated me and I’ve been involved in community-driven efforts ever since.”

Meerasa first partnered with CReNIEO in 1988, when he enrolled for a computer course sponsored by the organisation. “There were many outreach programs back then, for example, in the late 1980s, boatmen from Pulicat had to travel all the way to Chennai to get their engines repaired. But then CReNIEO organised a three-month-long engine repair workshop to produce homegrown mechanics, and now all the boat mechanics in Pulicat are a result of that workshop.” As part of the organisation, Meerasa has been active with community outreach and has worked with over 30 schools these past 20 years. “We organise trips for school students to get familiar with the mangroves, and we’ve also published booklets and teaching material for students and teachers so that they’re informed about their surroundings. It’s important that people develop a feeling of ownership. This is our land, this is our livelihood and our future, and it’s our right to fight for it,” he says.

**Fighting off worm poachers** “All of this outreach has paid off because the community takes action and mobilises all on its own today. The boatmen who take tourists to see the mangroves make it a point to never leave anything behind, the villagers get together to clean the lake, and just last month we were approached by women who’d fought off worm poachers. It’s a problem we’ve been having for the past three years, and it’s one that’s caused great harm to the ecosystem,” says Meerasa. Polychaete worms are found in large quantities on this side of the lake, with one kilo of worms fetching 1,200 rupees and as much as 4,000 rupees when resold in the market. These worms are sought after as feed by prawn farmers and aquarium dealers, who pay agents to acquire them from the lake. But the polychaete worms are important to aquatic life as well as the birds that visit the Pulicat Lake. The main problem arose when hired workers dug two feet holes in the ground to acquire these worms.

These holes caused sudden drops in the ground. This resulted in falls and broken bones among the prawn picking women of Pulicat. The women banded together and fought off the poachers. They now pick the worms themselves, but in measured quantities. Restoring mangroves the

biggest community-driven undertaking, however, was the mangrove reforestation effort started in 2012. Aided by the Global Nature Fund and partnering with CRENIEO, the project involved fishermen and boatmen, labourers and prawn pickers, and utilised the local community in the restoration process. Thereby empowering them to take charge of their environment and enabling them to regain the livelihoods lost when the mangroves were destroyed. “In 2012, we began digging canals to improve the water circulation, especially during the summer. We dug around 3000 meters of canals over three years, and began planting the mangroves on the bunds of the canals. We’d tried this out once before in 2010, using the indigenous *Avicennia marina* seeds, but this was a failure owing to the high mortality rate of the plant. *Avicennia marina* seeds are about the size of a tamarind and remain small even after growing them in a nursery.” Meerasa says, “We learned from our mistakes and this time around, we used the *Rhizophora mucronata* plant. *Rhizophora* seeds are about a foot long, have lower mortality rates, and grow two to three feet when kept in the nursery.

We got the help of the womenfolk around the lake to grow these seeds in nurseries; labourers were paid to work on the canals, and we listed the help of fishermen to plant the mangroves on the bunds.” He adds, “The canals also helped the plants regenerate naturally. *Avicennia marina* seeds that drifted away would settle on the bunds and grow, and soon a site with 100 plants had over 5,000 plants. It’s hard to monitor the plants and keep count because they would significantly reduce in numbers during the summer — they would either drift away and the lack of water was a major issue. Just last year we got labourers to manually water the mangroves during the summer.” But just as everything was going great, tragedy struck. During the monsoon of 2015, Pulicat was hit by a historic flood, a flood that submerged the plants for 10 days and resulted in the loss of about 90% of the restored mangroves. Mangroves have several adaptations that enable them to tolerate up to 100 times more salt than most other plants. They get rid of the salt by storing them in their leaves and bark and shedding them, but at same time they also need freshwater to survive. They would last about a week or so submerged completely by saltwater, after that they begin to deteriorate.

The community lost a lot of its plants during the floods, but haven’t given up yet. The people continued with their reforestation efforts, and are now able to see its advantages materialise. “I used to find two or three tiger prawns at most, but now after the mangrove growth, I pick 10 to 12 prawns on average,” says Rajee, a prawn picker. Babu, a boatman who helped plant the mangroves, says that he makes detours during his tours of the lake to show tourists the mangroves. “I like to show off these plants, and people are always surprised to learn about a tree that can grow in saltwater,” he says. Threat of port expansion looms The Kattupalli megaport, the largest proposed port project in India, is set to be constructed as an expansion to the existing 330-acre L&T shipyard, amidst protests. The public hearing over the construction of the 6111-acre megaport on Kattupalli Island was scheduled to take place on January 22 but has been postponed after taking into account the large number of people who would turn up and the

potential COVID-19 hazard it could cause. Despite the looming threat of the Kattupalli port expansion, and the possibility of history repeating itself again, Meerasa is optimistic about the future. He's convinced that people are better informed this time around, and that they're more willing to act. "No one knows what the future holds, but we know how to protect our surroundings. We will continue our work preserving our land and our mangroves, and we will continue to fight for our land and our livelihood," he says.

### **Tamil Nadu: Thanjavur fishers want high-speed boats confiscated**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/thanjavur-fishers-want-high-speed-boats-confiscated/articleshow/80657166.cms>

"Fishermen from Thanjavur and Pudukottai have demanded that the government take steps to confiscate the mechanized high-speed boats operating along their coasts, and arrive at a permanent solution in this regard. A Thajudeen, general secretary of Tamil Nadu Fishermen Federation at Mallipattinam, said at a consultation meeting of Thanjavur, Pudukottai district mechanized boat fishermen association at Peravurani that there has been an agreement among fishermen on fishing by both mechanized and country boats. Accordingly, mechanized boats could fish for three days and country boats for four days a week in Thanjavur, Pudukottai and Ramanathapuram coasts. However, fishermen on high-speed boats from other districts have been violating the agreement, leaving the local fishermen high and dry. The association appealed to the government to do the needful to instruct these fishermen to follow the 40-year-long agreement. A resolution was also adopted at the meeting condemning the Sri Lankan navy for sinking the boat of TN fishermen killing four of them on board. The meeting expressed displeasure at the human rights commission remaining "mute spectator" to fishermen's issues.

### **Tamil Nadu: Proposal of Seaweed Park in TN gets a thumbs up from industry**

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/proposal-of-seaweed-park-in-tn-gets-a-thumbs-up-from-industry/article33718806.ece>

"The Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has proposed in the Budget to set up a multi-purpose seaweed park in Tamil Nadu as part of promoting seaweed cultivation. According to the Minister, seaweed farming is an emerging sector with potential to transform the lives of coastal communities and will provide large employment and additional income. Welcoming the initiative, A Gopalakrishnan, Director, Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, said the proposed park could be a multi-purpose hub for a variety of economic activities related to seaweed farming, business development and bio-prospecting. Presently, seaweeds are being cultivated by hundreds of fishermen along the Palk Bay coast in Tamil Nadu. The proposal will help the fisherfolk and coastal entrepreneurs in the State, he said. The commercially exploited seaweed species in India mainly include *Kappaphycus alvarezii*, *Gracilaria edulis*,

Gelidiella acerosa, Sargassum spp. and Turbinaria spp. Seaweeds are valued for commercial products such as Karrageenan and Agar besides being used for the production of polysaccharides, fertilizer, sludge and other high-value products such as nutraceuticals and cosmeceuticals for use against various lifestyle diseases. K Riji John, Vice-Chancellor, Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies, said that the development of seaweed park would go a long way in addressing the nutritional security of a large segment of undernourished and underprivileged marginal communities. "India being a tropical belt, we have a number of economically important seaweed species which can be commercially exploited. The operation of this park needs to be extended to Lakshadweep where there is high potential for seaweed farming which is still remain so under explored," he said. Seaweeds are storehouse of essential amino acids, natural antioxidants, minerals and other micro-nutrients. However, awareness of the advantages on the consumption of the seaweeds are not properly penetrated to our community, he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Environment study sought for harbour**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/environment-study-sought-for-harbour-project/article33679764.ece>

"Activists have called for cancellation of the public hearing scheduled for Friday with regard to the construction of a fishing harbour at Alambarai in Chengalpattu district until an environmental impact assessment (EIA) was carried out for the project. They said any meaningful public hearing was possible only after the EIA report was available. M. Yuvan, an avian expert, said the proposed harbour at Kazhiveli lagoon was in the Important Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Area. The area attracts 80 species of migratory birds, including plovers, terns, gulls, sandpipers and so on. A harbour project in such a sensitive area required a comprehensive environmental impact assessment, said K. Saravanan of the Coastal Resource Centre, Chennai. "The proposed fishing harbour will cater primarily to largescale mechanised fishery. Increasing the depth would hurt the livelihood of the small fisherfolk who use both motorised and non-motorised boats," said Sathish Kumar from Alambarai. Two breakwaters of 600 m and 400 m length had been proposed at the fishing harbour. These could cause sea-erosion and even damage the nearby Alambarai Fort, they added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Palk Bay fishing dispute: Casting the net in a sea of conflict**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/palk-bay-fishing-dispute-casting-the-net-in-a-sea-of-conflict/article33698525.ece>

"Four fishermen from Ramanathapuram district are the latest casualties in the decades-old Palk Bay fisheries conflict between India and Sri Lanka. L. Srikrishna, C. Jaisankar, R. Rajaram and Meera Srinivasan report on the human cost of the issue touching on bilateral ties,

livelihoods, and ecological concerns. Samson Darwin was a toddler when his family fled their home in Jaffna in the 1990s, to escape the civil war that was tearing apart Sri Lanka's north and east. Mandapam camp in Ramanathapuram became their "home". Away from incessant bombing and destruction, they thought they had another chance at life. Last week, 28-year-old Darwin's body was brought back home after he and three other fishermen died in the Palk Strait, in Sri Lankan waters. Darwin's wife (they got married just a year ago) had given birth to their first child weeks before that, and just as their new life as a family was about to begin, his life ended. Darwin fled the civil war nearly 25 years ago but the adversity that began chasing him then came a full circle that fatal night. "After escaping the battle in Sri Lanka, we came here [Ramanathapuram]... but Darwin died in the hands of the Sri Lankan Navy," a relative says, requesting anonymity. He echoes the grief that pervades their village following the tragic death of Darwin, along with A. Mesiya (30), V. Nagaraj (52) and S. Senthil Kumar (32), all hailing from Ramanathapuram, on the night of January 18. Outraged by the incident, Tamil Nadu fishermen have accused the Sri Lankan Navy, which was patrolling the seas for "poaching" fishing trawlers, of killing the four men.

The Sri Lankan Navy, on the other hand, maintains that the fishermen and their boat "sank" while "resisting arrest" by a Navy vessel. The Indian government conveyed its "strong protest" to Sri Lanka, and insisted it adopt a humanitarian approach in dealing with fishermen. Sri Lanka's Fisheries Minister Douglas Devananda, a Tamil from Jaffna, set up a three-member committee tasked with finding a "permanent solution" to the Palk Bay fisheries conflict, affecting fishermen of Tamil Nadu and northern Sri Lanka. None of the official statements mentions a probe being sought or agreed to. The four Tamil Nadu fishermen and the Sri Lankan Naval personnel alone were witnesses to what happened late that night, mid-sea, and only one side is alive to tell their story. A long-festering problem "What wrong did my brother do? He was unarmed and he has been brutally killed," says A. Simon, Mesiya's older brother, in his thatch-roofed hut in Thangachimadam, a predominantly fishing village in Ramanathapuram. "Whenever we set out fishing we pray that we return home safely, irrespective of whether the catch is good or not. The innocent fishermen's end is horrifying." That too at sea, to which their lives are so intimately tied.

Fisherfolk wake up to the sound of the sea, head to the waters for a living, come back to the shore, catch some sleep at odd hours, again with the reassuring sound of the waves. "After fishing for about 30 hours, we return to the shore. On many days, the Sri Lankan Navy, under the pretext of surveillance, chases us. Sometimes they throw stones at our boats or hurl empty liquor bottles," says another fisherman mourning Mesiya's death. Fishermen's representatives in Tamil Nadu accuse the Sri Lankan Navy of injuring hundreds of fishermen over the years. "About 300 of our fishermen have died in the Palk Strait," says P. Sesu Raja, Rameswaram-based leader of a fishermen's association engaged mostly in bottom trawling. The Sri Lankan Navy has consistently denied the mounting allegations — through the years of the war and since it ended

in 2009. While the cause of death of the deceased fishermen has never been established in a court of law, the fact that these young fishermen died at sea remains a grim reminder of the human cost of the Palk Bay fisheries conflict. Their distressing death, when they were out at sea to earn a day's living, is yet another stark reflection of a long-festering problem — of depleting marine resources in the Palk Bay, competing livelihoods of fishermen, and a solution that remains elusive, as the fishermen on both sides are unable to agree on it.

Tamil Nadu fishermen are not a homogenous group with the same interests. They are part of a complex ecosystem of moneyed and often politically influential owners of trawler fleets who engage other fishermen; of those who practise traditional fishing in their small, mechanised boats; and thousands of poor fishermen who have only their labour to sell in order to survive. Depending on who you ask, a different aspect of the problem comes to light. Like Sesu Raja, most owners of the 5,000-plus registered trawlers say that the Sri Lankan Navy “attacked our fishermen”, arrested them, or seized their vessels. Daily wage fishermen speak of the enormous pressure on them to risk their lives and go as far as it takes to get a decent catch that would ensure a day's earnings in full. Arockia Sesu, 47, from Thangachimadam, who has been fishing for 29 years, says he makes about ₹700 on a good day. With a family of five, including his elderly mother and two children, making both ends meet is no easy task. “Earlier, it was just poverty which we had to battle. But in recent years, we also have to safeguard ourselves from the Sri Lankan Navy's aggression,” he says.

**Straying in international waters** Despite the GPS units attached to their boats, the fishermen often stray into Sri Lanka's territorial waters, across the International Maritime Boundary Line, mutually agreed upon by the neighbouring countries in the mid-1970s. India embraced mechanised fishing using bottom trawlers, after its fishing fleet was “modernised” between the 1950s and the early 1970s, with millions of dollars from the Norwegian government. In the fishing method of bottom trawling, fishermen drag large nets from the vessels through the sea, virtually scooping out young fishes, shrimps and other organisms from the seabed indiscriminately. Some use thangoosi valai or monofilament nets, widely considered harmful for marine species. The catch, using these methods, has proved significantly higher, boosting the State's exports. Data from the Fisheries Department show that Tamil Nadu exports about 1.28 lakh tonnes of sea food, amounting to ₹5,591 crore.

For the export-oriented governments at the Centre and State, and profit-driven owners of trawlers, the practice gradually became an addiction despite the serious environmental implications along the Tamil Nadu coast, periodically highlighted by scientists. Small-scale fishermen, too, bear the brunt. In Pudukkottai district, further up the coast, small-scale fishermen spoke of how the trawlers have struck a huge blow to their livelihoods. “They [trawlers] return with huge catches thus depleting the marine resources and depriving the smaller mechanised boat fishermen of Pudukkottai district of good catch,” said B. Balamurugan, president of the

Mechanised Boats Association in Jagadapattinam, from where over 200 mechanised boats using traditional fishing practices operate. The trawlers are not just at the centre of an international conflict but have also bred local conflicts, points out Chinna Adaikkalam, President of the Kottaipattinam Mechanised Boat Owners Association. “The longer-sized and higher capacity Karaikal trawlers have resorted to long durations of fishing, for almost 15 days, leaving hardly anything for us in our seas,” he says. Intuitively chasing fish, Tamil Nadu fishermen employed in the larger, mechanised trawlers regularly veer into Sri Lankan waters. The ecological damage is comparatively less on the Sri Lankan side because most Sri Lankan fishermen do not engage in bottom trawling.

It is the prospect of a bigger catch that pushes Tamil Nadu fishermen to risk encountering arrest by the Sri Lankan Navy or worse, death. Strained livelihoods and ties Over time, Sri Lankan fishermen grew more vocal about the adverse effects of bottom trawling along their coastline. Their catches fell, and livelihoods were threatened. Fishermen on both sides speak of a time when they shared cordial ties. “We would call each other machaan and maapilai [brother-in-law and son-in-law]. We would share our porridge, karuvaadu [dried fish] and beedis. They would give us cigarettes and biscuits,” Sesu Raja recalls. Sri Lankan fishermen too reminisce about a time when they took an overnight boat journey to catch the latest M.G. Ramachandran film in Rameswaram and return the following day. But the Sri Lankan civil war and the growing use of mechanised bottom trawlers in India have strained their ties.

For a good part of the nearly three-decade civil war, fishermen in the northern Jaffna peninsula and the Vanni were barred access to the sea, as the Sri Lankan Navy, along with the armed forces, was taking on the LTTE. It is when the war ended in 2009 that the fisherfolk, most of them displaced in the years of strife, returned to their homes, and gradually began to rebuild their lost livelihoods. However, their return to sea was far from smooth: they found their catch dwindling after Indian trawlers ravaged their seas at least thrice a week, and their nets, often bought with huge loans, getting caught and damaged under the trawlers. The Sri Lankan Navy stepped up surveillance, arresting fishermen and seizing trawlers “trespassing” into Sri Lankan waters. Since 2010, more than 3,000 Indian fishermen, all from Tamil Nadu, have been arrested by the Navy.

As of today, 12 fishermen and more than 60 trawlers are in Sri Lankan custody. The issue has remained a sensitive bilateral issue, but the Central, State and provincial governments in India and Sri Lanka have achieved little success, besides “paying lip service”, fishermen note with distrust. Sri Lanka banned bottom trawling in 2017, and in 2018, imposed large fines on foreign vessels fishing illegally in its waters. While arrested fishermen have been released periodically, at times after a considerable diplomatic push by New Delhi, the 60-odd trawlers seized since remain in custody. Their owners in India are yet to come to Sri Lanka, to appear in court and pay the fine, before reclaiming the vessels, say officials in Sri Lanka’s Fisheries Department.

Options tried and tested Talks at the governmental level, as well as among fishermen, have not resulted in a durable solution. With heightened surveillance and increased arrests making news in late 2020, India and Sri Lanka resumed bilateral talks, after a three-year gap, in December 2020, through a Joint Working Group with senior officials from both sides. Apart from government-level talks, fishermen leaders from both countries have held discussions several times since 2004. They met at least six times between 2010 and 2015 – in both India and Sri Lanka – when the Palk Bay conflict intensified. Tamil Nadu fishermen could not keep their promise of “phasing out” trawlers, and also refused to agree to Sri Lankan fishermen’s demand that bottom trawling be fully stopped as a goodwill gesture.

Talks remain deadlocked since. “It is not possible to find a solution to the five-decades-old vexatious issue in two or three sittings. No follow-up action has been taken to resume talks for so long. Governments are receptive and react only when fishermen are killed or arrested in Sri Lankan waters,” says U. Arulanandam, Tamil Nadu’s representative of the Alliance for the Release of Innocent Fishermen, a long-time activist based in Pamban, Ramanathapuram. While a section of fishermen in Pudukkottai and Ramanathapuram districts is for restarting talks, fisher leaders in Sri Lanka remain sceptical. “We are really pained by the recent death of Indian fishermen. We are all fishermen first, only then Indian or Sri Lankan. We fully understand their suffering, we are in solidarity with them and want to put an end to this,” says K. Rajachandran, who leads a fisher cooperative in Karainagar, a small island off the Jaffna peninsula.

At the same time, he calls for more sincerity in trying to come up with a solution. “I have been for several rounds of these talks. Despite many assurances to phase out trawlers, they continued coming in trawlers very close to our shore. If they agree to use small boats and traditional fishing methods, we are more than willing to come to the table to work out an arrangement to share our resources responsibly. That is the only way our future generations can live,” he says, insisting that stopping the use of trawlers be a pre-condition for future talks. Unlike the state, fisher leaders do not talk in terms of invisible boundary lines in the sea, or the law that deems their fishing “illegal, unreported and unregulated”. They appear more inclined towards a humane and practical arrangement that will address their short-term concerns of securing their livelihoods, as well as the long-term interest of preserving the marine organisms in the Palk Bay. “The use of bottom trawlers has to be stopped fully. Northern fishermen here, whose livelihoods were devastated by a long-drawn civil war, are frustrated that despite their struggle over many years, the problem of bottom trawling by Tamil Nadu has not ended,” says Ahilan Kadirgamar, senior lecturer at the University of Jaffna, who researches fisherfolk’s livelihoods in Sri Lanka’s war-affected region.

“There could be more rounds of talks and a promise of a permanent solution, but how can you really resolve this crisis without addressing the fundamental problem that is bottom trawling,” he asks. Further, the Indian trawlers have spawned a fleet of relatively smaller, but still destructive

trawlers in Jaffna, Rajachandran notes with concern. “We don’t oppose trawlers because they are from India. We oppose trawlers from Jaffna [there are some 500] as well. It is the destructive practice we are against, not the fishermen engaging in it.” Some others like Annalingam Annarasa, leader of the federation of fisher cooperative societies in Jaffna, want to give talks another chance. “Honestly, this is not an issue between two countries, or one between the Tamil Nadu fishermen and the Sri Lankan Navy. It is fundamentally an issue threatening the livelihoods of Tamil fishermen in both India and Sri Lanka. We need to work together with mutual understanding and solidarity,” says Annarasa.

“We need to form an alliance with small-scale fishermen in Tamil Nadu and together raise awareness about the dire consequences of bottom trawling. That could be a starting point for talks.” Solution in sight? Meanwhile, a project of the Indian government, aimed at weaning Tamil Nadu fishermen off trawlers and diverting them to deep-sea fishing methods, took off in 2017, but has hardly progressed as planned. Both New Delhi and Tamil Nadu, implementing the ₹1,600 crore initiative, hoped to replace at least 2,000 trawlers with deep sea fishing boats with long lines and gill nets. However, less than a tenth of that target has been achieved, The Hindu reported in December.

According to Johny Tom Varghese, Project Director Palk Bay and Additional Director (Fisheries) in Tamil Nadu, deep sea fishing will eventually be lucrative, though it is capital-intensive. “A fisherman who invests his money in a deep sea fishing boat can break even in about 18 months. We are training them. We have signed 103 agreements with individuals under the scheme,” he says. Those grappling with the shift from trawlers to deep sea vessels are also confronted with rising costs. In Sesu Raja’s view, the 70% subsidy, together from the Centre and State, for the deep sea fishing boats, is insufficient. “The governments had worked out the cost at ₹80 lakh per boat, while it is almost ₹1.20 crore today,” he observes. Pointing to the scheme’s “very slow progress,” Arulanandam says, “If it is implemented within a year or two, I hope it can offer a possible solution. But the governments should make sure of buying back all existing trawlers.” The fishermen in Kottaiappattinam and Jagadapattinam villages in Pudukkottai too complain that while the government is taking steps to introduce deep sea fishing, the old boats are yet to be weeded out. The proposal to shift fishermen of Kottaiappattinam, Jagadapattinam and Rameswaram towards deep sea fishing has not picked up, fishermen say.

There have not been many takers for fish farming in the Gulf of Mannar, either. The hype following the successful demonstration of fish farming by the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute in Mandapam was short-lived. The Fisheries Department seized mechanised boats used for pair trawling on several occasions, but the punitive actions could not eliminate the practice fully. The deep divisions among various fishing groups and frequent agitations have put the brakes on enforcing strict regulations, according to fishermen. As the campaign in election-bound Tamil Nadu picks up, the issues of fishermen, who constitute a sizeable electorate in

coastal districts, will take centre stage again. “The real challenge for fishermen on both sides is to keep this issue in focus even after the polls,” says Annarasa, reflecting a similar sentiment heard in Tamil Nadu about “not allowing politicians to exploit our situation.” At one level, the problem at hand is historical, complex and layered. At another, it is about sustaining and sharing finite marine resources in the Palk Strait, a narrow strip of water, just over 100 km at its widest, separating south India and northern Sri Lanka. As fishermen repeatedly point out, at the heart of this persisting conflict is their insecurity about their livelihoods and futures. Elections come and go, but that is yet to be decisively addressed.

### **Andhra Pradesh: Fishermen ‘capture’ 100 Tamil Nadu men, boats**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/andhra-pradesh/2021/jan/28/andhra-pradesh-fishermen-capture100-tamil-nadu-men-boats-2256065.html>

"Yet another tussle between Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu fishermen over violation of zonal restrictions was reported. In the fresh incident, the fishers of Isakapalem under Allur mandal are said to have captured 100 persons with 18 boats after a chase, as the TN men were found to be fishing in AP waters on Wednesday. The captured men and boats were shifted to a temple in Isakapalli village, and association leaders were informed of the same. It may be noted that there have been numerous reports of Tamil Nadu fishermen crossing the sea border with mechanised boats, creating disturbances between the fishermen communities in the two states. “Though the officials say that they will file a case against the Tamil Nadu fishermen if they venture into Andhra Pradesh, no action has been taken yet. The police say this is due to lack of evidence,” said A Polaiah, a fisherman from Allur.

### **Tamil Nadu: Sicagen empowers Tamil Nadu’s local fishing community by delivering modern deep-sea fishing vessels**

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/sicagen-empowers-tamil-nadus-local-fishing-community-by-delivering-modern-deepsea-fishing-vessels/2017950>

"The following press release comes to you under an arrangement with Business Wire India. PTI takes no editorial responsibility for the same.) Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India– Business Wire India Thiru. K. Palanisamy, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, launches the vessels in a virtual function. The State Department of Fisheries, Tamil Nadu, awarded the work contract to Sicagen. The project is a part of the Government's scheme to convert 2000 trawler boats into deep-sea fishing and gillnet boats for the fishers in Pudukkottai, Nagapattinam, and Ramanathapuram districts. While the boats were built and were ready for use in early 2020, the handover to beneficiaries was delayed due to the pandemic. The Boat Building division of Sicagen India Limited (Sicagen), a leading integrated, value-added solutions provider for infrastructure, industrial packaging, and specialty chemicals, and part of AM International -

Singapore, recently delivered eight deep-sea fishing boats to the Department of Fisheries, Government of Tamil Nadu. The project is part of the Government's vision to provide better livelihood opportunities to the fishing communities of Pudukkottai, Nagapattinam, and Ramanathapuram districts by converting 2000 trawler boats into deep-sea fishing and gillnet boats. Sicagen's Boat Building division built the deep-sea fishing boats converted from fishermen trawlers in the Palk Bay.

They were launched by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. K. Palanisamy, at the Secretariat, in a virtual function from Sicagen's yard. 50% of the boat costs were met through a Central Government subsidy, while the state government provided financial assistance for 20% of the costs. Another 20% of the price was financed through bank loans, and the users themselves contributed the remaining 10%. Mr. Ashwin Muthiah, Chairman, Sicagen and Founder Chairman, AM International, said, "It is an honour to partner with the Government of Tamil Nadu and the State Fisheries Department for this project. The deep-sea fishing boats are safer, efficient, and enable the beneficiaries to cruise deeper into the sea. In many ways, they are symbolic of a better future that awaits the state's hardworking fishing community. At Sicagen, we're proud to facilitate a progressive transition." Sicagen was contracted to build eight deep-sea fishing boats due to its rich experience and shipbuilding expertise for the maritime industry. While the vessels were built and were ready for use in early of 2020, the handover to beneficiaries was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chief Minister handed over the registration certificates for seven boats to beneficiaries during the function. Sicagen has now been contracted for the construction of six other deep-sea fishing boats. Besides the Chief Minister, the virtual launch event was attended by the Hon'ble Minister for Fisheries, Personnel and Administrative Reforms Mr. D. Jayakumar, Chief Secretary Mr. K. Shanmugam, IAS, Principal Secretary of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Department Mr. K. Gopal, IAS, Director of Fisheries Development and Managing Director of Tamilnadu Fisheries Development Corporation Mr. J. Jayakanthan, IAS, Additional Director of Fisheries Department Mr. Jony Tom Verghese, IAS and other higher officials of Government. Mr. R. Chandrasekar, Whole Time Director represented Sicagen at the event. About Sicagen India Ltd Sicagen is a leading integrated, value-added solutions provider for Infrastructure, Industrial packaging, Power control systems, and Specialty chemicals for water treatment. With a presence across India and South East Asia, we enable the region's development imperative through a one-stop customer-oriented approach.

Part of Singapore's headquartered \$2+ billion AM International group, Sicagen has a presence across six countries with five synergistic business verticals and two wholly-owned subsidiaries. [www.sicagen.com](http://www.sicagen.com) About AM International Holdings Pte Ltd AM International is a diversified, multinational group of companies with a federated operating architecture. Headquartered in Singapore, it has been trusted by millions of customers for over six decades. Today, many of the

group's businesses are market leaders with footprints across South East Asia, India, and the United Kingdom. The group's business verticals include fertilizers, supply chain, petrochemicals, infrastructure, healthcare, and green energy. [www.aminternational.sg](http://www.aminternational.sg) To View the Image Click on the Link Below: Thiru. K. Palanisamy, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, launches the deep sea fishing boats in a virtual function.

**Tamil Nadu: Sri Lanka returns bodies, four fishermen laid to rest**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/sri-lanka-returns-bodies-four-fishermen-laid-to-rest/articleshow/80429555.cms>

"Bodies of the four Tamil Nadu fishermen, who died after their boat was sunk allegedly by Sri Lankan Navy on Monday, were handed over to the Indian Coast Guard near the international maritime boundary line on Saturday morning. A group of fishermen received the body from the authorities. Late in the evening, the four — A Mesiya (30) of Thangachimadam, V Nagaraj (52) of Vattanvalasai, S Senthil Kumar (32) of Thaathanenthal and N Samson Darwin (28) of the Sri Lankan refugee camp at Mandapam, — were laid to rest in their villages in Ramanathapuram district. Though postmortem of the bodies was done in Sri Lanka, fishermen had demanded a second post-mortem when they met Union fisheries minister Giriraj Singh on Friday night. Following this, Ramanathapuram district administration had arranged for the same by a team of doctors at the district government hospital. However, on Saturday the families urged the officials to hand over the bodies without the re-postmortem.

"We got an undertaking from the four families individually and handed over the bodies to them," a police officer told TOI. The bodies were brought to the fish landing centre at Kottaipattinam around 3 pm. Health minister C Vijayabaskar along with relatives of the deceased received them and paid homage. Pudukottai district collector P Uma Maheswari and officials were also present. Ramanathapuram collector Dinesh Ponraj Oliver paid homage when they were brought to the district in the evening. At Thangachimadam, fishermen staged a road blockade on the Madurai - Rameswaram highway for nearly 90 minutes till 6.30 pm demanding initiation of criminal action against the Lankan Navy. Fisheries minister D Jayakumar said Sri Lanka has constituted a committee to probe the incident. "It should be an unbiased committee. The Sri Lankan navy has committed a mistake. We will gain trust in the committee only when those who are guilty are punished," he said. In the event of the committee not punishing the guilty, the minister said that it will be treated as an eyewash.

## **Tamil Nadu: Lankan Navy attack: Nagai fishermen demand a permanent solution**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/jan/23/lankan-navy-attack-nagai-fishermen-demand-a-permanent-solution-2253907.html>

“Prosecute the killers and find a permanent solution” was the common refrain among fishermen in Nagapattinam after an alleged attack by Sri Lankan Navy personnel left four fishers dead. In the wee hours of Monday, four Ramanathapuram fishermen were killed after their trawler, which left Pudukottai district, was allegedly rammed by a Sri Lankan Navy vessel in the Palk Strait. Their bodies were retrieved by Lankan armed forces on Wednesday. The incident has left the Nagai fishing community in shock. Fishers here are no strangers to harassment by the Lankan Navy. “Condemning the incidents, providing solatium and assurances to speak to the Centre will not resolve the issue. Such incidents keep happening, although we have a Defence force and units. Even Gujarati fishers do not face such hostility from Pakistani armed forces,” said RMP Rajendra Nattar, fisher representative from Nagapattinam.

“Our men face threats, intimidation, bullying and assaults from Sri Lankan armed forces. The Centre and the State have not taken up the issue with Sri Lanka. Those who killed our men should be prosecuted and punished,” said RV Kumaravel, vice-president of National Fishworkers Forum said. Fibreglass fishers from villages in Vedaranyam taluk in Nagapattinam district still go for fishing in the Palk Strait. The passage is calmer from November to February, compared to Coromandel waters and fish is available in abundance too. However, the attack on Monday has left Vedaranyam fisherfolk fearful. “We routinely face the issue in Palk Strait. Trawlers which go to Palk Strait should be regulated. The mistakes committed by trawler fishers also put fibreglass fishermen in danger. We need the Coast Guard to intensify patrols in Palk Strait,” said M Durgeswaran, a fisher-representative from Kodiyakarai. Officials have issued an advisory in the wake of the incident.

“We have advised fishers to carry life-saving equipment such as jackets and buoys,” said G Jayaraj, assistant director of fisheries department. ‘Punish Navy personnel’ Opposition parties urged Centre to ensure Lankan Navy personnel involved in the incident are punished. “Condemnation by the External Affairs Ministry is not enough as SL action is against Sovereignty of India,” PMK founder Dr S Ramadoss said. TVK chief T Velmurugan urged Centre to get `10 crore solatium for the victims’ kin from Sri Lanka. VCK president Thirumavalavan urged State police to ensure protection of fishermen. MDMK leader Vaiko said a demonstration would be staged at Valluvar Kottam.

**Tamil Nadu: Seafood landing at Ennore, Royapuram, Pattinapakkam has high concentration of metals**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/its-heavy-metals-on-the-menu/articleshow/80412435.cms>

"A lot of the waste let out into the city's lakes and water bodies returns to residents' plates in the form of heavy metals in seafood, a study has found. The study conducted in fish landing areas at Ennore, Royapuram (Kasimedu) fishing harbour and Pattinapakkam showed seafood had high concentrations of chromium, nickel, manganese, zinc, lithium and titanium besides certain levels of copper, lead and iron. While some of these metals are vital for the human body, frequent intake of seafood loaded with them can damage organs like liver and kidney and even cause cardiovascular diseases and cancer. Of the three locations where fishermen land with fresh catch and sell it, samples from Ennore had the highest average concentration of heavy metals at 10.7mg/kg, followed by Kasimedu or Royapuram at 10.63mg/kg and Pattinapakkam with 10.56mg/kg.

The highest average heavy metal concentration of 11.7mg/kg was in crabs and the lowest of 9.9mg/kg in prawns, while fish and squids had 10.4mg/kg, said professor S Sureshkannan, corresponding author, in the study. Findings of the study, conducted by Madras Veterinary College, Tanuvas, Dr MGR Fisheries College and Research Institute, Ponneri and Veterinary College and Research Institute, Orathanadu, were published in the International Journal of Chemical Studies. Scientists from city-based National Centre for Coastal Research said crustaceans like crabs feed on dead organic matter lying on sediment that accumulates more concentrations of heavy metals.

"Unlike the physiology of a fish which has the capability to let out or eliminate these heavy metals from its body, the process of elimination is less in crabs," scientist said. Hepatopancreas, which plays a key role in metal detoxification in crabs, has the capability of accumulating more trace metals. This is possibly why "crabs may be a good indicator for measuring contamination level in surface sediment in the sea." After researchers collected 15 samples of fish, prawns, crabs and squids at each site, a laboratory analysis showed variability in metal concentrations between the study sites besides in the different types of seafood, which was linked to possible sources. The presence of nickel, the highest recorded heavy metal in samples from all three sites, was linked to petroleum industries, stainless steel industries, electroplating plants, smelting

plants and nickel-cadmium battery plants. Its maximum mean concentration was 69.9mg/kg at Pattinapakkam.

The researchers said galvanisation units, paint manufacturing units and pharmaceutical units could be sources of zinc, while sources of manganese are iron, steel and alloy industries. Iron, which can get into coastal waters through discharge of sewage and hospital waste into water bodies, is vital for human cell functions, but an excess can accumulate in various organs resulting in damage to the gastrointestinal tract. The study points out that concentrations of chromium, manganese, nickel and zinc above the WHO permissible limits and the presence of lithium and titanium in seafood samples is a matter of public health concern.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen submit demands to Union Fisheries Minister**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishermen-submit-demands-to-union-fisheries-minister/article33639096.ece>

"Fishermen of Kasimedu have urged the Central government to take steps to hand over the control of the fishing harbour to the State Fisheries Department. Presently, the control is with the Chennai Port. The fishermen on Friday presented a petition containing a list of demands to Giriraj Singh, Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying during his visit to the harbour. They also sought additional solar lighting, concrete roads connecting all the wharfs and jetties, compound wall, gates with boom barrier and security guards, guide lights at the bar mouth of the harbour, renovation of dry dock to facilitate boat construction and repairs. The Minister was accompanied by Rajiv Ranjan, Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries. K.Gopal, Secretary, Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Department explained about the improvement works carried out at the harbour.

### **Sri Lankan Navy recovers bodies of 4 Tamil Nadu fishermen; unrest over deaths**

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/sri-lankan-navy-recovers-bodies-of-2-tamil-nadu-fishermen-unrest-over-deaths-1761366-2021-01-21>

"The bodies of four Tamil Nadu fishermen have been recovered by the Sri Lankan Navy. The Sri Lankan Navy had sunk the boat, alleged other fishermen, however, the Lankan Navy claimed that the boat sank while the fishermen were resisting arrest. That is when the boat rammed into our vessel, claimed the Lankan Navy. The incident took place in the wee hours of Monday when nearly 1,000 fishermen on 200 boats were travelling from Kottaipattinam for fishing. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami has announced a compensation of Rs 10 lakh each for the families of the four fishermen. CM Palaniswami also condemned the Sri Lankan Navy, accusing it of destroying the livelihood of fishermen from Tamil Nadu. Steps are being taken to put an end to such issues, CM Palaniswami's office said adding that he will write to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking action in this regard. The fishermen alleged that the

Lankan Navy harassed them near Neduntheevu when they were trying to return. This is when one patrol vessel rammed into a boat, and the boat carrying A Mesia, V Nagaraj, N Sam and S Senthil Kumar sank.

### **Tamil Nadu: Sinking of Indian fishing boat: Bodies of 2 recovered by Sri Lankan Navy**

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/sinking-of-indian-fishing-boat-bodies-of-2-recovered-by-sri-lankan-navy/2014245>

"Two days after an Indian fishing boat sank in Sri Lankan waters following a collision with a Navy vessel of the island nation, bodies of two fishermen were recovered on Wednesday, a Tamil Nadu Fisheries official said, quoting information received. Sri Lankan officials have informed their counterparts about the recovery of the bodies and asked them to send photographs of fishermen who went missing to confirm their identity, Pudukottai Assistant Director of Fisheries Kumaresan said. According to the official, four fishermen from nearby Thangachimadam had put out to sea from Pudukottai on Monday and were fishing near Neduntheevu in Sri Lanka when it collided with the Navy vessel and a search was on by different agencies, including the Indian Coast Guard. Officials in Pudukottai and Coast Guard station here were informed on Wednesday evening about the recovery of the two bodies by Lankan Navy. -0Rameswaram Coastal Fishermen Association president S Emerit said they have also been informed about the development and asked to send identification marks and photos of the missing fishermen. The Sri Lankan Navy had on Tuesday said it has launched a search and rescue operation for ""unknown number of missing fishermen"" and the sunken boat after the mid-sea incident. The information about death of the fishermen came a day after 40 fishermen from the state, arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy in recent times, returned to Chennai after being released. Thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi for it, Chief Minister K Palaniswami on Tuesday sought efforts for the release of 12 more fishermen and all mechanised boats in the custody of the island nation.

### **Tamil Nadu: 2004 Tsunami survivors still await houses**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/2004-tsunami-survivors-still-await-houses/articleshow/80360439.cms>

"More than a hundred fisherwomen from Kasimedu gathered at the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board office on Tuesday and demanded new houses for the ones destroyed in the Tsunami in 2004. The women said they have been waiting for 16 years to get a new house. "We have visited every state department and sent several petitions requesting authorities to sanction us a house. But we have heard nothing from them so far," said M Santhi, who lost her house near Kargil Nagar to the giant waves. Due to the delay in providing alternate housing, many of them

moved to rented homes and a few became pavement dwellers. Around 1,500 families in and around Kargil Nagar were allotted houses in several TNSCB quarters but they were left out, they said. Their plight has worsened due to the pandemic. "Majority of our earnings is spent on rent and we can barely make ends meet," said Selvi, another fisherwoman. Officials from the department said they are considering various housing schemes and will decide suitably.

### **Tamil Nadu: Livelihood of fisherman, biodiversity at risk, yet Adani Port proposal makes it to public hearing stage**

<https://thelogicalindian.com/trending/livelihood-of-fisherman-biodiversity-at-risk-yet-adani-port-proposal-makes-it-to-public-hearing-26266>

"Amid resistance from environmental activists, opposition parties and citizens, Thiruvallur district administration has postponed a public hearing on the expansion project by Adani Ports at Kattupalli Port near Chennai. A few days ago, villagers had demanded to change the venue or cancellation of the public hearing. The public hearing for the 'Proposed Revised Master Plan Development of Kattupalli Port' by Adani Ports and SEZ's subsidiary Marine Infrastructure Development Private Ltd (MIDPL) is scheduled Bhagavaan Mahaveer Auditorium in Shree Chandrabrabhu Jain College in Minjur of Tiruvallur district. The auditorium is nearly 20 km away from the village. Several locals, who may be affected by the project, have alleged that keeping the venue far away is a deliberate attempt to discourage people from voicing their opposition. Adani has sought environmental clearance current application for the ₹4,000 crore port and harbour project, a part of the ₹53,400 crore masterplan.

As per Appendix 1V, Clause 7 (III) of Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006, the public hearing should be held at the site, or in its proximity. The Kattupalli port commenced operations in 2012 and was initially owned by L&T (Larsen and Toubro). Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd. (APSEZ) acquired it in 2018 with a plan to add 40 million metric ton of new capacity in the next three years. Environmental activists allege that the proposed master plan includes involves the conversion of wetlands into an industrial area. This they say, will have a drastic impact on food security and drinking water security of Chennai. Advertisement This project is set to come up in Kattupalli, Kalanji and Karungali villages, which are a part of a high eroded coastal stretch. Environmental activist G Sundarrajan told The Logical Indian that the project will impact the environment as it will come upon wetlands and ecologically fragile sand dunes on the Kayyupalli Barrier Island near the Pulicat Wildlife Sanctuary.

Ecology Affected The proposed expansion plan demands the conversion of 2807 acres (1135.95 ha) of wetlands into an industrial area, which also covers the salt pans, mangroves and coastal stretch areas. "The revised master plan will require the reclamation of the sea of up to 796.15 ha. The total area needed for the revised master plan is about 2,472.85 hectares (ha). This

includes the existing area of 133.50 ha and additional government land of 761.8 ha, private land to the tune of 781.4 ha," Sundarrajan said adding that acquiring such lands affects the ecology in turn affecting the lives of people. **Livelihood Of Fishermen At Risk** He also said that the proposed plan will affect the lives of fishers living around the Pulicat lake as this project leads to the destruction of ecology that sustains their livelihood. "The people who would lose their livelihood include marginal farmers, inland fish workers, agricultural labourers and cattle-rearers living by the port." The fishermen have submitted a memorandum to the Environment Assessment Committee (EAC) visiting the site, conveying their opposition to the project. **Pollution Problems** He said that heavy vehicles' movement along with diversion of wetlands for industrial purposes like this and degradation of wetlands due to coal and fly ash deposition have added to the reduction of the air quality.

### **Tamil Nadu: Prices soar in Chennai as fewer fishermen set out to sea**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/prices-soar-in-chennai-as-fewer-fishermen-set-out-to-sea/articleshow/80323094.cms>

"Fish lovers in the city had it tough on Sunday when the retail prices of most of their favourite varieties rose to more than three times last week's rates. The reason, say fishermen, is because fewer boats went out to sea during the extended weekend due to Pongal holidays leading to a reduced catch. Anbu, a vendor at the Chintadripet fish market, said sankara cost 300 a kg, vanjiram 1,000 a kg, karuppu vavva 600 a kg, sura 600 a kg, koduva 600 a kg; crabs 500 a kg and prawns 400 a kg. A Ragupathy, a boat owner, said less than 60 tonnes of catch arrived at the Kasimedu fishing harbour on Sunday against a daily average of 100 tonnes brought by 100 trawlers, leading to an increase in prices. Such a hike in prices is normal during Pongal when there is reduced fishing activity and boat operators look for newer job opportunities, he said. A vendor at the Kasimedu market said more fishermen would begin putting out to sea, leading to an increased catch and stabilizing of prices. Another reason, some fishermen said, is that fish is not cooked in a majority of homes throughout the Pongal holidays barring 'karinaal' (fish day), leading to a reduced demand.

### **Tamil Nadu: Sri Lanka Court Orders Release Of 26 Indian Fishermen Arrested Last Month**

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/sri-lanka-court-orders-release-of-26-indian-fishermen-arrested-last-month-2352129>

"A Sri Lankan court has freed 26 Indian fishermen arrested by the Lankan navy for allegedly fishing in its waters, officials said on Wednesday. However, the court ordered for the "nationalization" of the four mechanised boats and other equipment siezed during the arrest of the fishermen, the officials said. 22 fishermen hailing from Tamil Nadu's Rameswaram and four

from Puthukottai, arrested last month, were ordered to be released by the court. The court also cautioned the fishermen against entering the country's waters (illegally) in the future and warned of two years' imprisonment, if caught. Local fishermen associations opposed the detention of the boats and equipment, saying they were the sole means of livelihood for the persons concerned.

### **Tamil Nadu: Mannar's Corals Stand Strong in the Face of Growing Threats – With a Little Help**

<https://science.thewire.in/environment/coral-reef-bleaching-gulf-of-mannar-nccr-mandapam-artificial-reefs-climate-change/>

"In spite of global warming and pollution, coral reefs in the Gulf of Mannar have been resilient – a sign that management interventions are helping. It was a sight of “devastation” that met 22-year-old Gilbert Mathews when he dove into the clear waters near southern Vaan, a coral island off the Tamil Nadu coast in the Gulf of Mannar, in 2002. “Broken coral skeletons lay everywhere. And barely any fish,” he recalled. That was because coral mining for limestone, for use as a construction material, was common in the Gulf then – until the government banned it in 2005. Climate change was beginning to take a toll, too: researchers had already begun seeing traces of coral bleaching.

Mathews had joined the Suganthi Devadason Marine Research Institute (SDMRI) in Thoothukudi to study how corals were faring under such threats. But today, you will see corals thriving in this patch, said Mathews, currently an associate professor at SDMRI. The corals now support a diversity of reef fish as well. This recovery – not just around Vaan Island but also in other patches of the Gulf – has come about despite several setbacks. The most prominent of them were destructive fishing practices, marine debris and two debilitating bleaching events in 2010 and 2016. While climate change still remains the chief worry, reefs here are showing immense resilience, researchers said. And this didn't happen on its own. Reviving biodiversity the impact of a changing climate on corals worldwide first came to light in the 1980s and the 1990s, when scientists discovered some reefs bleaching – turning pale as they lost the algae that gave them their distinct colours and helped them photosynthesise. This happens when the ocean warms – and warming oceans is one of global warming's major consequences. This said, bleaching alone is not a danger; algae can regrow on coral given the right conditions. The real problem is prolonged exposure to warm water, which can kill off corals entirely.

Picture a field of ghostly white skeletons unable to sustain reef fish or other marine life – that's what it looks like. Scientists have observed both bleaching and coral death in the Gulf of Mannar, which comprises a group of 21 coral islands, since 1998. The most significant bleaching events here happened in 2010 and 2016. In the latter year, scientists reported that almost 50% of corals in a few islands off Thoothukudi had bleached. Some patches across the Gulf displayed

similar effects. Ailing corals support fewer species and quantities of reef fish, or drastically affect fish communities. This in turn hits coastal communities. More than one lakh fishers in coastal villages near the Gulf depend on reef-associated fishery, according to J.K. Patterson Edward, the director of SDMRI. As part of a study to improve biodiversity and enhance fish catch, Edward and his team placed ‘artificial’ reefs underwater near Vaan Island in 2002. These are tent-like contraptions devised out of three cement slabs fused shoulder-to-shoulder. By 2004, plankton, barnacles and a host of other marine life had latched on to these slabs, as did four types (or genera) of corals. In 2017, the team reported 14 types of corals growing on the slabs. “In India, artificial reefs are usually deployed to enhance fish production because fish aggregate at reefs. But they can also aid resilience in coral communities,” Edward said. Currently, they have deployed around a thousand artificial reefs in the Gulf and the adjacent Palk Bay, including near Mandapam town and Thoothukudi port.

Since 2002, his team has also been restoring some reefs by attaching live coral fragments to concrete frames. This process, called coral transplantation, has been fairly successful: 80% of the team’s transplants have survived. Other teams have been monitoring coral health and conducting coral transplantation exercises of their own. In 2018, Chennai’s National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), affiliated to the Ministry of Earth Sciences, conducted a coral transplantation campaign in six islands in the Gulf. As they grew, the transplanted coral secreted calcium carbonate – or lime, which helps corals adhere to a substrate. The team is considering how they might replicate their success in other Indian reefs, T. Shunmugaraj, an NCCR scientist leading the project, said. Monitoring environmental impacts the coral resilience prevailing in the Gulf today reflects the resilience many reefs around the world have put on display, NCCR director M.V. Ramana Murthy said.

Towards supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goal no. 14 – conserving underwater life – his team will study the environmental factors that support this resilience and growth, he added. And there are many such factors. Resilience can be species-specific: for example, a few coral species seem to be less affected by bleaching. Some branching corals in the Gulf didn’t bleach during a warming event in 2016 while as others did. Even the weather plays a role, per Edward. In the summer of 2020, when the Gulf experienced more coral bleaching, cyclones, low pressure events and depressions pulled these temperatures down. As a result, Edward said, “all the bleached corals recovered faster than they usually would.” Similarly, a lack of sea currents, which could have displaced warmer sea water and decreased the sea surface temperature, near Hare Island in 2019 could have promoted the bleaching that year, said T. Shunmugaraj. Strong wave action can also erode coral islands.

This is one important reason, together with the coral mining before to the 2005 ban, that Vaan Island was eroding at an accelerating pace, scientists noted. So in a state-backed project in 2015, SDMRI introduced a different set of artificial reefs near Vaan to stem this problem. It worked.

By 2017, Vaan island had grown by 2.24 hectares in low tide, as The Wire has reported. Sources at SDMRI said this figure has since increased to 3 hectares. Competition between corals and other marine life – and how climate change changes these interactions – could be yet another factor in coral resilience. Sponges and some species of algae, for instance, can easily grow over bleached or injured corals. Scientists at SDMRI have spotted the yellow spot sponge competing with bleached corals off Thoothukudi this way. But they have also found that a native species of mollusc – the tiger cowry – feeds on this sponge. While corals may have an ally in the tiger cowry, these molluscs are threatened by human activity: the locals harvest them in huge numbers to craft shell jewellery popular among tourists. Protecting or at least regulating these harvests could boost coral resilience to some degree, researchers have said. Protection, enforcement and awareness Edward has been observing the Gulf for more than 30 years. And while coral restoration is a great tool, according to him, the one thing that triggered enormous recovery in the Gulf was the coral-mining ban. “That’s when coral recruits increased. From 2005 to 2009, there was so much resilience until the 2010 global mass-bleaching. We lost some corals then,” he said. “After that also there was some resilience.

After the 2016 bleaching, too, there was resilience – though not as much as before.” Climate change is still very much the primary concern – but sustained law enforcement by the forest department is an important reason many existing reefs still stand, Edward added. The department intensely monitors and patrols the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park. Anti-poaching sea and island patrols include around a hundred local fishermen as watchers. Separate teams engage in shore patrols to ensure no illegal marine catch is landed, and a mobile ‘forest squad’ helps with daily enforcement activities. Most importantly, community engagement – like the formation of eco-development and marine conservation committees in 252 villages – and awareness programmes have been paying off. Local fishers are cooperating with the department, even informing them of any violations, according to A. Marimuthu, the park’s wildlife warden. “The biggest stakeholders are the local people. Unless they feel that it is an important resource [that] should be conserved for their own well-being, no conservation is possible,” Marimuthu said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Plan to deploy modern pushcarts on Marina beach put on hold**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/plan-to-deploy-modern-pushcarts-on-marina-beach-put-on-hold/article33562618.ece>

"Steps taken by the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC), at the insistence of the Madras High Court, to procure and deploy 900 modern pushcarts for use by vendors at Marina Beach hit a roadblock with the Supreme Court directing the civic body to maintain status quo. Justices Rohinton Fali Nariman, Navin Sinha and K.M. Joseph passed the interim order on an appeal preferred by AIR Systems Limited, one of the bidders for the supply of the push carts. The judges directed the Corporation to maintain status quo as on Tuesday and not proceed further. In

2015, Fishermen Care, a non-governmental organisation, had filed a public interest litigation petition in the High Court regarding welfare of fishermen. In 2018, a Division Bench, led by Justice Vineet Kothari (now transferred to Gujarat High Court), expanded the scope of the case. The Bench began issuing a series of directions for the beautification of Marina Beach by regularising vendors and clearing the fish sellers squatting on its loop road. As part of the beautification process, the GCC decided to procure modern and colourful pushcarts. When tenders were called for, two firms submitted their bids. While AIR Systems Limited quoted ₹16.44 crore, A Quad Enterprises quoted ₹17.20 crore. However, the tender was allotted to the latter because the former supposedly did not conform to other conditions. Immediately, AIR Systems Limited filed a writ petition before a single judge and obtained an interim order in its favour on November 10.

However, when this was brought to the notice of the Division Bench, it stayed the single judge's order and tagged the writ petition along with the PIL petition. Subsequently, the Bench suggested that the contract could be equally divided between both firms so that all 900 pushcarts could be procured within three months and the Corporation obliged. On December 4, the court ordered that both the suppliers should also be penalised for delay in supply. Ordering that 300 pushcarts must be supplied every month, the Bench said the suppliers would suffer a penalty of reduction of price to the extent of 10% per cart if the delay was more than two days, 25% per cart if the delay was more than a week and 50% per cart if the delay was more than 15 days. When the case was listed again on December 14, a senior counsel representing AIR Systems told the court that his client was not interested in taking up the contract since the company was not agreeable to the penalty clause of reduction in price if there was a delay in supply. After recording his submission, the Division Bench directed the Corporation to issue work orders for 100% of the supply to A-Quad Enterprises. It was this order that had now been taken on appeal to the Supreme Court and an order of status quo had been obtained.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen at loggerheads over berthing space in Kasimedu**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishermen-at-loggerheads-over-berthing-space-in-kasimedu/article33553931.ece>

"Two boat associations are at loggerheads over space to berth their craft in the Kasimedu fishing harbour. A group of around 50 mechanised boats that are occupying the low-level wharf meant for smaller fibre boats is causing the problem. "They are refusing to move and when the winds are heavy or the tide is high, the smaller boats get hit and damaged. Due to lack of space, these fibre boats are berthed some 5-6 boats away, which leads to men falling into the water and getting hurt due to the stones and rods at the bottom. There are at least 10 wharfs for the larger mechanized boats that number around 1,000," explained Nanjil Ravi of Akhila Indhiya Meenavar Sangam. M. Vijesh, who represents the small boats, said the issue should be amicably

resolved and that they did not want to create a ruckus over it. “They are our brethren. They should understand our problems. A section of the boats did move out. But some boats are still berthing here. This will cause damage to the wharf too since it cannot withstand the loading and unloading operations,” he said. The Fisheries Department had sent notices to the owners of the boats and also to the association representing them. Their diesel subsidy, too, was suspended for a certain time. However, they managed to get that lifted. A meeting with the association members has been planned, said a source in the department.

### **Tamil Nadu: Making waves: the hit Indian island radio station leading climate conversations**

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/jan/07/making-waves-the-hit-indian-island-radio-station-leading-climate-conversations>

"Selvarani Mari is a fisher and seaweed collector who lives on Pamban Island of Tamil Nadu, on the southernmost tip of India. Every day she helps her husband cast the fishing nets, maintains rafts for cultivating seaweed, and dives into the ocean to gather sargassum. But she always makes time to listen to the radio. Mari, 33, and her friends and family all unfailingly tune into Kadal Osai on 90.4FM, India's first local radio station for a fishing community. With guests including from older people from the villages sharing their fishing wisdom or chatting about the climate crisis, the station has become an integral part of local life, featuring gossip, jokes, old songs and news on fish prices and sea conditions. Gayathri Usman, head of Kadal Osai, fell in love with the station when she visited the area, and stayed on to run it. “While a majority of the 12-member crew is from the same community, I am the odd one out,” she says.

“Our shows are popular because they are entertaining, useful, and, more importantly, in a local dialect of Tamil that the fishing community understands and finds comfort in,” she says. Started by businessman Armstrong Fernando, himself from a fishing family, Kadal Osai (“the sound of the ocean” in Tamil) began in August 2016 with just a few hours of transmission daily, before going full-time in 2019. Alongside updates on weather, marine affairs and fish prices, advice on safe and sustainable fishing and the preservation of coral reefs, the station also conducts on and off-air workshops on the climate crisis and biodiversity. On the fringes of India's mainland, across the water from Sri Lanka, Pamban and the surrounding 20 islands and coral reefs are part of the richly biodiverse Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve, and home to 47 hamlets of the indigenous Marakeyars, engaged in fishing for centuries. “Due to poor signal reception, the fishing community cannot solely depend on the All India Radio [India's national broadcaster], especially while at sea. In such a scenario, it is Kadal Osai – with a coverage area of 5-10km – that they tune into,” says Usman.

In the past few years, the climate crisis has had a drastic effect on marine life and local livelihoods. Senthil Rajan is a microbiologist at a seaweed cultivation site in Pamban. “It has

become increasingly difficult to predict and interpret water levels in the ocean, cyclone formations, and potential fishing zones. The erratic weather patterns have led to an unprecedented rise in sea levels as well as the height of the waves, thus affecting many seaweed cultivating sites,” says Rajan. “In such a scenario, tapping into the traditional knowledge of the fishing community, remains a rich source of learning.” Understanding this need to share knowledge with the next generation, Kadal Osai invites experienced fishers to talk with experts about the effects of over-exploitation on marine resources, and the importance of integrating traditional and modern fishing methods. “Using umbrella terms such as climate change and global warming with this coastal community may not drive home the point effectively. So, we juxtapose the knowledge passed down the generations with the right mix of anecdotes and scientific techniques and keep the dialogue going on climate change,” says Usman. Radio is one of the most powerful methods of communication in India, with enormous reach among its 1.38bn population. Even prime minister Narendra Modi has a monthly programme. Unicef collaborated with 215 community radio stations in India, such as Kadal Osai, to create awareness around ending child marriage, something which has been on the decline in India, by 2030. “We started the ‘Kutty Chutty Express’ to inform children on the ill-effects of child marriages through skits, quizzes and roadshows, as well as conducting workshops,” says Usman.

The station also publicises the number for Childline India Foundation, which operates the country’s first 24-hour hotline for children in distress. During the pandemic, Kadal Osai has become a bridge between the authorities and the coastal communities. It created awareness of the importance of sanitising and social distancing, and also distributed free masks. “In the initial months, we tried to break a myth among islanders – who believed that they were safe from Covid-19, being surrounded by the salty sea water. Now, since the lockdown has been relaxed, we highlight that ostracising affected people isn’t the solution,” says Usman, as she signs off to go live on 90.4FM, and continue her mission to entertain and inform her faithful community of listeners.

### **Tamil Nadu: Rs77cr sanctioned to make Thengapattanam harbour safer**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/rs77cr-sanctioned-to-make-thengapattanam-harbour-safer/articleshow/80161825.cms>

"The government has sanctioned Rs 77 crore for making the Thengapattanam fishing harbour in Kanyakumari district safer for fishermen. The sanction was made after a series of protests by fishermen following the deaths of at least four fishermen at the entrance of the harbour last year. The government sanctioned the amount under state fund in anticipation of project approval from the fisheries and aquaculture infrastructure development fund (FIFD) considering the immediate requirement for execution of the project. It will be utilised to extend the main breakwaters for 200m and rehabilitation of the damaged head and trunk portion of the

existing main breakwaters for a length of 36m. The sanctioned funds include Rs 7.99 crore as GST at 12% and Rs 77 lakh towards provision of labour welfare fund at 1%.

According to the GO, core breakwater with stones measuring two to 12 tonne each for a total of 27,996 cubic metres, 1.87 lakh tonne of blue granite stones weighing 10 to 50kg each, 64,840 tonne of blue granite stones weighing 1.2 to two tonne each and 12,336 tonne of blue granite stones weighing 1 to 10kg each will be used for the works. Welcoming the GO as announced by the CM at the Christmas celebrations in the district in December, representatives of fishermen bodies urged the government for speedy completion of the works so that their livelihood will not be affected. The harbour was established at Rs 97.4 crore in 2019. Huge waves turned turtle many fishing boats and left fishermen who were tossed into the sea injured when they hit the boats or boulders at the harbour's entrance and breakwaters. Fishermen bodies had staged protests blaming the poor design of the breakwaters and mouth of the harbour.

### **Tamil Nadu: TN Fire and Rescue Services commandos rescue fishermen in Chennai**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/tn-fire-and-rescue-services-commandos-rescue-fishermen-in-chennai/article33508824.ece>

"It was a scene right out of a movie, when a six-member team of the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services (TRNFRS) marine commandos swam into the sea and rescued four fishermen who fell into the water after their boat capsized, on Wednesday morning. On Wednesday morning, four fishermen Arumugam, 60, Jayaseelan, 30, Madhan, 25 along with Mahendran, 45, the owner of the boat, went into the sea for fishing. As they were returning around 8 a.m., they waited for a rip current to move away. However at this juncture, a peice of cloth got caught in the boat's propeller. All of a sudden, the nose of the boat tipped and strong waves toppled the boat over. Marine Commandos Loganathan and Sandhana Sekhar, who were patrolling the shore, saw this and blew the whistle to alert their team mates -- Gunasekara Pandian, M. Jeevanandam, P. ISakki Raj and M. Mohamed Firdouse -- who were at the Marine Beach Rescue outpost on the shore. "The wetsuit-clad commandos swam into the sea with life buoys and jackets and rescued the fishermen. All of them were caught in the net, and after much struggles, they brought them back to safety. A. Satish Kumar, owner of SUP Marina, a paddling club, and its member Dhanush, also joined in the rescue efforts," said a senior TNFRS officer. Arumugam and Jayaseelan were injured badly and have been rushed to the hospital. "Last week we rescued a dolphin that washed ashore just opposite our outpost. We took it back to the sea. It was a unique experience," said a commando team member. Following the inauguration of the TNFRS Marina Beach rescue station last year, a rescue outpost was also set up on the shores of the beach recently. "We can save many people from drowning. We have been provided All Terrain Vehicles and Jet Skis. Our team members are trained in kayaking, swimming and paddling, among other water rescue methods," said Priya Ravichandran, Joint Director of the TNFRS.

## **Tamil Nadu: Expert Appraisal Committee defers Pulicat lake wall proposal, seeks more details**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/expert-appraisal-committee-defers-pulicat-lake-wall-proposal-seeks-more-details/article33515222.ece>

"The Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) of the Environment Ministry has directed a sub-committee to visit the coastal stretch of Pulicat lake where the Department of Fisheries, Tamil Nadu, has proposed two training walls for permanent stability for the bar mouth of the lake, and ascertain details about the impact of the project. The EAC directed the sub-committee to also discuss the findings with a team from the National Institute of Ocean Technology, the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON), the Tamil Nadu State Coastal Zone Management Authority and the Department of Fisheries. The Department of Fisheries proposed to construct two training walls on the north and south side of the lake at the bar mouth, which will provide access to fishermen throughout the year. It also proposed to dredge the channel after the construction of the wall. The EAC deferred the proposal for want of further details. Impact on wildlife The EAC directed the project proponent to submit the report of a study already conducted by SACON on the proposed project's impact on migratory birds since the Pulicat Bird Sanctuary is located within 10 km of the project site. It has also sought data on fisheries and their decline observed in the past years. Since the proposal is related to making a permanent opening at the bar mouth, data on salinity of the lake is also important. Available data on salinity of the lake over the past 10-20 years shall be submitted, the EAC said. The committee also said it would be too premature to consider the proposal for construction of the training walls from a Coastal Regulation Zone perspective as the Comprehensive Shoreline Protection Management Plan of Tamil Nadu was awaiting approval.

## **Tamil Nadu: Action against rearing African catfish**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Coimbatore/action-against-rearing-african-catfish/article33496397.ece>

"The district administration has warned that action will be taken against farmers who rear or sell banned African catfish (*Clarias gariepinus*) or African keluthi as it poses a threat to native aquatic species. A release from Collector C. Kathiravan said that based on the National Green Tribunal order no 435/2018 dated January 22, 2019, the Central and the State governments had banned rearing of the species as it was posing a threat to several local varieties of fish and polluting water bodies. Known as African Mushi, the species was introduced across the globe in 1980 for aquaculture and in India without official sanction. The fish had the ability to survive in shallow mud for a long period of time and had high tolerance to poorly oxygenated water. The release warned that rearing of the banned fish violated the law and action would be taken accordingly. For details, contact, Assistant Director of Fisheries, No 42, Subburam Complex,

2nd Floor, Perundurai Road, Near Collectorate premises, Erode 638 011. Phone 0424-2221912, Inspector of Fisheries at 93848-24368, the release said that officials could be contacted for rearing other fish species for which subsidy was provided.

### **Tamil Nadu: SDPC suggests co-curriculum on fish production**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/sdpc-suggests-co-curriculum-on-fish-production/articleshow/80030091.cms>

"The State Development Policy Council (SDPC) has suggested development of co-curriculum which focuses on fish production by using innovative technologies to promote entrepreneurship. Vice-chairman of SDPC C Ponnaiyan said that Tamil Nadu Agriculture University and Tamil Nadu Dr J Jayalalithaa Fisheries University may jointly work on such a curriculum to increase production and income to fishermen. SDPC organised a webinar on best practices in fisheries sector for all stakeholder departments and panel experts. Director of fisheries department in his presentation highlighted efforts taken by them to provide easy access to consumers through e-marketing and fish eating habits through apps like 'Dial-A-Fish' and 'Meengal'. Ponnaiyan in his concluding remarks quoted that advanced infrastructure facilities for fish breeding, live food production and a lab with state-of-the-art facilities are being established through projects like Aquatic Rainbow Technology Park and E-Fish health surveillance.

### **Tamil Nadu: 16th anniversary of Tsunami tragedy observed in Kumari, Thoothukudi**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/TamilNadu/2020/12/27024302/1268428/16th-anniversary-of-Tsunami-tragedy-observed-in-Kumari-.vpf>

"Candlelit prayers were offered at churches and several fisher folks got access to seashores and showered petals in memory of those lives lost during Tsunami. Fishermen abstained from fishing on Saturday. Scores of people and children took out silent processions to mark the occasion. In Kanniyakumari, the coastal village of Kottilpadu was the worst-hit area, whereas many as 199 fisher folks were killed. A silent procession led by Fr Churchill, general secretary, South Asian Fishermen Fraternity, Kanyakumari was taken out from Tsunami colony at Kottilpadu to the graveyard where the bodies were buried en masse. Kottilpadu Parish priest Raj flagged off the procession, which culminated at St. Alex Church, where prayer service was conducted for the departed souls to rest in peace. The mourners later paid tributes at Tsunami memorial tomb behind the church.

Public, politicians pay homage Political party representatives of ruling AIADMK, DMK and other political party members on Saturday along with public paid homage to 2004 Tsunami victims by participating in candlelight mourning along the shores of Marina. Local public also participated and special prayers were conducted for departed souls. AMMK general secretary TTV Dhinakaran in a detailed statement demanded a specially dedicated team headed by IAS

officer to address the issues about fishermen and their families hit by 2004 Tsunami. It has been 16 years since the Tsunami struck Tamil Nadu adversely affecting the lives and livelihood of TN fishermen. Though the state has taken up several schemes to rehabilitate the Tsunami survivors the quality of life affected is still in a bad shape. The state government should form a dedicated official team headed by IAS officer to look into the welfare of fishermen affected by the deadly Tsunami waves, Dhinakaran said.

### **Tamil Nadu: 15 hamlets pay homage to tsunami victims**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/tsunami-anniversary-observed/article33427665.ece#:~:text=Hundreds%20of%20fisherfolk%20from%20Chennai,in%20the%20tsunami%20of%202004.&text=It%20was%20in%202004%20that,wassomething%20called%20a%20tsunami.>

"Hundreds of fisherfolk from Chennai, Tiruvallur and Chengalpattu districts on Saturday paid homage to those who died in the tsunami of 2004. Photos of those who died were exhibited in fishing villages, pots of milk and flowers were offered to the sea, silent processions taken out and candles were lit at small memorials in the villages. Jalandhran Chettiyar of Arangamkuppam in Pulicat said the people from the 15 fishing villages did not venture into the sea on Saturday as had been the practice all these years. "We held early morning prayers. It was in 2004 that we learnt that the sea could be so ferocious and there was something called a tsunami. From our area, two children and an elderly woman lost their lives in that tsunami, he recalled. K. Bharathi of South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association said that though the tsunami had brought in unimaginable damage and loss of lives, it turned the government's focus on fishing hamlets. "In under two years, they ensured infrastructure including roads, bridges and lighting. There were villages that could not be accessed from any main road but had connectivity only via another village and then through the seashore. All that changed. The government along with NGOs ensured that we were back on our feet within a short span, he recalled.

### **Tamil Nadu: Public hearing for Adani's mega expansion of Kattupalli Port in Chennai on January 22**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/dec/22/public-hearing-for-adanis-mega-expansion-of-kattupalli-port-in-chennai-on-january-22-2239669.html>

"The public hearing for the mega expansion of Kattupalli Port proposed by Marine Infrastructure Developer Pvt Ltd (MIDPL), a vertical of Adani Ports, is scheduled on January 22. Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) officials told The New Indian Express that the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) study for the proposed revised master plan development of Kattupalli port has been completed and submitted to the board. ""The public hearing will be conducted at 11 am on January 22 at Bhagavaan Mahaveer Auditorium in Chandraprabhu Jain

College in Minjur,"" a top official from TNPCB said. The Kattupalli Port expansion has been proposed in a total area of 2,472.85 hectares which includes 133.50 ha of existing area, 761.8 ha of government land, 781.4 ha of private land and proposed sea reclamation of 796.15 ha. When completed, Kattupalli Port will be one of the largest major ports in the country enhancing the cargo handling capacity from the current 24.66 MTPA (million tonnes per annum) to 320 MTPA. Adani will be pumping in an investment in excess of Rs 53,000 crore. However, the project would eat into wetlands of the fragile Ennore ecosystem and is likely to pose a significant threat to India's second largest brackish water lake - Pulicat lake. An expert appraisal committee of the Union Environment Ministry, before issuing Terms of Reference (ToR) for MIDPL to conduct EIA studies, had constituted a sub-committee to inspect the project site after receiving several complaints from local people and activists.

In its report, the sub-committee noted that Pulicat lake in the north of Kattupalli port, Ennore creek in the south with the Buckingham canal on the west are designated as ecologically sensitive areas and placed under CRZ-1 (critical for maintaining ecosystem of coast) of Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2011. ""Extensive shallows (Ennore shoals) are formed at this place and they extend up to Pulicat. The coastal area near Pulicat is very flat and has a vast expanse of backwater including saltpans. It has been hypothesized that shoals might have formed due to interaction of northerly coastal currents and sediment supply through Ennore creek (Kosattalaiyar river) when it was active,"" the committee said and recommended a detailed study on the impact of the port expansion on the Ennore shoals that were protecting the coast from cyclones and tsunamis. The sub-committee had also recorded and endorsed the concerns of local people, with regard to protection of the Kosasthalaiyar estuarine wetland ecology with its brackish water channels, salt pans, mud flats, mangroves, sand dunes, palmyra stands and endemic flora and fauna, running parallel to the coast and linking Ennore creek, Karungali estuary and Pulicat lake. It is critical to the effective drainage of the massive volumes of flood waters received from inland and the dissipation of the storm surge energy from the ocean. This naturally evolved earth system is crucial in maintaining fresh water recharge and countering saltwater intrusion.

However, in the executive summary of the EIA study, MIDPL claims that the proposed port location does not contain environmentally sensitive areas and it also does not include breeding and spawning grounds of fish and other marine life, areas of outstanding natural beauty, historical or heritage areas and areas rich in genetic diversity. ""The development activities such as capital dredging, reclamation, dredge spoil disposal, expansion/modification of navigational facilities, offshore structures will impact the marine environment. However, most impacts during construction are short-term in nature and will cease on completion of construction activities,"" the study report claims. MIDPL also claimed that to prevent the erosion along the north coast, both soft (sand bypassing) and hard measures (groynes) were tested with appropriate model

simulations. ""The model analysis also clearly shows that the Pulicat lake mouth will not have any impact due to the proposed development and protection measures considered,"" it said.

### **Tamil Nadu and Kerala: New technology playing savior to fishermen: Shakya**

<http://www.uniindia.com/~new-technology-playing-savior-to-fishermen-shakya/India/news/2271851.html>

"The advent of new technology, especially the digitised applications and services launched by the Government, have given the fishermen, especially those residing in the coastal areas of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, a sense of security, as they keep the fishermen alert and also help them during distress times at the sea. These views were expressed by R Shakya, Deputy Director General (Satellite), Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications, while participating in the virtual summit on 'Criticality of Transforming Fisheries Industry: Ushering Digitization to Support PMMSY,' organised by India's premier news agency, United News of India, here on Tuesday. Talking about the new-age technologies, Mr Shakya mentioned the NavIC Messaging Receivers (NMR), which is an indigenous system, developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Ahmedabad.

The system sends alert messages regarding Cyclones, High Waves and Tsunami to the fishermen on their mobile phones in native languages, using Bluetooth, he said. It also warns them about international boundaries and gives detailed information on potential fishing zones, added the DDG. Talking about other applications, Mr Shakya listed the Distress Alert Transmitter (DAT), Second Generation Distress Alert Transmitter (2G-DAT), 2 Way Vessel Tracking Terminal, MSS Satellite Phone and VSAT Link as the new-age helpers of the fishermen. Giving details, he said DAT is an INSAT-based battery operated transmitter, which is developed for 'NAVIKA' community. In case of emergency, DAT transmits an emergency message, which consists of the boat's ID, it's location, type of distress and time information. The DAT transmits the information to INSAT-3A satellite, which relays the signal to the Indian Coast Guard in Chennai for rescue operation, added Mr Shakya. The technologies are not only used by the fishermen community, but even the Defence personnel at the borders make use of these for easy and smooth communication at remote corners of the country.

### **Tamil Nadu: Shrimp hatcheries along ECR operating without CRZ clearance, authorities turn blind eye: RTI**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/dec/19/shrimp-hatcheries-along-ecr-operating-without-crz-clearance-authorities-turn-blind-eye-rti-2238468.html>

"None of the 65 coastal aquaculture shrimp hatcheries operating on East Coast Road (ECR) of Chengalpet and Villupuram districts have mandatory Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearance. Officials of the Tamil Nadu Coastal Zone Management Authority and Department of Environment confirmed that between 2005 and 2019, they have neither issued nor discussed the granting of CRZ clearance to shrimp hatcheries in the State in any of the meetings. The information was obtained through RTI by environmental activist Pooja Kumar of Coastal Resource Centre. This is a major oversight by the authorities. The CRZ Notification 2011 lists hatcheries as an activity permitted within certain permissible zones of the CRZ, subject to prior appraisal and recommendation from the State's Coastal Zone Management Authority (SCZMA) and clearance from the statutory authority. The coastal aquaculture industry is also specifically regulated by the Coastal Aquaculture Authority (CAA) Act 2005. Rules framed under this Act prohibit the setting up of all coastal aquaculture facilities, including hatcheries, within 200m of the High Tide Line (HTL) in coastal areas. Any aquaculture activities beyond 200m of the High Tide Line requires statutory licenses from the CAA.

The Coastal Resource Centre has also published a 33-page report titled ""Below the Radar"" based on site verification, according to which 62 of the 65 hatcheries were operational within 200m of the HTL in blatant violation of the provisions in the CAA Act. None of the hatcheries have valid Consent to establish or operate under Water and Air Acts too. The worst offenders are four hatcheries sitting on the ecologically sensitive CRZ 1A areas (sand dunes). When contacted, senior officials of Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) told The New Indian Express that hatcheries are dealt with under the CAA Act and a former official of the Tamil Nadu Coastal Zone Management Authority said it is a huge grey area. ""Hatcheries are not as polluting as other industries, but they still need mandatory licenses."" K Saravanan, one of the authors of the report who also photo-documented the violations, says, ""Detailed survey of coastal aquaculture hatcheries along all districts in Tamil Nadu must be undertaken and compliance to CRZ Notification, CAA Act and Water and Air Acts of all hatcheries along the TN coast must be verified urgently.

Those found in violation must be removed and the natural state of the area restored."" It's a common sight all along the ECR that hatcheries are releasing untreated discharge into ecologically sensitive intertidal CRZ areas. Aquaculture effluent usually contains pharmaceutical waste as medicines are used to prevent infections in the cultured animals. Untreated effluent mixed with chemicals when discharged into intertidal areas affects the health of intertidal life and pollutes nearshore waters and in turn marine life, activists allege.

## **Tamil Nadu: Pulicat Bird Sanctuary: Environment ministry defers proposal to build groynes in eco-sensitive zone**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/dec/19/pulicat-bird-sanctuary-environment-ministry-defers-proposal-to-build-groynes-in-eco-sensitive-zone-2238475.amp>

"An expert appraisal committee of the Union Environment Ministry has deferred the Tamil Nadu government's proposal to build groynes in the eco-sensitive zone of Pulicat Bird Sanctuary seeking additional information. The committee, which met on December 14, observed that the project may affect the migratory birds' pattern since Pulicat Bird Sanctuary is located within 10 km of the project site. "Therefore, a report of the study already conducted by the Salim Ali Institute of Ornithology may be submitted. Data on how much reduction in fishery has been observed in past years may be submitted. Since the proposal is related to making a permanent opening at the bar mouth, data on salinity of the lake is also important. Therefore, available data on salinity of the lake over the past 10-20 years shall be submitted," the committee said. It also felt that the Comprehensive Shoreline Protection Management Plan of Tamil Nadu was yet to be approved by the National Coastal Zone Management Authority (NCZMA).

So, the proposal for construction of the groynes for permanent stability of the bar mouth may be "premature" to consider for now. A sub-committee will make a site visit to ascertain the details of the interventions and its environmental impact. They will also hold discussions with experts from National Institute of Ocean Technology, Salim Ali Institute of Ornithology, Tamil Nadu State Coastal Zone Management Authority and the Department of Fisheries. Officials in the State fisheries department said that construction of training walls or groynes will give permanent stability to the bar mouth at Pulicat village and it will allow continuous access for vessels of fishermen to do traditional fishing in all the seasons. It will also increase fishing activity in the lake and support the livelihood of fishermen, thereby increasing their social and economic status. The project will give employment to the fishermen in the nearby 52 villages during the operation phase. The project area falls in CRZ-IB and CRZ-IV as per the CRZ demarcation map. Since the project site is located within 5 km of the inter-state boundary of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, the proposal is being appraised at the central level. A public hearing was conducted on October 29 where no major issues were raised. The Tamil Nadu government has allocated Rs 27 crore for the project.

## **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen fleeing Oman intended to surrender**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/fishermen-fleeing-oman-intended-to-surrender-activist/articleshow/79727998.cms>

"Five Indian fishermen who fled from Oman to India and were arrested, did not intend to reach home in hiding but wanted to surrender before the Indian Navy or the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) after entering Indian waters, said general secretary of the South Asian Fishermen Fraternity (SAFF) Churchil, who is fighting for their cause. The men were lodged in the Nagercoil sub-jail in Kanyakumari district on Monday evening. "They went fishing on December 1 but their boat suffered a technical snag. They asked their employer for help but he did not send them. After remaining stranded in the sea for two days they got help from another fishing boat, Churchil said. According to him, one of the fishermen S Sahaya Thadeus has experience in repairing boats. Once he fixed the engine on December 4 they decided to flee to India to escape harassment by their employer. Directionless, they headed northward and realised they were near Pakistan when they noticed a few Pakistan fishing vessels. "They sailed south and reached the Lakshadweep, from where they headed to Cochin, Vizhinjam and Muttom. They did not come across the navy or ICG, he added.

The fishermen Stephen, Thadeus, G Joseph Edwin, M Pranjees and S Aldo and were booked under Section 3 (iii) of The Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920. Kin of the fishermen and SAFF have appealed to the government to quash the FIR against the fishermen and free them as they only tried to save themselves from their employer. Meanwhile, the marine police said that Bangladeshi national Md Razib Uddin, 29, had no clue he was leaving Oman and that his fellow fishermen were taking him with them to India. He was booked under Section 14(a) (remains in any area in India for a period exceeding the period for which the visa was issued to him) of The Foreigners Act, 1946. Uddin was sent to Chennai to be lodged at the Puzhal Prison.

### **Tamil Nadu: Construction of fishing harbour inaugurated**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/harbour/article33309963.ece>

"Handlooms Minister O.S.Manian inaugurated construction of a mini fishing harbour at a cost of ₹34.30 crore under the self-sufficiency scheme at Nambiar Nagar here on Friday. Bhoomi pooja was performed last year but there was delay in construction. The project has reached the execution stage despite legal hurdles, he said. Nambiar Nagar, with a population of about 4,400, is situated about two km away from Nagapattinam town. Fishers own 96 mechanised boats and 256 fibre boats. While fibre boats docked on the seashore, mechanised boats have to be docked at Nagapattinam harbour. A majority of fibre boats were damaged during cyclone Gaja. The mini harbour has been sanctioned to reduce congestion at Nagapattinam harbour and provide better amenities for fishermen of Nambiar Nagar. Villagers are contributing ₹11.43 crore for the project and the rest was provided by the government.

The harbour will include a boat landing stage of 100 metres in length and 12 metres in width. He also inaugurated construction of a groin and dredging of the river mouth at Pattinacherry. The groin to be built on the north bank of the Vettar at Nagore Pattinacherry has been sanctioned at a cost of ₹19.87 crore. The groin would prevent frequent silting up of the river mouth impeding the movement of boats. The groin would be built for a distance of about 360 metres. Already a groin was built on the opposite side – on the south bank of the Vettar. A fish landing centre was built in 2014. The river mouth would also be dredged and deepened as part of the project. Once the works were completed, boats can set sail smoothly into the sea from the coast, Mr. Manian said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Chennai fisherwoman floats waste recycling company, earns Rs 13 lakh in a year**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/dec/13/chennai-fisherwoman-floats-wastre-recycling-company-earns-rs-13-lakh-in-a-year-2235503.html>

"It's a life-changing decision, says 41-year-old K Velankanni, a fisherwoman from Nambikkai Nagar in Pattinapakkam, who floated her own company that converts fish waste into value-added products, and made a turnover of Rs 13 lakh in just one year. Until 2018, Velankanni used to sell fish that her husband nets, to eke out a living. "Monthly income was very irregular as the fish catch is not something one can guarantee. On average, we earned around Rs 10,000-Rs 15,000 per month. It was not sufficient and forced us to take loans at higher interest rates. I have two daughters, one in class 9 and the other in class 7, and they deserved better education and future. A window of opportunity opened when the Central Institute of Brackish Aquaculture (CIBA) invited us for training on how to convert fish waste into wealth, and I decided to give it a shot, Velankanni tells Express. After completing the training successfully, Nambikkai Fish Farmers Group was formed, and CIBA established the "Fish Waste Processing Unit on February 18, 2019.

"From then on, our lives changed forever. We bring 200- 300 kg of fish waste from nearby markets daily, process it afresh, and convert it into value added products. CIBA helped us brand and market the products. We started getting orders from Kerala, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, and West Bengal, which helped us grow bigger. After testing enough waters and tasting success, Velankanni decided to become an entrepreneur and floated her own firm on December 2, 2019, a micro- level enterprise called "VS Fish Waste Hydrolysate. Our company has GST number and will be filing IT returns, gleams Velankanni's proud husband T Kennit Raj, who is leading the Nambikkai Fish Farmers Group. The group has produced 16.345 tonnes of Plankton Plus and 0.82 tonnes of Horti Plus and received Rs13.07 lakhs (from May 2019 to July 2020). Even during the Covid-19 pandemic, they managed to earn around Rs2 lakh. CIBA director KK Vijayan tells, the technology was developed under the Swachh Bharat initiative of the Government of India.

“We often find stinking fish wastes dumped on the seashore and in fish markets, causing environmental pollution and discomfort to the people living in the area. We decided to develop a technology that would convert this waste into ‘wealth’. The products – Plankton Plus and Horti Plus – have been tested for their efficiency and efficacy in aquaculture and horticulture through a series of experiments in the yard, as well as in farms, and showed promising performance after which we reached out to potential beneficiaries. For example, Plankton Plus is used in aquaculture to boost and maintain the healthy plankton blooms, while Horti Plus is used as organic manure in horticulture, the official says. P Mahalakshmi, principal scientist of engineering cell at CIBA, says though the training was imparted to about 150 people from 2015, only Nambikkai Fish Farmers Group made the best use of it, which in return, transformed their lives. “This technology of CIBA has the potential in cleaning the fish markets and providing alternative livelihoods to many across the country, she explains. The group is recognised as the “Best Fisheries Self Help Group 2020 by the National Fisheries Development Board. Kennit Raj received the award from Union Minister of Fisheries Pratap Chandra Sarangi on the occasion of World Fisheries Day last month.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Fisherman missing at sea**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/tamil-nadu-fisherman-missing-at-sea/articleshow/79628267.cms>

"A 69-year-old fisherman from Kanyakumari district who went fishing from Kochi on Monday night was found missing on Tuesday. The missing fisherman has been identified as A Sesaiyyan of Thoothoor village in Kanyakumari district. International Fishermen Development Trust president P Justin Antony said Sesaiyyan was among the 12 fishermen who went for deep sea finishing in a mechanised boat (IND TN 15 MM 5101). The boat left Kochi around 10 pm on Monday. According to the activist, Sesaiyyan's fellow fishermen found him missing in the early hours of Tuesday and informed the office of the additional director of fisheries at Colachel in Kanyakumari district. Justin Antony urged the Prime Minister, defence minister, fisheries minister, Indian Coast Guard and the Tamil Nadu chief minister to order an aerial search for the missing fisherman.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Post-cyclone, deep sea fishing permitted with some restrictions**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/post-cyclone-deep-sea-fishing-permitted-with-some-restrictions/article33284313.ece>

"With the intensity of cyclone-induced rainfall subsiding, fishers in Nagapattinam district have started venturing into the sea after a gap of nearly a fortnight, albeit with adherence to distancing restrictions imposed by the Fisheries Department. Those into deep sea fishing with mechanised boats have received instructions to return to the shore within three days, and to maintain daily contact either with the department or family members. "Mechanised boats left the fishing harbours on Sunday and are expected to touch shores on Wednesday. The fishermen have been instructed to remain well within the range of the VHF sets supplied to them. The mechanised boat operators have been instructed not to venture beyond 35 nautical miles from the shore this entire month, Joint Director of Fisheries Amal Raj Xavier said. As for fishermen with fibre boats, the spells of heavy rainfall will help them to net shrimps in large quantities. Measures are in place for smooth resumption of fish trade after the two consequent cyclones, he said. However, resumption of dry fish manufacturing will take at least 10 more days, Mr. Amal Raj Xavier said. Fishermen in the district net mostly dry sardines that have a huge market in Kerala. Though resumption of fishing activities has brought in huge relief, fishermen welfare organisations say the community is badly in need of government support to overcome loss of revenue for the days they have had to remain confined to the shores. For more than 10 days, the fishermen had no other source of income. Most of the residents in low-lying fishing hamlets were evacuated to various flood relief centres where they were provided with food and shelter. Representatives of fishermen welfare organisations are understood to have submitted petitions to State Ministers, who are in the district to oversee flood relief operations, to sanction funds and mitigate their hardship caused by economic distress.

### **Tamil Nadu: 'Repair boats damaged in Cyclone Burevi'**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/repair-boats-damaged-due-to-cyclone-burevi/article33275163.ece>

"Members of various fishermen associations here have urged the State government to immediately take stock of the damage Cyclone Burevi caused to their mechanised boats, and help them with financial aid, so that they can start work again. After the weather forecast about Cyclone Burevi, the Fisheries Department had instructed fishermen to stay off sea. From December 1, they have been indoors, but the rain, accompanied by gusty winds has damaged many of the boats anchored near Mandapam and Thangachimadam. The meeting of the associations, which was presided over by general secretary V.P. Sesu Raja at Rameswaram on Monday, passed six resolutions. The members wanted the government to survey the damage to the boats, fishnets and immediately order compensation. They wanted the government to

provide them with 1,000 litres of diesel free of cost and to replace the mechanised boat of a fisherman identified as Sarfudeen of Thangachimadam as the boat had been badly damaged.

The meeting also passed a resolution stating that the fishermen had moved 116 mechanised boats to a safer place after the district administration directed them to move the boats to a shore near Mandapam. In the cyclonic influence, at least 40 of the anchored boats were damaged. The mechanised boats had to be urgently repaired, if the fishermen were to go fishing again. As the port had withdrawn the warning signal two days ago, the fishermen are ready to venture into the sea, but are unable to go. Hence, the government intervention will be helpful and timely, Mr. Sesu Raja said. Thanking the district administration for their timely alert to move the boats from Mandapam by lifting the Pamban rail bridge, he said that the government should provide loans to procure fishnets as these had been destroyed in the cyclone. Members at the meeting pointed out that instead of confining themselves to just giving compensation or relief due to the cyclone, the government has to earmark funds and build infrastructure at Kundukaal and other locations to facilitate the fishermen to safely anchor their boats in future, when such cyclones hit the region. The meeting decided to submit a memorandum to the Collector and also to the State government through the Fisheries Department.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen reiterate demand for change in ban period**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/tn-fishermen-reiterate-demand-for-change-in-ban-period/article33262687.ece>

"Fishermen have reiterated their demand for shifting the annual deep sea fishing ban to October-November instead of April-May. They say that the ban should ideally be during the northeast monsoon when they are unable to venture into the sea due to various systems, including cyclones, in the Bay of Bengal. This monsoon, said president of the Gillnet Boat Association R. Varadan, brought copious amounts of rain to the State and forced the fishermen to stay home. "There have been instances of fishermen and boats going missing during this season. What is the use then of going fishing when the State Fisheries Department issuing tokens and then asking us to return when there is a cyclone warning, he asked. Mr. Varadan, who recently went to court seeking change in the 61-day annual ban period from April 14, said that the report of an expert committee in 2014 based on which the ban was being implemented, said that there was no scientific evidence indicating that the fishing ban helped in replenishing fish stock.

"The report could not identify a common peak spawning period for all fish, as different fish species have different spawning months. The solution is not biologically sound, he said. Nanjil Ravi of the Akhila Indiya Meenavar Sangam said that the Kerala ban coincided with the onset of the southwest monsoon on the western coast. Tamil Nadu was not affected by that monsoon. The Indian prawn, one among the highest commercial species, spawns mostly in September. A common ban period was not appropriate for the entire east coastal region, Mr. Ravi said.

## **Tamil Nadu: Cyclone affects availability of fish**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/cyclone-affects-availability-of-fish/articleshow/79573723.cms>

"As back-to-back cyclones over the Bay of Bengal have kept fishermen off the seas, the arrival of fish to the city has been severely affected in the last two weeks. Ever since Nivar cyclone passed through the state, only a limited variety of fishes has been available following a dip in arrival from coastal districts including Nagapattinam. With Cyclone Burevi following in Nivar's trail, fishermen in Ramanathapuram and Kanyakumari districts have not been able to venture out. "Several fish varieties such as anchovy (nethili), seer fish (vanjiram) and barracuda (sheela) are not available due to adverse weather condition in the sea. We are managing with what we get, said S Badrinath, proprietor of Ocean pick seafood. Expecting it to continue for a week or more, vendors have started procuring fishes from Kerala to meet the demand. "Threadfin fish (sankara) and ladyfish (kilangan) are at presently procured from Kerala coast. For the next one week, we expect a fall in the arrival of fishes from the coastal districts of the state, T Ashok Kumar, a fish vendor from Kasivilangi market added. Vendors said that prices have remained the same to prevent people from avoiding seafood and going after meat. A majority of the fish vendors here rely on Nagapattinam and Ramanathapuram fishers, both of which are witnessing the impact of cyclones.

## **Tamil Nadu and Kerala: Cyclone Burevi weakens into deep depression**

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/cyclone-burevi-live-updates-storm-weakens-into-deep-depression-tamil-nadu-kerala-airports-shut-11607056118869.html>

"The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said that the cyclonic storm Burevi has weakened into a deep depression is inching closer to the Tamil Nadu and Kerala coast on 4 December. Deep depression is a stage of cyclone formation or de-intensification. Southern Tamil Nadu and neighbouring Kerala are on high alert as the weather bureau had earlier predicted that Burevi would hit the southern shores as a cyclonic storm. Here are the Latest Updates on Cyclone Burevi: - Latest IMD bulletin - Deep Depression over Gulf of Mannar at 0530 IST today is close to Ramanathapuram District coast remained practically stationary, about 40 km southwest of Ramanathapuram, 70 km west-southwest of Pamban . - - The associated wind speed is about 55-65 gusting to 75 kmph. - IMD issues no.3 hazard warning at Pamban port - The met department has issued a number three hazard warning sign at the Pamban port due to strong winds blowing at a speed of 55 kmph over the coast. - Flight operations shut - Flights operations have been suspended till 12 pm today in Madurai and Tuticorin airport. The flight operations will also remain suspended at Thiruvananthapuram International Airport from 10 am to 6 pm on Friday. - Kerala declares public holiday in 5 districts - The Government of Kerala has declared a holiday in five districts for today.

A statement issued by the state government said a public holiday has been declared for the districts of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha and Idukki in Kerala. - Strong winds hit Tamil Nadu's Rameswaram - Visuals from Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu as strong winds hit the region; sea turns rough. - Heavy rains predicted - Heavy rainfall has been predicted in several places under the deep depression, including Toothukudi, Tirunelveli, Kanyakumari, Cuddalore, Puducherry and neighbouring areas for the next six hours on Friday. - Disaster relief teams on standby - Diving and disaster relief teams of the Indian Navy and the National Disaster Response Force continue to be on standby to render necessary support to the administration. Two Indian Navy ships and four Indian Navy aircraft were deployed for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief assistance and warn fishermen at the west coast of the sea. - Kerala CM holds high-level meeting - In view of the high alert issued for cyclonic storm Burevi, a high-level meeting was held with representatives of armed forces, Coast Guard, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), various department heads, DGP and Chief Secretary, said Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. The situation was assessed and strategy was evaluated in the meeting. - Schools in Puducherry to remain shut - The government and private schools in Puducherry will remain closed today due to continuous rains triggered by Cyclone Burevi. - Amit Shah assures all possible help - Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami and his counterpart in Kerala Pinarayi Vijayan on Thursday and assured them of all possible help to the people of both the states.

### **Tamil Nadu: Cyclone Nivar weakened near the coast – but flooded coastal districts**

<https://science.thewire.in/environment/cyclone-nivar-weakened-coast-but-flooded-coastal-districts/>

"Sathyaseelan, 40, and his family live on the edge of Tamil Nadu's Ekkiar Kuppam, a fishing village. Cyclone Nivar made landfall at 11:30 pm on November 25 near Marakkanam, barely five kilometres from his hut, which was battered by heavy rain and a turbulent sea. "We spent over five nights at the shelter, the fisherman said, as he cleaned the wet floor of his hut. "Every year we end up spending at least a few days there, it is such a problem. Nivar rapidly intensified last week, with winds initially touching 85-95 km/hr between Marakkanam and Puducherry. However, it weakened into a storm and then a deep depression on November 26 and 27, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) said. Heavy rains continued in most of Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and coastal Andhra Pradesh on Thursday, November 26, flooding several districts. IMD on Monday, November 30, warned that yet another cyclone may be headed towards south India. The depression over the south-east Bay of Bengal was near 710 km from Trincomalee, Sri Lanka and 1120 km from Kanyakumari, India on Monday.

IMD said it was likely to intensify into a cyclonic storm in the next 48 hours and bring "extremely heavy rainfall across southern districts in Tamil Nadu and Kerala on December 1-4.

Nivar-affected areas of north Tamil Nadu, coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Puducherry will once again witness heavy rains in this period. Fishermen in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka were advised to return to the coast and not venture into the south-west Bay of Bengal and the south-east Arabian Sea until December 4. “Nivar brought good rains to north and north-eastern parts of Tamil Nadu, and Puducherry. The deficit has come down significantly, S. Balachandran, deputy director general of meteorology, of the Chennai Regional Meteorological Centre of the IMD, told Mongabay-India. Tamil Nadu's deficit fell from -23% to -15%. Puducherry witnessed surplus rainfall, with Nivar pushing it over 13%. “Each cyclone is different, and Nivar was a rain-filled cyclone. It has completely weakened as of November 28, Balachandran added. Apart from western Tamil Nadu, most of the state has received sufficient rains, he noted. Rains will continue through early December. The initial prediction was that Nivar could hit anywhere in the 200-km stretch of Mamallapuram, Tamil Nadu and Karaikal, Puducherry.

Limited damage “Over 30 houses along the shore were submerged in Bommayapalayam (near Marakkanam). This was the worst-affected village, said Sura Vegadessaperoumal, executive member of National Fishworkers Forum's (NFF) Puducherry wing. Though Marakkanam's famed salt pans were flooded, the damage wasn't severe because it is off-season. “It's the houses of our workers which are affected, Prabhakaran, a salt pan worker in Marakkanam said. “Most are poor, landless Dalit households. It is always difficult for us to get any compensation. Some people are living in shelters now. Over 2.7 lakh people were evacuated and moved to 3,042 government shelters on Wednesday, November 25 night by state officials, mitigating Nivar's impact. “We were instructed to move people from all low-lying areas on November 23-24, Suresh Babu, a revenue official from Karaikal, Puducherry, said. Local officials had been inspecting cyclone shelters beforehand, arranging the movement and rescue of people from low-lying areas and inspecting the damages after the cyclone passed. The National and State Disaster Response Forces were deployed in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Andhra Pradesh. Nivar's immediate impact was less in comparison to previous cyclones Thane (2011), Vardah (2016) and Gaja (2018).

“If we got off easy, it is thanks to sheer providence, Chennai-based activist Nityanand Jayaraman said. The initial losses estimated in the agricultural and other sectors are around Rs 400 crore in Puducherry. Tamil Nadu reported four deaths, damages to 118 houses and 10,000 hectares of farmland, and uprooting of 1086 trees. Over 40,000 houses were flooded in Chennai. In Andhra Pradesh, eight people died and over 4.91 lakh hectares of agricultural land was damaged. “Each cyclone has different characteristics depending on the wind speed, rain-bearing capacity and other parameters. We cannot compare the impacts of Gaja to Nivar, Balachander said. He added that the impact also depended on what areas are hit, ground conditions and disaster preparedness. Heavy rains continued in districts of Chennai, Thiruvalluvar, Puducherry, Chengalpattu, Villupuram, and several southern districts of Andhra Pradesh as Nivar, one of the wettest

cyclones in recent years, crossed. But the worst may not yet be over as rains may continue in the coastal districts.

Chennai flooded Chennai, which faces water scarcity every summer, received 808 mm of rains in October and November (until November 28). This is over 32% more than usual for this time of year, the IMD noted. There was waterlogging and flooding in several areas in the city. As capacity in the Chembarambakkam lake, which is a reservoir designed to partially meet the water requirements of the city, upstream of river Adyar before it enters the city, reached 80%, many citizens feared a repeat of the devastating floods of 2015. However, last week the gates of the lake were opened for the first time since 2015. On Wednesday over 5,000 cusecs of water were released from Chembarambakkam lake into the Adyar river in the south of the city. Local residents were warned and evacuated before the release of water. In 2015 this lake received the highest inflow in a century, but a delayed and sudden opening of the gates caused severe flooding in Chennai. This time, however, both the municipal and state authorities acted quickly, local residents said. While netizens praised the Chennai Corporation's actions, there are plenty of criticisms. Parts of north Chennai, largely comprising densely populated and poorer neighbourhoods in low lying areas surrounded by industries, were heavily flooded for most of the last week. Suburbs such as Semmencherry, Velachery, Varadharajapuram and Mudichur in south Chennai also remained flooded after the cyclone.

“In some areas there was neck deep water even before the cyclone. It was worse afterwards, said Victoria Raj, a social worker in north Chennai. She said the Cooum river and Buckingham Canal overflowed with nowhere for the wastewater to go. Raj has been wading through waters to rescue homeless people and slum dwellers, and distribute food and blankets. “When there are heavy rain, winds and storm surge all acting together there is no way for the water to flush out into the sea, because the sea water is pushing in as the rainwater pushes out. Such compound events can cause flooding, Roxy Mathew Koll, a climate scientist at Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, told Mongabay-India. The damage caused by such events can be severe. To top it all, the infrastructure in the city has clogged all major drainage points, Jayaraman noted. “Any amount of tinkering of the drainage system will not be useful if the main arteries – the river basins, creeks and estuaries – are blocked, he said. Chennai's planning authorities have over the years given permissions to construct and raise a city on wetlands, marshlands, river beds and estuaries. Poor urban planning was flagged as a major cause for flooding in the city in a 2017 report by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

## **Tamil Nadu: Kanniyakumari and Nagercoil on cyclone alert, popular ferry service to Vivekananda Rock stopped**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/dec/02/kanniyakumari-and-nagercoil-on-cyclone-alert-popular-ferry-service-to-vivekananda-rock-stopped-2230929.html>

"With Cyclone Burevi approaching, two NDRF teams have arrived and begun an awareness drive at Kanniyakumari and Colachel. The popular ferry service to Vivekananda Rock and Thiruvalluvar statue in Kanniyakumari has been stopped. In Nagercoil and Kuzhithurai, two emergency teams are on standby. Following the cyclone alert, the Poompuhar Shipping Corporation's Kanniyakumari ferry service has stopped the operation of its boats to Vivekananda Rock and Thiruvalluvar statue on Wednesday morning. Ferry service manager A Chellappa said the boats have been stationed at their jetty. The sky has been cloudy since Wednesday morning in Kanniyakumari, Nagercoil and other places in the district. Kanniyakumari and Nagercoil began to see a light drizzle from 2.45 pm. An NDRF team went to Kanniyakumari coast for a cyclone awareness drive, while another NDRF team is camping at Colachel coast. Coastal Security Grop teams too are camping in coastal areas. The Kanniyakumari Coastal Security Group Inspector PV Navin said two teams have been kept ready at Kanniyakumari and Colachel. Sources said people have been told to stay away from the coast at Kanniyakumari.

The Kanniyakumari District Fire Officer B Sharavana Babu told The New Indian Express that 60 rescue team brigades from Madurai, Theni, Virudhunagar and Sivaganga districts have landed at Kanniyakumari. He noted that 11 teams were kept ready across Kanniyakumari district for rescue operations. This apart, two life-saving teams have been kept ready in Nagercoil and Kuzhithurai. The fisheries department sources said that only 124 mechanised boats have returned to the shore. The boats involved in deep-sea fishing were from the Thoothoor area. We are taking efforts to ensure all the boats to reach the shore. INFIDET president P Justin Antony said that mechanised boats were returning to the shore at Thengapattinam and from other shores in Kerala, Karnataka and other states. Kanniyakumari District Monitoring Officer and senior IAS officer Jothi Nirmala, District Collector M Arvind, SP V Badri Narayanan met fishermen at Thengapattinam and updated them of the latest developments. PWD water resources organization officials are camping at Pechiparai, Perunchani and other dams and monitoring them continuously.

**Tamil Nadu: Cyclone Burevi is expected to make landfall on Friday (December 4)**

<https://zeenews.india.com/india/cyclone-burevi-alert-issued-by-imd-for-these-two-states-get-other-updates-here-2327939.html>

"The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Tuesday (December 1) said that Cyclone Burevi is expected to make landfall in Tamil Nadu on Friday (December 4). It is expected that the cyclonic storm would cross the Sri Lanka coast close to Trincomalee during the evening or night of December 2. The cyclone would cross Trincomalee with a wind speed of 75-85 kilometres per hour gusting to 95 kmph. "It is very likely to move nearly westwards thereafter, emerge into Gulf of Mannar and adjoining Comorin area on December 3 morning. It would then move nearly west-southwestwards and cross south Tamil Nadu coast between Kanyakumari and Pamban around early morning of December 4," IMD said. It is expected that Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Tenkasi, Ramanathapuram and Sivagangai in Tamil Nadu would receive heavy to very heavy rainfall on December 2 and 3. In Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta and Alappuzah are expected to receive heavy rainfall on December 3.

#### **Tamil Nadu and Kerala: Awaiting the storm**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/thiruvananthapuram/2020/dec/02/awaiting-the-storm-2230553.html>

"Less than a week after Cyclone Nivar battered Tamil Nadu, another one, Cyclone Burevi, is expected to hit Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The cyclone warning has created a fresh set of challenges for the authorities who were engaged in poll preparations amid Covid-19. Authorities are rushing to complete the groundwork, such as pruning trees and setting up evacuation plans for the families in landslide-prone areas and coastal belts. The IMD issuing a warning for yet another cyclone, one similar to Cyclone Ockhi, has raised concern among the district authorities who were busy prepping for the conduct of a smooth and fair local body election amid the pandemic. Ensuring cyclone preparedness without hindering poll arrangements is a daunting task for authorities.

According to officials, most of the camps identified for relocating evacuated families during disasters are now polling stations. As a result, village officers have been asked to find alternate locations including private educational institutions and marriage halls for shifting families. As per the prediction, the depression formed over the Bay of Bengal on Monday is highly likely to intensify and progress to a cyclonic storm triggering heavy rain in Kerala. The storm is anticipated to cross Sri Lanka and make landfall at Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu on Wednesday morning. Not an ordinary cyclone an official of the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) said the cyclone may trigger heavy rains and high-speed winds in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam.

“This is not a typical cyclone. After making landfall in Sri Lanka, the storm may gain more strength. We are yet to have clarity on the path of the cyclone after it hits the Kanyakumari coast. While the cyclone is similar to Ockhi and may not enter the state, Thiruvananthapuram is inclined to receive heavy rain and wind. Based on forecast variations, the wind speed will be calculated later. Currently, we have to prepare for the worst, said the official. According to experts, the heavy rain could cause flooding in the city limits and high alerts should be issued in the eastern region of the district where the hilly areas lie. The state has prohibited all fishing activities in the wake of the cyclone alert.

“We have sought the help of coastal police and fisheries department to ensure the safe return of fishermen who have gone for deep-sea fishing. Alerts have been issued a day in advance and we hope those who had left earlier return home safely, the official added. Rain warning by IMD (as per December 1) An orange alert has been issued in the southern and northern districts on Wednesday with IMD predicting heavy to very heavy rain at isolated places. A red alert has been issued in the southern districts on Thursday predicting heavy to very heavy rain at a few places and extremely heavy rain at isolated places. An orange and yellow alert have been issued in **southern and northern districts, respectively.**

#### **Tamil Nadu: Unsafe to leave boats at sea, say T.N. fishermen**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/unsafe-to-leave-boats-at-sea/article33217084.ece>

"Fishermen say they have no space to park boats or keep nets safely as instructed by the State government in times of cyclones. During the monsoon, the sea advances inland, and in some places even enters coastal villages. S. Palayan, a fisherman of Ururkuppam, said fishermen had dragged the boats onto the road in their village. “The sea is very close to our homes, and if we leave our boats on the beach, they would be washed away or buried in the sand and damaged, he said. At Pulicat, where the brackish water lake is brimming with floodwaters from various rivers, including the Arani river, fishermen have pulled their boats further up the embankment. “There has not been much rain in our area, but water from other places have flowed in here. Another round of opening of the dams upstream would only mean we would have to leave the boats on the main road. And it is not an easy task since the boats weigh a lot.

The smallest boat weighs half-a-tonne. We need cranes to move most boats, and when fishing activities resume, the cranes have to be engaged again, said A. Ganesh, a fisherman. “Sea erosion has eaten up space in many villages, and in some places, roads and beach beautification projects, too, come in the way. There is no designated space for keeping boats, nets and engines safely in our villages. The government must designate spaces for such a purpose, said K. Bharathi of South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association. He said that even during full moons and some

months when the sea would be rough, the waves would wash away blocks of sand overnight. The government should construct shelters for engines and nets to be used by fishermen, he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Steps on to ensure safety of deep-sea fishing boats: Minister**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/steps-on-to-ensure-safety-of-deep-sea-fishing-boats-minister/article33208448.ece>

"In view of the well-marked low pressure area in the Bay of Bengal that is likely to develop into a depression, the Fisheries Department is taking steps to ensure the safety of 210 deep sea boats from Kanniyakumari and Thoothukudi districts that are in the sea. Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar on Sunday said that eight boats belonging to Thoothukudi district had returned due to the efforts of the Department. "Steps are being taken to contact the boats over satellite phones and VHF sets. They are being asked to either return or head to nearby harbours or landing centres, he said in a statement. "The governments of Kerala, Karnataka, Goa and Lakshadweep have been requested to permit safe anchorage for boats from Tamil Nadu, due to the depression that is likely to develop into a cyclone, he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Braces for another cyclonic storm, flood scare eases in Pulicat island**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/nov/30/tamil-nadu-braces-for-another-cyclonic-storm-flood-scare-eases-in-pulicat-island-2230074.html>

"The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) on Monday confirmed the formation of another cyclonic storm by December 2, which would impact south Tamil Nadu and Kerala coasts. Latest satellite and ship observations indicate that the depression over the southeast Bay of Bengal has moved west-northwestwards and lies centred at about 710 km of Trincomalee (Sri Lanka) and 1,120 km east-southeast of Kanyakumari. ""It is likely to intensify into a deep depression by Monday night and intensify further into a cyclonic storm by December 1 night,"" said officials of the regional meteorological centre here. Under its influence, heavy rains would start from December. ""Extremely heavy rain is likely to occur at isolated places over Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Kanniyakumari and Ramanathapuram districts. Heavy to very heavy rain is likely to occur at isolated places over Pudukkottai, Sivagangai, Virudhunagar, Tenkasi, Thanjavur, Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam districts and Karaikal area.

Heavy rain is also likely to occur at isolated places over Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram districts,"" said S Balachandran, deputy director-general of meteorology, regional meteorological centre. Squally weather with wind speed reaching 55-65 kmph gusting to 75 kmph is expected over southeast and adjoining southwest Bay of Bengal from December 1 night and 70-80 kmph gusting to 90 kmph over southwest Bay of Bengal along and off Sri Lanka coast and 45-55 kmph gusting to 65 kmph over Comorin Area, Gulf of Mannar and Tamilnadu-Kerala coasts from December 2 forenoon for subsequent 24 hours. As the sea condition will be rough to very rough,

fishermen were warned not to venture into southeast and adjoining southwest Bay of Bengal from December 1 night. In Chennai, the weather would remain pleasant with cloudy skies. Thunderstorms with light to moderate rain may occur. Maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be 30°C and 24°C respectively.

Meanwhile, the flood scare in Pasiyavaram Island has eased with the choked Pulicat bar mouth opening-up. The inhabitants of the island told The New Indian Express that floodwaters from Arani river had submerged the only approach road to the island, but at the same time had broken the sand bar at the bar mouth, which has helped ease the situation. The water is now draining into the sea smoothly during the low tide, but connectivity is still hampered during high tide. Muthuswamy, district revenue officer of Tiruvallur, said to address this problem State fisheries department has proposed to build groynes to stabilise the bar mouth and keep it open round the year. "The proposal is pending before the Union Environment Ministry," he said.

**India: Rains likely in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, coastal Andhra Pradesh; Low pressure to become depression soon**

<https://www.deccanherald.com/national/south/rains-likely-in-tamil-nadu-kerala-coastal-andhra-pradesh-low-pressure-to-become-depression-soon-921414.html>

"A well-marked low-pressure area over the Bay of Bengal is very likely to concentrate into a depression on Monday and bring moderate to heavy and extremely heavy rainfall over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and coastal Andhra Pradesh over the next four days, the IMD said. Tamil Nadu Fisheries Minister D Jayakumar said in view of the forecast, steps have been taken by the government for the safe return of 200 plus Tamil Nadu boats -engaged in deep sea fishing- with the help of Coast Guard, who have also been provided with the location of the vessels. Of the total 218 boats, eight have returned safely, he said. Authorities in Kerala, Karnataka, Goa and Lakshadweep have been requested to allow Tamil Nadu boats in their fishing harbours and to render them assistance, the Minister said. The low pressure area on Saturday over south Andaman sea and adjoining areas of southeast Bay of Bengal has organised into a well marked low pressure area, the Regional Meteorological Centre here said. An updated RMC bulletin said the well-marked low-pressure area "is very likely to concentrate into a depression during next 24 hours and likely to intensify further thereaer.

It is likely to move west northwestwards and reach near south Tamil Nadu coast around December 2." Under the influence of the system, light to moderate rainfall or thundershower is likely over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal starting from Sunday and it could continue upto December 3 in the state and till December 1 in the regions falling under the union territory. The showers, in such regions, starting with isolated places, could extend to many areas and then spread to most places during the next four days, the bulletin said. On December 1, heavy to very heavy rain is likely to occur at isolated places over Tirunelveli, Tuticorin and Kanyakumari

districts. The next day, southern districts including Tirunelveli and Ramanathapuram could experience extremely heavy showers and the following day, heavy rainfall is likely over the same regions.

The IMD tweeted, "Scattered to widespread rainfall activity very likely over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry & Karaikal, Kerala & Mahe, Lakshadweep, south coastal Andhra Pradesh and south Rayalaseema during 01st-03rd December, 2020." Also, the department said, "Isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall with moderate thunderstorm & lightning very likely over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry & Karaikal during December 1-3 and isolated extremely rainfall likely over south Tamil Nadu and south Kerala on 02nd December 2020." In Kerala, a red alert has been sounded for Idukki district on Wednesday and fishermen restrained from putting out to sea from the midnight of November 30. An Orange alert has been issued for Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam and Pathanamthitta districts on December 2 and a yellow alert for Alappuzha, Kottayam and Ernakulam districts on the same day. Red alert indicates heavy to very heavy rainfall of over 20 cm in 24 hours, an Orange alert (6 cm to 20 cm) and yellow alert (6-11 cm). Jayakumar said a virtual meeting of fisheries officials of south Tamil Nadu was held and they were also advised to contact the fishermen involved in deep sea fishing through means like satellite phones to coordinate their safe return to nearest locations. Control rooms at Kanyakumari and Tuticorin districts (04651-226235 and 04612320458 respectively) and at the headquarters here (044-29530392) are functional 24 x 7, the Minister said in a statement.

### **Tamil Nadu: Steps taken to safeguard fishing boats: Minister Jayakumar**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/nov/30/steps-taken-to-safeguard-fishing-boats-minister-jayakumar-2229754.html>

"Fisheries Minister D Jayakumar on Sunday said that the State government has taken various steps to safeguard the fishing boats of southern coastal districts ahead of the next cyclone, following the warning of Indian Meteorological Department (IMD). According to the minister's press statement, it was informed by IMD that a low pressure area had formed in the south-east Bay of Bengal and it may go to the Arabian sea after moving across north Sri Lanka and Mannar Peninsula on December 1 and 2. Following which, action has been taken to safely bring back fishing boats (of Tamil Nadu), those who ventured for deep-sea fishing, through the higher officials of the Fisheries Department through video-conference, and other fishermen have been told not to venture into sea from Sunday. To enable deep-sea fishermen a safe return, around the clock control rooms have been established at Thoothoor in Kanyakumari district (04651-226235) and Tharuvaikulam in Thoothukudi district (0461-2320458) and information has been immediately conveyed from the fisheries directorate control room (044-29530392).

### **Tamil Nadu: Two years on, coastal farmers yet to recover from Cyclone Gaja**

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/two-years-coastal-farmers-tamil-nadu-yet-recover-cyclone-gaja-138603>

"When Cyclone Gaja made landfall on 16 November, 2018, between Nagapattinam and Vedaranyam in Tamil Nadu, it left a trail of destruction, uprooting nearly 50 lakh coconut trees, more than a lakh of electricity poles, besides other fruit trees. Farmers in seven coastal districts bore the brunt, losing their crops. Nagapattinam district was the worst affected, as the cyclone made landfall there. A few coastal villages in Nagapattinam district, suffered a double whammy of the cyclone and the storm surge that it caused. Storm surge is an abnormal sea level rise caused by atmospheric weather systems such as tropical cyclones and hurricanes. In November 2018, Cyclone Gaja caused a rise in sea level, bringing the brine into the coastal villages. While seawater entered the villages of Vellapallam, Pushpavanam and Vettaikaraniruppu, Kovilpathu was the most affected. Kovilpathu village, where most of the residents are farmers, not only lost their standing crops and trees, the storm surge made the groundwater and soil saline. As per Census 2011, Kovilpathu village in Vedaranyam taluk of Nagapattinam district had a population of 3,213. With the addition of a few colonies, the population has more than doubled. The villagers had reasonable commercial success growing coconut, paddy, groundnut, cashew and mango. But two years after Cyclone Gaja and the storm surge it caused, they are yet to recover from the impact. Coastal vulnerability though the villagers knew about the cyclone warning, the storm surge caught them by surprise. The only other time that seawater entered the village was in December 2004, when the tsunami struck.

However, two elderly villagers remembered a storm surge in the early 1950s. "When seawater came into the village in 1953 or 54, it did not cause this much of damage, octogenarian Chandra Thangavel told VillageSquare.in. "Tsunami also wasn't this bad, because only seawater came. We did not lose our trees. Indian National Centre for Ocean Services, places the Nagapattinam – Pamban stretch of the Bay of Bengal coast, where the village is situated, in a high risk zone, with 3 to 5 m surge height. "When seawater came in during Cyclone Gaja, water was up to my neck and I swam to the next house, said Uma Devi. The villagers took shelter in the houses that had an upper floor. The village is about a kilometre from the shore. The storm surge resulted in loss of crops and livestock, besides prawn and fish farms that a few villagers owned. The youth of the village, who hold professional and science degrees, yet continue farming, are aware of the climate crisis and fear increasing vulnerability and its impact on their livelihood. Damage to water and soil given the salinity of the seawater and the coastal sludge deposited by the storm surge, the crops wore a scorched look. Chandra Thangavel lost her entire groundnut crop. Radhakrishnan Sivagnanam lost his paddy crop.

Every farmer recounted a total loss. As the village lies about 2.5 km from the Nagapattinam – Vedaranyam Road, the villagers' plight was immediately not known. For a few days, they had to survive on groundwater contaminated by seawater. During rehabilitation work, the panchayat

was quick to address the issue, by arranging for piped drinking water supply. However, the farmlands still bear the effect of the storm surge. Crop yields have been less than usual. “Water is the main problem. If we had received good rains, the salinity would have reduced, but the rains were less, said Veeraramakrishnan. R (30). Veeraramakrishnan normally gets a profit of Rs 4 lakh from cultivating groundnut. “From one sack of groundnut seed sowed, we generally harvest 10 sacks. But last year we harvested only four sacks, he told VillageSquare.in. Visu Ramaiyan (30) concurred that groundnut yield was very less last year. According to an agriculture department official who did not wish to be named, the farmers did not buy seed groundnut, but from wholesale traders, and that is the reason for the poor yield. Notwithstanding the allegations and the limited rainfall, farmers remain hopeful. “In three weeks, we will start planting groundnut for this season, said Visu Ramaiyan.

The farmers believe that the few days of rain received this monsoon would have decreased the salinity a bit. Beetle blight Of the 120-odd coconut trees that Visu Ramaiyan had, only 25 survived the cyclone. “Even the remaining ones produced spathes after many months. The yield was so low that we couldn't sell the nuts but use only for our own consumption, he said. Veeraramakrishnan lost all the trees in his 2-acre coconut farm, except a handful. All the villagers related a similar loss. Eega Trust, a non-governmental organization (NGO) working in Nagapattinam district, partnered with two other NGOs, took six months to clear the fallen coconut, mango and cashew trees, and level the land in Kovilpathu village. Though Eega Trust carried out relief work for a considerable stretch along the coast, their agricultural development work was confined to Kovilpathu village.

“We distributed coconut saplings as part of agri development work, said Mohanarajasekaran R, of the trust. With such contributions, and with the compensation of Rs 1,100 per coconut tree given by the Tamil Nadu government, all the farmers replanted coconut saplings. They were in for a shock again, as rhinoceros beetle damaged the saplings. According to Chandrasekar. K, agricultural entomologist, Tamil Nadu Dr J Jayalalithaa Fisheries University, Sikkal, the beetle proliferated since the fallen trees, which provide an ideal condition for breeding, were not removed immediately. The scientist has been advocating a slew of measures to overcome the problem. “The beetles attack at all stages of the trees' growth. Since there were no big trees, they attacked the saplings, Chandrasekar told VillageSquare.in. “The beetles can be eradicated only if all the farmers follow the suggested measures, and not a handful in isolation. Farmers who have planted in a few acres admitted that it was not easy to look for the beetle in every sapling and destroy it. Some have found an alternative.

“They are growing the saplings in big plastic bags for one year and then transferring to the pit, which is quite effective in controlling the beetle, said Veeraramakrishnan. “So we are all planning to adopt the same method. Vegetable cultivation to rescue Veeraramakrishnan and Visu Ramaiyan used to earn a minimum of Rs 15,000 per month from the coconut trees. All the

farmers earned a considerable income from mango, casuarina and cashew trees. Cyclone Gaja has robbed them of this income. "As it would take a few years for trees to grow and bear fruit, we suggested vegetable cultivation to the farmers and distributed saplings and seeds, Mohanarajasekaran of Eega Trust, told VillageSquare.in. Veeraramakrishnan planted brinjal in half-an-acre. "The yield was good. Brinjal and cluster beans are doing reasonably well, he said. "It is at least helping us manage our regular household expenses. Prior to Cyclone Gaja, only a few farmers such as Ayyappan Rengaiyan (38) grew vegetables. He had been harvesting brinjals for a week, when the cyclone struck. The brinjal and jasmine plants were scorched beyond salvaging. Though he had coconut trees, vegetables brought a daily income. Of the 120 coconut saplings he planted, only 40 survived the beetle attack. But he is quite satisfied with the yield and income from brinjal and jasmine. And so are the farmers, who cultivate vegetables for now, and hope their situation would improve in a few years.

### **Tamil Nadu and Karnataka: Cyclone Nivar heads for Karnataka, heavy rainfall in parts of Tamil Nadu for next 3 hours**

<https://www.india.com/news/india/cyclone-nivar-live-updates-tamil-nadu-puducherry-cyclone-makes-landfall-latest-news-ndrf-imd-high-alert-4224423/>

"Relief authorities have evacuated more than one lakh people from the coastal areas of the union territory and neighbouring Tamil Nadu, and housed them in shelters. We're closely monitoring situation in Tamil Nadu & Puducherry in the wake of cyclonenivar. Have spoken to Tamil Nadu CM Edappadi K Palaniswami & Puducherry CM V.Narayanasamy and assured all possible help from the centre. NDRF teams are on ground to help people in need, says Amit Shah. Tamil Nadu: Eraiyannur village fishermen in Villupuram district experience less than expected damage from cyclone Nivar. ""We're happy that cyclone hasn't affected us much. A day ahead we shifted our boats. Now the waves are high. We cannot fish till next week,"" says a fisherman

### **Tamil Nadu: Dindigul fish farmer bags national award**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/dindigul-fish-farmer-bags-national-award/articleshow/79417599.cms>

"A farmer from Dindigul, M Chinnasamy, 65, has bagged the 'best fish farmer' award at the national level after as he was able to earn a profit of over two lakh per annum through fish

farming. He had reared freshwater fish in his farm ponds with the help of the fisheries department. Chinnasamy received the felicitation as part of awards presented for World Fisheries Day. Chinnasamy has been rearing fish in his agricultural land for the past three years. He said that he received training from the fisheries department following which he dug five farm ponds in his one acre land in Pudupatti village in Natham in Dindigul district. The ponds were treated with caustic soda and filled with water for five feet. Fish that are about one inch in size are introduced into the ponds and are fed fish feed on a regular basis. He grows three varieties of freshwater fish-catla, rohu and mrigali-which would grow to weigh 500 grams to 750 grams in seven months, when begins he catching and selling them. Chinnasamy, said that he earns about Rs 3.75 lakh during each harvest with an expenditure of Rs 1.75 lakh. Additional director for fisheries, Dindigul, Pancha Raja said that Chinnasamy had been following the right procedure and also availing the subsidy. Each year farmers into fish culture are selected for awards on World Fisheries Day falling on Nov 21. This year they Chinnasamy's name was recommended to the state government and he was validated by a central government team and selected for the prize. The prize was handed over to the farmer by Dindigul district collector, M Vijayalakshmi, on Tuesday.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Response mechanism strengthened**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/cyclone-nivar-response-mechanism-strengthened/article33173359.ece>

"Cyclone-response preparedness was further strengthened in Nagapattinam and Karaikal districts on Tuesday, with evacuation of residents in fishing hamlets to relief centres and establishment of response mechanisms to drain out flooding in low-lying areas. Accompanied by Monitoring Officer C. Munianathan, Nagapattinam Collector Praveen P. Nair inspected Sebastian Nagar and other low-lying areas in Velankanni and Thalainayar blocks where the paraphernalia for draining out stagnant water had been put in place. Fishers in all 53 coastal hamlets had been evacuated and housed in relief centres where food, water, power, milk and other requirements had been addressed, the Collector said. Eight zonal-level teams, one each for every taluk, had been formed to address public complaints, he added. Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami interacted with the Collector and determined the level of cyclone-preparedness during the course of the day. In Karaikal district, prohibitory orders under Section 144 CPC were passed by Collector Arjun Sharma to prevent loss of life and ensure safety of general public. The prohibitory orders would be effective from 10 a.m. on November 25 to 6 p.m. on Nov 26. The order, however, would not apply to agencies and officials involved in enforcement of law and order and cyclone duty. Maintenance of essential services such as milk booths, petrol bunks, pharmacies and health services would be allowed to continue, Mr. Arjun Sharma said. Collector P. Sri Venkat Priya said 168 earth movers, 90 tree cutters, 55 power saws, and 25 saws had been kept ready to meet contingency situations. A total of 10,265 sand bags, nine pump set motors,

127 generators, 33 walkie talkies, and 3,700 electric poles had also been kept ready. The district had adequate stock of rice, wheat, sugar, dal and palm oil, the Collector said. Accompanied by Collector T. Rathna, Chief Government Whip Thamarai S. Rajendran visited Melaramanallur islet across the Kollidam and inspected the arrangements made at the relief centre.

### **Tamil Nadu and Puducherry: Cyclone Nivar to Hit Tamil Nadu, Puducherry at 145 Kmph after Midnight: 10 Points**

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/cyclone-nivar-to-hit-tamil-nadu-puducherry-with-winds-at-145-kmph-2329807>

"Coastal Tamil Nadu and Puducherry are bracing for Cyclone Nivar, which has intensified into a "severe cyclonic storm", expected to intensify further and is barrelling towards the southeast coast. The powerful cyclone is likely to hit the coast by midnight or early tomorrow, the Met department said. The cyclone could hit the coast between Mamallapuram in Tamil Nadu (which is around 56 km from state capital Chennai) and Karaikal in Puducherry. Nivar has brought with it heavy rain and strong winds in coastal Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. On Tuesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted to assure the Tamil Nadu and Puducherry governments - both have said today is a public holiday - of all possible support. - The cyclone will bring extremely heavy rainfall and winds between 120 and 130 km per hour, with gusts of up to 145 km per hour, the Regional Meteorological Centre in Chennai has advised, adding that coastal areas could receive heavy rain till tomorrow. 1, 000 cusecs surplus water will be released from the Chembarambakkam lake outside Chennai this noon.

The discharge is likely to increase the water flow in Chennai's Adyar river and people living in low-lying areas along the river are being evacuated. Authorities, however, said there is no need for panic at the moment. Around 2,000 people have been evacuated to higher grounds from Tamil Nadu's Cuddalore district. - Bus services in seven Tamil Nadu districts have been suspended. The state government has said that those involved in essential services will continue to work. Chief Minister Palaniswami appealed to people to stay indoors as far as possible and said over 4,000 "vulnerable" locations had been identified and local officials have been told to ensure peoples' safety. - "Spoke to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Shri Edappadi K Palaniswami and Puducherry Chief Minister Shri V Narayanasamy regarding the situation in the wake of Cyclone Nivar. Assured all possible support from the Centre. I pray for the safety and well-being of those living in the affected areas," the Prime Minister tweeted in English and Tamil. - With memories of the 2015 floods still fresh, Tamil Nadu is also monitoring four reservoirs - Poondi, Cholavaram, Red Hills and Chembarambakkam - in anticipation of a rapid rise in water levels. Revenue Minister RB Udhayakumar, who heads the state Disaster Management Department, told NDTV: "We are ensuring clear channels for smooth flow of water and safe storage in large lakes". - Puducherry Chief Minister V Narayanasamy told NDTV today that the union territory

anticipates damage to crops, thatched roofs, and old buildings, besides power and communication lines. On Wednesday, Puducherry banned large gatherings and public movement till 6 am Thursday.

All non-essential shops and services have been shut; only milk booths, fuel stations, hospitals and pharmacies, and government offices will be allowed to open. Puducherry Lieutenant Governor Kiran Bedi appealed people this morning to stay indoors and move to safer places. Puducherry has installed "Number 7 storm warning cage at port areas", which means the port will experience severe weather from a storm of light or moderate intensity that is expected to cross over or near the port. - Around 1,200 National Disaster Response Force personnel have been deployed in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and neighbouring Andhra Pradesh as well, NDRF chief SN Pradhan told PTI. 12 teams are in Tamil Nadu (six in Cuddalore district and two in Chennai), seven in Andhra Pradesh and three in Puducherry. An additional 20 teams will be on standby in Odisha's Cuttack, Vijaywada in Andhra Pradesh and Thrissur in Kerala. - The Indian Navy has said it is closely monitoring the movement of Nivar, and is in constant touch with officials of both Tamil Nadu and Puducherry governments. Naval ships, aircraft and rescue and diving teams have been kept on standby. - State governments expect widespread damage to power lines and communication networks, with fears that houses in rural areas will be destroyed and trees will be uprooted.

Both governments have also sounded warnings to fishing communities and relocated thousands of people from coastal and low-lying regions, which may be hit by tidal waves up to a metre in height. An alert has been sounded at the Madras Atomic Power Station (MAPS) in Tamil Nadu's Kalpakkam, which is around 20 km from Mamallapuram. Authorities are closely monitoring the weather to take action as required, officials told news agency PTI. - Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jaganmohan Reddy has also sounded an alert. The state is expected to receive heavy rainfall as Nivar moves inland. Nellore and Chittoor districts are on alert, as are parts of Kadapa, Kurnool and Anantpur, with between 11 and 20 cm of rain and wind speeds of up to 75 km per hour expected. Fishermen have been advised not to go out to sea and low-lying areas have been warned of flooding. - In May, ""super cyclone"" Amphan ravaged several districts of south Bengal, killed 98. Amphan caused large- scale destruction to property, flattening villages, destroying farms and leaving thousands without electricity.

**Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Andhra Pradesh: India's southeastern coast braces for powerful cyclone**

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/25/indias-southeastern-coast-braces-for-powerful-cyclone>

"Local Indian authorities banned public gatherings and closed shops as more than 1,000 rescue personnel mobilised against a powerful cyclone barrelling towards the southeastern coast,

bringing heavy rains and strong winds. Cyclone Nivar is set to cross the coasts of Tamil Nadu state and the small territory of Puducherry as a “very severe cyclonic storm late on Wednesday, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) said. Parts of Andhra Pradesh, a coastal state north of Tamil Nadu, are also forecast to be slammed by the cyclone. A “very severe cyclonic storm is the fifth-strongest category on the IMD's scale of seven storm types. The heavy rains and strong winds were likely to damage houses and roads, uproot power lines, destroy crops and break trees along the coast of northern Tamil Nadu and southern Andhra Pradesh, the weather office said in a statement. “This will slowly intensify, maybe tonight or tomorrow, and turn into a very severe cyclonic storm with wind speeds of around 120 kilometres per hour (75 miles per hour) and gusting up to 145 kilometres per hour (90mph), IMD's Director-General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra told reporters in New Delhi. More than 1,000 personnel from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been deployed to assist local efforts on possible evacuations of residents from vulnerable coastal areas.

Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami declared Wednesday a public holiday and said it could be extended. “People living in regions vulnerable to the storm and in houses deemed not safe should be immediately shifted to relief centres, Palaniswami said. The Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry Kiran Bedi said public gatherings would be banned from late Tuesday until early Thursday. Shops in Puducherry, except those for essential services like pharmacies and petrol stations, were to be shut until the cyclone passes. In parts of Mahabalipuram, about 60km (37 miles) from Tamil Nadu's capital Chennai, local fishermen dragged their boats to safety along the coast. The cyclone's centre is expected to pass some 175km (108 miles) northeast of Sri Lanka's northernmost Kankesanthurai coastal town early on Wednesday. Fishermen in the northern area were advised not to go out to sea. No evacuation orders were issued but heavy rains were forecast, particularly in the island nation's north. More than 110 people died after “super Cyclone Amphan ravaged eastern India and Bangladesh in May, flattening villages, destroying farms and leaving millions without electricity.

### **Tamil Nadu and Puducherry: ‘Nivar’ to strengthen as very severe cyclone by evening**

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/pick-of-the-day/weather-nivar-ratchets-up-as-severe-cyclone/article33174505.ece>

"India Meteorological Department (IMD) has clarified that the peak wind speeds at the time of impending landfall of prospective very severe cyclone ‘Nivar’ would be 120-130 km/hr gusting to 145 km/hr, attributing an upward revision in an intervening bulletin to an inadvertent

error. Severe cyclonic storm 'Nivar' was located at 240 km East-South-East of Cuddalore and 250 km along the same bearing to Puducherry; and 300 km South-South-East of Chennai, the IMD said in a noon bulletin on Wednesday, restricting the potential landfall area to less than 200 km-stretch on the Tamil Nadu-Puducherry coast. 'Nivar' is expected to intensify further into a very severe cyclonic storm this (Wednesday) evening as it approaches for an eventful landfall between Karaikal and Mamallapuram around Puducherry during midnight and into the small hours of Thursday as a very severe cyclonic storm with wind speeds of 120-130 km/hr gusting to 145 km/hr. Extremely heavy rain warning Extremely heavy rainfall has been warned of over Myladuthurai, Ariyalur, Perambalur, Cuddalore, Villupuram, Kallapurichi and Thiruvannamalai districts and Puducherry today (Wednesday).

Heavy to very heavy rain may lash Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur, Thanjavur, Trichy, salem, Erode, Namakkal, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Vellore, Tiruppur, Ranipet, Chengalpattu, Kanchipuram, Chennai and Tiruvallur districts. Meanwhile, global model forecasts mostly agreed with the IMD timeline of landfall for the very severe cyclone by midnight into the early hours of Thursday as also the area of landfall, though a few indicated that the landfall area could extend a little further, from the South of Cuddalore to the South of Chennai. Global model views on 'Nivar' track The European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) seemed to be locked into Marakkanam as the landfall area (2.30 am on Thursday) while the ECWMF-IRES-HRES indicated a comparatively stronger system delaying landfall around the same location between 2.30 am and 3.30 am. The ICON model signalled to a landfall at 2.30 am while a few others suspected that the landfall could take place anytime during a window that is open as early as 9.30 pm tonight (Wednesday) and 1.30 am with a majority going for the 11.30 pm slot and into early Thursday hours as the IMD. The other look-outs ranged from; the GFS (landfall at 9.30 pm); the UKMO (rapid intensification until 5.30 pm and slight weakening with landfall at 11.30 pm); the APREGG (11.30 pm); the GEM (landfall South of Cuddalore at 11.30 pm); the ACCESS-G (landfall at 1.30 am on Thursday); the CMA (landfall South of Cuddalore at 11.30 pm); and the GDAPS-UM (landfall at 2.30 am on Thursday South of Chennai).

### **Tamil Nadu: CIBA's Waste to Wealth technology helps bag awards for two fisheries group**

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/cibas-waste-to-wealth-technology-helps-bag-awards-for-two-fisheries-group/article33175236.ece>

"Nambikkai Fish Farmers group in Tamil Nadu has won this year's 'Best Fisheries Self Help Group' award instituted by the National Fisheries Development Board under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying. The self-help group from Pattinapakkam in Chennai

bagged the award for successfully adopting the technology conversion of fish wastes into value-added products developed by the Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture. In recognition for the research initiatives of CIBA, a start-up company from Andhra Pradesh Sai Aqua Feeds which adopted the technology of CIBA in formulating feeds for shrimps won the Best Fisheries Enterprises award. Swachh Bharat mission Nambikkai Fish Farmers group started functioning during 2017-18 under the aegis of CIBA to commercialise the latter's technology of recycling fish wastes to develop value-added products named Plankton plus and Horti plus. While the product Plankton plus is used in aquaculture system to boost and maintain the healthy plankton blooms, the Horti plus is used as organic manure in horticulture. The products are developed under the concept of 'Waste to Wealth' initiative of CIBA in line with the Swachh Bharat Mission. "This technology of CIBA has the potential to propagate across the country in cleaning the fish markets and also providing alternative livelihood to many as a circular economy, said KK Vijayan, Director, CIBA. According to him, CIBA's technology focused on addressing the higher production cost in shrimp farming owing to the costly foreign feeds and introduced Vannamei plus in line with the Make in India concept. "In shrimp aquaculture, the feed constitutes around 60 per cent of the production cost. Further, this Desi Feed is a compliment to shrimp feed sector in India, which is mostly led by multi-national feed companies being the front runners in the sector, he said. "We are happy that the technologies developed by CIBA reach out to the targeted community and emerge as the best livelihood option for them, he added.

### **Cyclone Nivar: Depression to cross India's Tamil Nadu coast on Wednesday, govt reviews situation**

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/cyclone-nivar-depression-to-cross-tamil-nadu-coast-on-wednesday-govt-reviews-situation-11606152269217.html>

"With the depression over the Bay of Bengal likely to intensify into a cyclonic storm by Tuesday and cross the coast as a severe cyclonic storm a day after, the government of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu on Monday reviewed the situation, asking the respective district administrations to be on guard. It announced suspension of inter and intra-district bus services in seven districts from Tuesday, till further orders. Trains were partially and fully cancelled in some districts. The depression over southwest and adjoining southeast Bay of Bengal moved west-northwestwards a speed of 11 kmph and lay centred at 1130 hrs of Monday over the same region, about 520 km east-southeast of Puducherry and 560 km southeast of Chennai, the IMD said. The depression is very likely to intensify into a cyclonic storm during next 24 hours, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in a bulletin. ""It is very likely to move northwestwards and cross Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coasts between Karaikal and Mamallapuram around November 25 afternoons as a severe cyclonic storm with a wind speed of 100-110 kmph gusting to 120 kmph,"" it said. Under its influence, widespread rainfall/thunderstorm were ""very likely"" over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal during November 24 to 26, the IMD warned.

Isolated extremely heavy rainfall was very likely over Pudukottai, Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Karaikal, Nagapattinam, Cuddalore, Ariyalur and Perambalur, Kallakurichi, Puducherry, Villupuram, Tiruvannamalai, Chengalpattu between Wednesday and Thursday. As a result, a high alert has been sounded in Nagapattinam and fishermen have been asked not to venture into the sea till November 26. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami, who held a review meeting here, asked his cabinet colleagues and officials to remain fully alert and take appropriate precautionary measures.

At the "NIVAR Cyclone" review meeting, a number of directions were issued, he later said in a statement. These included officials of various departments being on standby with required equipment, earth movers, trucks and other machinery from Monday onwards in Pudukottai, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Villupuram and Chengalpattu districts, he said. Evacuation of people in vulnerable areas, facilities, including supply of food in relief camps, safeguarding boats and nets of fishermen, taking up fogging operations, monitoring water levels in big lakes and provision of mobile communication units should be ensured, he said. Further, since the cyclone is slated to cross the coast in north Tamil Nadu, six NDRF teams should be stationed in Cuddalore and two in Chennai with required equipment, he said. He announced suspension of inter and intra-district bus services in Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Villupuram, Chengalpattu and Pudukottai districts from 1 PM on Tuesday till further orders and appealed the people to avoid travel by own vehicles except for essential requirements. People should stock themselves with torch lights, candles and matchboxes. They should also avoid venturing out during gusty winds, he added. Revenue Minister R B Udayakumar and Electricity Minister P Thangamani expressed preparedness of their ministries to respond to any challenges arising due to the cyclone.

Udayakumar told reporters that all arrangements are in place to face the cyclone and special attention will be given to follow social distancing norms in the relief shelters owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Those living in low lying areas should immediately shift to relief camps, he said. Thangamani said power supply will be cut off when the storm crosses the coast on November 25, as a precaution. Cuddalore district has been given priority due to heavy rains. About 1.5 lakh electric poles are available with the government, he added.

**Tamil Nadu: Heavy rains, gale force winds: Nivar to cross Tamil Nadu coast tomorrow**

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/heavy-rains-gale-force-winds-nivar-to-cross-tamil-nadu-coast-tomorrow/story-FEWpfCXLiSo2Vs2X83oRFM.html>

"Severe cyclonic storm Nivar is likely to cross the Tamil Nadu coast between Karaikal and Mamallapuram of the southern state on Wednesday. Nivar, the first cyclonic storm to impact

the Indian coast this season will have a wind speed of 100 to 110kmph gusting to 120kmph and bring extremely heavy rain to Tamil Nadu and Puducherry on Wednesday and Thursday. The weather bureau has said that the depression over southwest and adjoining the southeast Bay of Bengal has moved west-northwestwards and lay centred about 520km east-southeast of Puducherry and 560km southeast of Chennai. M Mohapatra, India Meteorological Department's (IMD's) director general, said on Monday that Nivar is very likely to intensify into a cyclonic storm during the next 24 hours. Officials have said that Nivar is an Iranian name and comes from a list of names suggested by the 13 north Indian ocean countries affected by cyclones in the region. Here is what to expect under the influence of Nivar:

1. Widespread rainfall and thunderstorm activity over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal are likely from Tuesday to Thursday and over south coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalseema and Telangana during Wednesday and Thursday.
2. Extremely heavy rainfall activity also very likely over Tamil Nadu and Puducherry on Tuesday and Wednesday, over south coastal Andhra Pradesh and over Rayalseema on Wednesday and Thursday and over Telangana on Thursday.
3. Wind speed of 55-65kmph gusting to 75kmph is prevailing over southwest and adjoining the southeast Bay of Bengal. It would increase gradually becoming 65-75kmph gusting to 85kmph over the southwest and adjoining west central Bay of Bengal from Tuesday morning. It would further increase becoming 100-110kmph gusting to 120kmph over the southwest Bay of Bengal from Wednesday morning for subsequent 12 hours.
4. Squally wind speed reaching 45-55kmph gusting to 65kmph would prevail along and off Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and adjoining south Andhra Pradesh coast and over the Gulf of Mannar from Tuesday morning. It will gradually increase and become 100-110kmph gusting to 120kmph along and off coastal districts of north Tamil Nadu and Puducherry (Nagapattinam, Karaikal, Myladuthurai, Cuddalore, Puducherry, Villupuram and Chengalpattu districts), 80-90 gusting to 100kmph very likely over Tiruvarur, Kanchipuram, Chennai, Tiruvallaur districts from Wednesday forenoon for subsequent 12 hours.
5. Gale wind speed reaching 65-75kmph gusting to 85kmph very likely over adjoining the west-central Bay of Bengal and along and off south Andhra Pradesh's Nellore and Chittoor districts, Gulf of Mannar and along and off districts of south coastal districts of Tamil Nadu from Wednesday morning for subsequent 12 hours.
6. Sea conditions are likely to be 'high' to 'very high', with waves of 6 to 14 metres, along the coasts of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry on Wednesday. Tidal wave of one-metre height above the astronomical tide is also expected on Wednesday during landfall.
7. Fishermen have been asked not to venture into southwest and adjoining west-central and southeast Bay of Bengal, Gulf of Mannar and along and off Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and south Andhra Pradesh coasts from Monday to Tuesday. Those out at the sea have been asked to return to the coast and avoid these sea areas.
8. The weather bureau has warned of major damage to thatched houses or huts with the possibility of rooftops being blown off and unattached metal sheets flying. There could be damage to power and communication lines, it added. There could be major damage to paved and some damage to unpaved roads and

flooding of escape routes. Tree branches could break and large avenue trees could be uprooted. There could be severe damage to banana and papaya trees, horticulture and crops and orchards and major damage to coastal crops and to embankments and salt pans, it has said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Opportunities and challenges in innovating for coastal fishing**

<https://www.livemint.com/news/business-of-life/opportunities-and-challenges-in-innovating-for-coastal-fishing-11606052352501.html>

"Coastal fishermen in India largely use marine navigation systems from the US company Garmin or Japanese company Furuno, if they can afford it. Most go for the basic versions of these products, costing Rs.30,000-50,000, because the advanced versions at Rs.2 lakh and over are beyond their means. What they miss out on in the basic systems is the cloud-based data play, especially big data analytics to optimize routes and productivity, because real-time data is only stored on the device. This puts them at a huge disadvantage to larger, well-equipped Chinese trawlers in the international waters of the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea. Kanyakumari startup Odaku has come up with an affordable workaround to this problem. It has a SaaS (software-as-a-service) product that can provide the navigation as well as analytics with cloud support. This can be installed on any compatible tablet or smartphone, leaving the choice of gadget to the fisherman according to what suits his budget. The startup is also trying to tailor the product to local needs. "Indian fishermen use traditional knowledge for fishing on our coastline. We are baking that into our product," says Xavier Lawrance, founder of Odaku, who worked as an app developer in the US and Singapore before becoming an entrepreneur in his home state of Tamil Nadu.

Digital assistant for example, experienced fishermen know where they can get a good catch. They also know rock formations underwater that could snag their nets. Such details would normally be noted in a logbook, but once digitized on the cloud and collated with data from other fishermen; the fisherman's visualization can be more powerful. Odaku's product is being used on 1,700 mainly medium-sized mechanized fishing boats, each employing 30-50 people. So, it has a large potential impact on the fishing community as a whole, and not just the boat owners. The app has several other features, like weather alerts. But what sets it apart, according to Lawrance, is the way it communicates with its users. "There are several NGOs coming into this space and the government also pushes a lot of solutions, but most of them are designed for normal users," he says. "When a person goes out to sea, he uses a sea language. That's where there is a gap between the fishing community and the tech people who are building solutions for them. Since I come from their domain, I understand what they need and how to communicate data to them," he adds. Lawrance's family has been in fishing traditionally, and he still goes out to fish in the ocean. Odaku illustrates the kind of tech innovations that can make an impact on fishing. Most

startups have focused on inland fish farms, especially shrimp, which has a lucrative export market.

Farmed fishing is more predictable and easier to control for tech intervention, but marine fishing has the potential to make a big impact, considering the sheer number of people involved in it. Apart from help with fishing itself, opportunities abound all along the supply chain, from grading and quality checks to more reliable cold chain systems and market linkages to disrupt traditional distribution. An emerging area is traceability, which becomes far more doable with digitization and data. This gives visibility on what's in the chain. "A B2B supply company can then use the data not only to ensure fulfilment based on orders but also to do it in minimal time without degradation of quality," says Krishnan Neelakantan, managing partner at Ankur Capital, which recently invested in a startup that's building a platform that will enable traceability as well. This gets more complex for marine fishing than for inland fisheries or agriculture because of the diversity of species, their seasonality and the form factor that is, the dimensions which may not be as standard as for farmed fish. "So, the first proposition of data analytics is to help match fragmented end-demand with a heterogeneous and unorganized supply chain in an optimal manner," says Neelakantan.

**Vital ingredient** Innovations to transform the supply chain are vital to change consumer behaviour into acceptance of tech platforms, which will in turn create demand and drive the adoption of tech by fishermen. Customers can then be assured of the same consistency that you get with farmed fish. Right now, diehard consumers prefer to go to the market and pick their own fish, mainly because they are unsure of what they will get with an online order. Covid-19 has put a crimp in that inefficient system, but tech platforms have to evolve to provide more value at both ends of the chain the fishermen and consumers. This applies even more to India, where people prefer fresh fish, than in many countries in the West where frozen seafood has become a part of everyday life.

### **Tamil Nadu: Denmark's Danfoss to invest Rs 100 crore to expand in Tamil Nadu**

"Danish company Danfoss A/S has decided to pump in Rs 100 crore towards expanding its drives' production near here, said a top official in India. He also said that exports out of its plant near here went up by 15 per cent during the Covid-19 pandemic due to non-production in Danfoss' other plants. The company also plans to increase its headcount by 300 persons from the current about 950. "With the central government announcing PLI for various sectors, more companies will be investing in expansion, which in turn augurs well for Danfoss drives," Ravichandran Purushothaman, President, Danfoss India, told IANS. He said, the fresh investment of Rs 100 crore will also increase the local content in the company's drives from 40 per cent to 90 per cent by 2022. The company drives find extensive applications in industries such as Food and Beverages, Plastics, HVAC, Air Compressor and Textile OEMs, Chemical,

Cement, Steel, Water, Oil & Gas, Marine, Paper and others. Danfoss India is a wholly-owned subsidiary of \$6.3 billion-euro Danfoss A/S.

The company's business segments are classified under power solutions, cooling, drives and heating and it supplies components and systems for original equipment manufacturers. Purushothaman said exports orders increased during the current year owing to lockdown of Danfoss factories in other places due to Covid-19. ""This year, our exports grew by 15 per cent. Last year, we shipped out about Rs 500 crore worth of products,"" Purushothaman said. While exports went up for Danfoss India, the Covid-19 had its impact on domestic sales and the company will close this year with a turnover of about Rs 1,600 crore - Rs 1,700 crore. ""As per our original target, we would have touched a turnover of Rs 2,000 crore by 2020 but the coronavirus spoilt that,"" Purushothaman added. He said that food, pharma and fisheries industries are expected to log good growth and the three farm laws will change the agricultural sector in India.

### **Tamil Nadu: NITPY hosts national workshop on water quality management for aquaculture**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/nitpy-hosts-national-workshop-on-water-quality-management-for-aquaculture/article33109821.ece>

"A national workshop on Water Quality Management for Aquaculture was conducted by the National Institute of Technology - Puducherry (NITPY) through online mode on Monday, to infuse into fisheries sector the benefit accruing from Internet of Things (IoT) platform. The workshop organised by the Department of Electronics and Communications Engineering was addressed by experts from ICAR - Central Institute of Fisheries Technology, Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies, Marine Products Exports Development Authority, and Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture. Inaugurating the national conference, G. Sugumar, Vice-Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Dr. J. Jayalalithaa Fisheries University, said such programmes envisaging dissemination of latest technical know-how were the need of the hour for ramping up the scale of production through inland fisheries, as in advanced countries. The inaugural session of the workshop was also addressed by Rashmi Sharma, Scientist, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, and G. Aghila, Professor and Registrar In-Charge of NITPY. Funded by the Science for Equity, Empowerment and Development (SEED) Division of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, the programme was a component of a project titled 'Design and Development of IoT Based Low Cost Water Quality Monitoring and Reporting System for Aquaculture', NITPY Director K. Sankaranarayanan said. The topics covered included prospects of aquaculture diversification in India, advances in shrimp farming, engineering technologies for Aquaculture and inland fisheries, and Internet of Things-based Water Quality Monitoring System for Aquaculture.

### **Tamil nadu: Fishermen upset at delay in dole payment**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/fishermen-upset-at-delay-in-dole-payment/article33088899.ece>

"With just a day to go for Deepavali, fishermen in the city are upset that they received the dole for the fishing lean period just two days before the festival. The Fisheries Department released Rs. 88.54 crore towards payment of Rs. 5,000 each to 1.77 lakh fishermen families in Tamil Nadu on Wednesday. K. Bharathi, of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association, said that during the previous years, the Department ensured that they had at least four working days before the festival. "This year, we have just two working days, and it is pouring. Many of us were unable to withdraw the amount since banks were crowded. Considering the pandemic, the government could have released the amount at least at the beginning of the week so that the families would have time to shop. This year, the amount is more important to us since not many were able to earn, he said. The government also released Rs. 68 crore from the fisherwomen cooperative societies to around 2.13 lakh fisherwomen who are their members. Each would get Rs. 4,500 from the amount saved by them in monthly installments'. "This is the amount we have saved. Even this was delayed. Some banks do not issue ATM cards, forcing us to wait in queues. Hopefully, at least next year, they will return our savings and pay the dole on time, said Chandra, a fisherwoman.

### **Tamil Nadu: Stranded fishermen brought back from Somalia**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/stranded-fishermen-brought-back-from-somalia-madurai-high-court/article33087905.ece>

"The Centre and the State informed the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court that eight Tamil fishermen who were stranded in Somalia had been brought back to India. Recording the submission, the court closed the petition. A Division Bench of Justices K. Kalyanasundaram and T. Krishnavalli closed the petition filed by G. Theeran Thirumurugan who sought a direction to the Centre and the State to rescue fishermen Chitiravel, Seran, Viswanathan, Muthukrishnan, Manimaran and Prabu from Ramanathapuram district, Suresh from Nagapattinam district and Subbu from Sivaganga district who were stranded in Somalia for the past one year. The petitioner said the fishermen were engaged in fishing in Somalia for a very little pay and treated badly by their employers.

### **Tamil Nadu: NBCFDC CSR project- raised Fish Drying Yard for better livelihood**

<https://www.psuconnect.in/news/nbcfdc-csr-project--raised-fish-drying-yard-for-better-livelihood/25478>

"NBCFDC has implemented a CSR project by providing a raised 'Fish Drying Yard' for improving the livelihood of OBC fishermen in the Mudasalodai village of Cuddalore District in Tamil Nadu. Project implemented by Dr. Ambedkar Chair of Annamalai University under the guidance of the State Fisheries Department.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen taken into confidence for auction'**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishermen-taken-into-confidence-for-auction/article33079297.ece>

"The reported auctioning of 125 mechanised boats, lying in Sri Lanka, was planned only after taking the fishermen concerned into confidence, said officials of the Fisheries Department and a senior representative of the fishermen community. Fishermen's associations too had requested the State government to arrange for the auctioning of the boats, said D. Jayakumar, Fisheries Minister, in a statement. A team of four officials and 10 representatives from the community had visited Sri Lanka during October 10-16, 2018 to ascertain how many of the released boats could be brought back to Tamil Nadu. After deliberations among officials and the representatives, it was decided that 36 boats would be taken home, while the rest could be auctioned in Sri Lanka. Consequently, the boats were brought back to Tamil Nadu during January 16-February 6, 2019, a senior official in the Department said. The State government, according to the Minister, spent Rs.47.95 lakh for bringing back the boats.

In May this year, a team was supposed to visit Sri Lanka to bring back 10 more boats, but the pandemic disturbed the plan. As the boats identified for auctioning are properties of Indian nationals, proceeds from the auction will be handed over to the Indian High Commission so that the amount can eventually be passed on to the owners of the boats, the official explained. Mr. Jayakumar said the State government requested the External Affairs Ministry to send the money to it for facilitating their distribution to the boat owners. P. Jesu Raja, president of the Ramanathapuram district chapter of the All-Mechanised Boats-Fishermen Association, said he was one among those who went to Sri Lanka, and it was agreed that the unsalvageable boats could be auctioned in the neighbouring country itself. As the value of each boat is in the Rs.15 lakh-Rs.30 lakh range, the owners or the fishermen stand to lose heavily, if the expected revenue through the auction is "just Rs.3 lakh-Rs.4 lakh a boat. This is why the Central and State governments should provide compensation to the fishermen, in addition to the amount collected through the auction, Mr. Raja said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Govt's online fish delivery app a hit with Rs 1 crore sales since launch**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/nov/09/tamil-nadu-govts-online-fish-delivery-app-a-hit-with-rs-1-crore-sales-since-launch-2221541.html>

"The online seafood delivery app 'Meengal' introduced by the state government in April this year is a hit among the public, attracting more than 13,000 orders so far. As per the Tamil Nadu Fisheries Development Corporation which runs the app, 20 tons of fish were sold to customers at a value of approximately Rs 1 crore since April. In a bid to promote fish marketing, easy access of fish during the pandemic situation and to help the fishermen, the website [www.meengal.com](http://www.meengal.com) was revamped and the Android app Meengal was launched in April. For the delivery, they had partnered with Dunzo and Bytize. ""The app was instantly a hit among the public attracting more than 10,000 downloads. We have four shops catering to the online crowd in Anna Nagar, Teynampet, Virugambakkam and Santhome. Anna Nagar attracts the most number of customers,"" said an official.

People within a 5-km radius of these outlets can place orders, which are typically delivered within an hour. Since April, the Anna Nagar branch sold as much as 7,721 kg of seafood, while the Teynampet branch sold more than 6,000 kg and Virugambakkam and Santhome branches nearly 3,000 kg. While more than 40 species of seafood are sold online, small prawns, seer fish, catla, mackerel and anchovies remain the best selling varieties. Currently, the fish is procured mainly from Kasimedu fishing harbour and stored at the fish handling centre at Santhome. Inland fish are procured from TNFDC owned reservoirs like Aliyar, Amaravathy and Bhavanisagar. ""We are planning to launch the 'Meengal Procurement' app by the end of December, which would help the fishermen. We will place requests for fish on the app and registered fishermen can show interest if they have the fish we want for the desired price. We will immediately procure from them and pay on an instant basis,"" said the TNFDC official. Apart from this, TNFDC is also planning to increase the stores selling through Meengal app soon. TNFDC clocks sales of around 1000 metric tons of fish every year. Across Tamil Nadu, in terms of fish marketing infrastructure, TNFDC owns 22 fish kiosks, 20 modern stalls, 15 mobile stalls, 4 mobile restaurants, one seafood restaurant and two fish handling centres at Chennai and Coimbatore.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen want better lighting at Kasimedu**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishermen-want-better-lighting-at-kasimedu/article33061832.ece>

"Fishermen have been complaining that the entry/exit point to the Kasimedu Fishing Harbour from the sea has remained unlit for nearly a month. Two signal lights placed atop rooms at the end of the breakwaters have not been functioning, making it difficult for fishermen to enter or leave the harbour, especially at night. "Most boats leave late at night and return before noon. At night, when there is not enough light, the risk of collisions which could result in damage to the boats and even a loss of lives is high, said M.D. Dayalan of the Indian Fishermen Association, who has submitted petitions to the Fisheries Department to fix the lights. Nanjil

Ravi of the Akhila Indiya Meenavar Sangam said boats that returned after long trips sometimes mistake the entry of the Chennai Port and go there. "If these boats cross paths with the ships they could be damaged badly. Luckily, no mishaps have happened so far.

At times, if boats miss this entry point and if the winds are heavy, the current could just strand them at sea, he said. Krishnaraj, a boat owner, said apart from this entry/exit point, the harbour was ill-lit or even pitch dark on many stretches. "The usual point of entry from the Ennore Expressway at the N4 side has been boarded up, which has led us to enter via Nagoorar Thottam. That route is very dark. There have been instances of people being robbed at knife point, he said, adding that the Fisheries Department must take steps to improve lighting in and around the harbour.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish vendors on Chennai's Marina Loop Road to be relocated in four months**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/nov/06/beach-beautification-fish-vendors-on-chennais-marina-loop-road-to-be-relocated-in-four-months-2220262.html>

"Even amidst resistance from the fishing community, the Chennai Corporation says it is determined to relocate fish vendors from the Marina Loop Road to a newly constructed complex in four months. While the civic body chief says that the fishermen groups have agreed to move once the complex is constructed, members from fishing unions told The New Indian Express that they have not. The fishermen were living in the locality and selling fish there for several decades, well before the loop road was laid. The city corporation has renewed attempts to relocate the fishermen from the beach after recent observations by a bench of the Madras High Court on beautifying the beach. The court also insisted on relocating the fishermen. The court had also asked the City Corporation Commissioner and the Police Commissioner to take morning walks alongside the beach and loop road to ensure the place was well maintained and free of encroachments. Addressing reporters at the loop road on Friday, after a morning walk there along with the police commissioner Mahesh Kumar Agarwal, city corporation commissioner G Prakash said that the complex is being constructed in a two acre land nearby with all the facilities for the fishermen designed scientifically. "Once it is done in four months, we will shift the 300 shops on both sides of the lane to the complex soon," said Prakash.

"Once this complex is constructed, we will ban selling fish alongside the loop road. We will take biometrics of all fish vendors and transfer them to the complex, Prakash said. But fishermen said that the officials are falsely claiming that they agreed to the move. "How will we give consent? We have been opposing this all along. Our request has always been for the authorities to create safer ways for us to sell fish along the road itself. No one has given consent, said a senior union member, on condition of anonymity over fear of police action. The union member said that the previous city police commissioners and corporation commissioners too made attempts to convince them but it is not feasible for them to move away from the road. The Street Vendors

(Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014 states that natural markets where street vendors have conducted business for over fifty years shall be declared as heritage markets and vendors in such markets shall not be relocated. “If the corporation builds a safe fishing space for us outside the road, it won't cause any disturbance to the traffic, the fishermen said.

While the fishing community has not yet come on board, the corporation hopes to beautify the beach front by early 2021. Prakash said each shop in the complex will be spacious with adequate storage space and display area for advertising the names of the fish, giving a hygienic and pleasant experience for customers. “The complex also comes with parking space with the capacity to park 400 two-wheelers and 89 four-wheelers, he said. Prakash claimed that there have been traffic issues on the loop road when the fishermen sell fish on both sides of the lane. “Coastal regulation clearance work too is 80 percent over and soon, the work will be done. Over time, people can enjoy the beach front and preserve nature, he added. Union members said there would be resistance when the civic body attempts to move them from the place.

**Sri Lanka: Fisheries Minister ready to hold talks with Tamil Nadu CM to resolve the nagging fishermen issue**

[http://www.colombopage.com/archive\\_20B/Nov05\\_1604600703CH.php](http://www.colombopage.com/archive_20B/Nov05_1604600703CH.php)

"Fisheries Minister Douglas Devananda says Sri Lanka is ready to hold talks with Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami to resolve the problems of fishermen of both countries. Addressing a press conference in Colombo, Mr. Devananda said both India and Sri Lanka were committed to addressing the long-drawn fishermen conflict. Sri Lanka's northern fishermen have raised concerns over Indian fishermen originating from Tamil Nadu trespassing into their waters and using destructive fishing methods, such as bottom trawling which is banned in Sri Lanka. The conflict is highlighted once again and Minister Devananda is ready to hold talks with the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister at a virtual meeting to find solutions to the long standing issue soon, the state run radio reported.

**Tamil Nadu: Fisherman starts India's first radio channel exclusively for fisherfolk**

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/it-s-viral/tamil-nadu-fisherman-starts-india-s-first-radio-channel-exclusively-for-fisherfolk/story-0ZPVxt3OpMU2fazyF1QfhL.html>

"A fisherman from the Ramanathapuram district's Pamban town has started 'Kadal Osai FM 90.4', India's first and only radio channel for fisherfolk. It offers infotainment to listeners - from information on marine and COVID-19 to folk songs sung by fishermen/women and film songs. Armstrong Fernando, a fisherman from Pamban used to listen to the radio since his childhood. Fernando has studied till 8th standard, he grew up in the industry and travelled to various places to listen to the community radio for farmers. Later, he planned to start a radio for his fishing community. "Nearly 80 per cent population of Pamban is engaged in fishing. It was launched to help them. Our transmission range is 5-10 kilometers now. The government should increase the range and pave way for it to be broadcast across Pamban island, said Armstrong Fernando, Director, and founder of 'Kasal Osai FM 90.4'. "Due to government regulations regarding the proximity of the Indian and Sri Lankan islands to the international border, island fishermen are only allowed to stay at sea for 24 hours. The fish they could catch during that period were sold at whatever price onshore. Sometimes information is collected and transmitted to know where there are more fish, as well as how they move during high-speed waves or storms, he added.

This radio is becoming an integral part of everyday fishing life. Kadal Osai FM 90.4 is making a significant impact on the Pamban Island in Tamil Nadu as it transmits marine safety awareness to the latest information on social distance, from creating more alternative livelihoods. Fishermen residing at Pamban Island in Tamil Nadu, located between peninsular India and Sri Lanka call it their radio station. Apart from the station manager Gayatri, the other 12 staff members of the station are part-time fishermen or their family members. Students, housewives, and fishermen learn about the daily happenings in the town as this channel benefits the local community. It also serves as a direct link between the government and the community to quickly resolve people's problems, from receiving government incentives to purchasing tokens for fishing.

### **Tamil Nadu: Wrong design causes fatal accidents at fishing harbour**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/wrong-design-causes-fatal-accidents-at-fishing-harbour/article33014272.ece>

"Following repeated fatal mishaps at the entrance/exit point of Thengaipattinam fishing harbour, thousands of fishermen from eight villages in western Kanniyakumari district launched an indefinite strike on Tuesday demanding the restructuring of the fishing harbour. To highlight their demand, the striking fishermen staged a dharna at Chinnathurai village on Tuesday. They say the design of the Thengaipattinam fishing harbour itself was faulty and sand gets accumulated in the nearby estuary caused the mishaps. "The officials, without discussing with the local fishermen about the 'sea pattern,' had established the harbour. The sea is usually rough on the Kanniyakumari west coast, more so during monsoons.

It should have been taken into account while designing the harbour, said Sunil Sabariyar of Vallavilai on the Kerala border. It is where 53-year-old Jesudasan lost his life last week when his boat was capsized in a giant wave at the exit point of the harbour. Mr. Sunil says tidal velocity during various months, depth of the sea, sea erosion, nearby estuary, experiences of local fishermen - these were all factors that should have been taken into consideration before designing the harbour. An M.Tech. degree holder, he said the small granite stones were used for constructing the breakwater instead of laying huge rocks there to neutralise the giant waves. “The breakwater, which is constructed to ensure a calm sea inside the harbour throughout the year, has failed to serve the purpose as the groynes were very close to the harbour. So, the waves capsized the boats entering or exiting the harbour, leading to loss of lives. The breakwater should be extended by another 500 metres from the Thengaipattinam shoreline for neutralising the waves and ensuring calm inside the harbour, he said.

The fishermen also said dredging of sand, getting accumulated in this ‘danger zone’ due to rough seas and the nearby estuary, would not be a solution as sand removed from the accumulated areas would get filled up in no time due to the wave pattern. “So, the government, besides restructuring the breakwater and the fishing harbour, should provide a lasting solution to sand getting accumulated in this accident-prone zone and inside the harbour by stationing a dredger, the fishermen said. The fishermen, demanding shifting of Parakkani check dam to some other place as it was facilitating sand accumulation, complained that they had witnessed the loss of 24 fishermen in the mishaps at the Thengaipattinam fishing harbour entry / exit point since 2014 – four fatal accidents in the past five months. “Families of the fishermen, who were killed in mishaps at Thengaipattinam fishing harbour, should be given due compensation and employment must be given to a person from the affected families, they said. Fisheries Department officials held talks with the protesters in the evening.

### **Tamil Nadu: Chennai fishermen resist token system**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/chennai-fishermen-resist-token-system/article32999543.ece>

"The fishing community has been opposing the implementation of the token system in the Kasimedu fishing harbour, whereby the entry and exit of boats will be monitored. Boat owners have been asked to provide details, including the names of labourers, date of departure/return and location of fishing. “Will they guarantee the safety of our men, boats and nets if we provide these details? The safety equipment they have provided us will not work in half the boats. We travel for as long as a week to reach fishing grounds. In such cases, how can we return quickly to the shore if there is a cyclone? asked an office-bearer of a boat owners' association. Kumaresan, a boat owner, said the token system would not suit Chennai, since the labourers were not fixed or attached to the boats. “Sometimes even bystanders are taken on fishing trips on short notice. We

get people from Andhra Pradesh or Thoothukudi, he said. Another boat owner said that places like Nagapattinam and Karaikal had a token system for boats, but craft with high-speed engines from those areas were fishing near Chennai and spoiling the livelihood of local fishermen. "Can the government ensure that those fishermen don't come here? he asked. The Fisheries Department, which introduced the system, is now insisting that deep sea fishermen and trawlers register themselves before leaving for trips. "This is for their own safety, especially during monsoon, said an official.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen must use tracking devices: Minister**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishermen-must-use-tracking-devices-minister/article32967369.ece>

"The Fisheries Department will insist upon fishers to use satellite phones and other tracking devices while going to sea to ensure their safety, especially during the monsoon. In some cases such tracking equipment were not being put to use properly. The members of clusters were not sharing the satellite phones or not turning them on as they should. There have been complaints that fishers do not use tracking devices and when they go missing, it is extremely difficult to track them. Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar said that the government had been distributing satellite phones to clusters of boats that go deep sea fishing and that they must use the phones. "These are being given at 75% subsidy to ensure the safety of the fishers. During the Northeast monsoon that has just set, our control room will be tracking crafts. We will coordinate with the Meteorology department and other State government departments,"" he said. A total of 500 satellite phones have been procured from BSNL at a cost ₹5.12 crore and they are being distributed in batches to beneficiaries. ""Even on Tuesday, we distributed 15 sets to various clusters,"" he said. The satellite phones can be used by deep sea fishermen to communicate with the shore and among themselves. They can also to be used to track boats during times of distress and to disseminate weather warnings. One set costs ₹1 lakh approximately with the MPEDA bearing 50% of the cost. Meanwhile, the State government is also procuring 4,997 transponders for mechanised boats in the State at a cost of ₹18.01 crore.

### **Karnataka and Tamil Nadu: Fishermen engage in scuffle over border violations**

<https://www.dajjiworld.com/news/newsDisplay.aspx?newsID=763838>

"Incidents of fishermen from outside Karnataka indulging in violating fishing borders has become usual occurrence. Fishermen from Tamilnadu were fishing in a Kerala boat by using lights in Malpe on Thursday morning. As fishing with the use of lights is banned and fishing boats from outside the state entered the Karnataka border, the purse seine boat owners in Malpe opposed. The fishermen from outside the state then entered into arguments with Malpe fishermen and ended up damaging Makara Sankranti boat in Malpe. The boat named 'Indian' from Kerala

was brought to the port by the others including the boat owner. Two people sustained injuries in the scuffle that ensued. They were also administered medicine. The fishermen at Malpe have objected to such incidents that are occurring repeatedly. More than 100 fishing boats that had been for deep-sea fishing returned and the fishermen have urged for suitable action against the violators. A grim situation prevailed in Malpe port on Thursday morning.

The coast guard police and Malpe police personnel arrived at the spot and took control of the situation. "Penalty of several lac rupees has been imposed when the fishing borders of Kerala are violated. Therefore, the violators in this incident should be also punished and the cost for damaging the boat should be also recovered, urged the owner of Makara Sankranti fishing boat. The boat named 'Indian' does not have any registration documents. It is said to be belonging to a person named Farooq from Kerala. Purse Seine Boat Fishermen's Association secretary, Naveen Kotian, said that over a hundred boats from other states have been undertaking light fishing and using spathes to catch fish illegally but the Coast Guard which is aware of this activity, has been turning a blind eye. Coastal Security Force superintendent of police Praveen Nayak, inspector Ratnakumar, Udupi police circle inspector Manjunath, deputy director of fisheries Ganesh K, senior assistant director Shivakumar and assistant director Payal, visited the spot and verified the details. Both Purse Seine Fishermen's Association and owner of Makara Sankranti boat have filed complaints in Malpe police station and a case has been registered. Fishermen leader had drawn the attention of fisheries minister, Kota Srinivas Poojary, about the illegal catching of cuttlefish near the shore and disposing them off at Malpe and the inaction of the officials in handling these illegal operators.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen stage protest**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fishermen-stage-protest/article32910584.ece>

"Led by Centre of Indian Trade Unions functionaries, fishermen staged a protest near the Collectorate here on Wednesday. CITU district secretary M. Karunamoorthy said their demands to put an end to purse seine fishing, to step up surveillance on mechanised boats which indulged in fishing close to the sea shore in violation of had not been addressed by officials of the Fisheries department. The State government should give a boat for the Fisheries department for the exclusive purpose of surveillance so that they could put an end to illegal acts of some fishermen. During a protest with the same demands three months ago, fisheries officials promised to take action but did not, the fishermen said. With the transfer of Deputy Director of Fisheries, a delegation of fishermen met District Revenue Officer Sivakami and pleaded for an early solution to their demands.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen stage protest**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fishermen-stage-protest/article32910584.ece>

"Led by Centre of Indian Trade Unions functionaries, fishermen staged a protest near the Collectorate here on Wednesday. CITU district secretary M. Karunamoorthy said their demands to put an end to purse seine fishing, to step up surveillance on mechanised boats which indulged in fishing close to the sea shore in violation of had not been addressed by officials of the Fisheries department. The State government should give a boat for the Fisheries department for the exclusive purpose of surveillance so that they could put an end to illegal acts of some fishermen. During a protest with the same demands three months ago, fisheries officials promised to take action but did not, the fishermen said. With the transfer of Deputy Director of Fisheries, a delegation of fishermen met District Revenue Officer Sivakami and pleaded for an early solution to their demands.

Tamil Nadu: Fishermen stage protest <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fishermen-stage-protest/article32910584.ece> "Led by Centre of Indian Trade Unions functionaries, fishermen staged a protest near the Collectorate here on Wednesday. CITU district secretary M. Karunamoorthy said their demands to put an end to purse seine fishing, to step up surveillance on mechanised boats which indulged in fishing close to the sea shore in violation of had not been addressed by officials of the Fisheries department. The State government should give a boat for the Fisheries department for the exclusive purpose of surveillance so that they could put an end to illegal acts of some fishermen. During a protest with the same demands three months ago, fisheries officials promised to take action but did not, the fishermen said. With the transfer of Deputy Director of Fisheries, a delegation of fishermen met District Revenue Officer Sivakami and pleaded for an early solution to their demands.

**Tamil Nadu: Use of banned purse seine nets has Kanniyakumari fishermen up in arms**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/use-of-banned-purse-seine-nets-has-kanniyakumari-fishermen-up-in-arms/article32901755.ece>

"Following the Thoothukudi country boat fishermen, the fishermen in Kanniyakumari have raised a banner of revolt against the use of purse seine nets by a section of fishers in the district saying the use of the banned fishnet would "destroy marine wealth including fingerlings. After venturing into the sea in two country boats – the first one occupied by the fishermen and the other one loaded with the purse seine nets – the fishermen, on reaching the spot for fishing, would release the net into the sea from the boat in the form of a large circle (apparently with 15 or 20 meter diameter). While the boat with the fishermen would be stationed at a point, the craft with the purse seine would be moved slowly even as a fisherman would release the net into the sea. As the moving boat with fishnet would reach the starting point – i.e. near the stationary boat – the fishnet would have been released into the sea in the form of a circle. After a few minutes,

the released net would be dragged back to the boat manually with the fishes entangled in it. “Since this fishing practice is like scooping, it won't even spare the fingerlings and hence the government banned this fishnet which is still being used by a few fishermen here.

So we appeal to the district administration to strictly enforce the ban on using these nets, says Antony, president of Marthandanthurai Fishermen Cooperative Society Limited. Mr. Antony, who has forwarded a complaint to the Kanniyakumari District Collector in this connection, says fishermen from a few villages near Kollencode are using the banned purse seine net. Endorsing the views of Mr. Antony, president of Vallavilai Fishermen Cooperative Society P. Arulanandan says a few fishermen from Neerodi, a coastal hamlet situated on the Tamil Nadu – Kerala border, were using the purse seine nets posing serious threat to the marine wealth. “More importantly, these banned nets pose a serious challenge to the livelihood of catamaran and shore-net fishermen. Hence, the officials should take appropriate action against the fishermen using the banned fishnets, Mr. Arulanandan says.

However, fishermen using the purse seine nets defend their practice. “The purse seine nets are like ‘mani valai’ (cast net) being used by the inland fishermen while fishing in the reservoirs. Venturing into the sea only in country boats, we don't use bottom trawling nets as being used by the mechanized boats, which are being constructed nowadays in violation of the norms in length and hauled by engines with higher capacity up to 450 horse power while they are allowed to fit only engines with 120 HP capacity. We release and take back the purse seine nets manually and don't use machines at any point during fishing. So we use the fishnets with larger ‘kanni’ (holes) that ensure the escaping of smaller fishes from the net, says a fisherman using purse seine net, who does not want to be quoted. Assistant Director of Fisheries Mohanraj promised that he would personally conduct inspections soon to check the use of purse seine nets and take appropriate action against the erring fishermen if they were found to be using the banned fishnets.

### **Tamil Nadu: Meeting on structure to facilitate fishing boats in Pulicat on October 29**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/training-wall-at-pulicat-hearing-on-oct-29-fisherfolk-activists-divided/articleshow/78776440.cms>

"After much delay, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) is finally organising a meeting seeking public opinion on the proposed project to build training walls at Pulicat Lake. A training wall is a wall or jetty that confines and directs the flow of a river or tide. The construction, at a cost of Rs 27 crore, is aimed at preventing sand deposit at the lake's mouth and ensure smooth operation of boats into sea throughout the year. While fishermen want the construction to begin soon, environmentalists say this could cause severe environmental damage. K Bharathi, president of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association, who will represent concerns of 10 fishing villages near Pulicat, said sand dunes at the point where the lake joins the

sea reduce the depth and width of the passage making the movement of boats very risky. “So many fishermen have lost their lives while crossing this stretch and hundreds of boats have got damaged. But the government doesn't even dredge regularly to ensure smooth sailing, he said.

However, constructing of walls will prevent water exchange between the lake and the sea and this could affect reproduction of prawns and few other fish. Eventually this might affect the livelihood of fishermen there, said ecologist D Narasimhan. The creek is very fragile and once its nature is altered, it could cause severe environmental damage, he said, stressing on the need for TNPCB to consider all such aspects before going ahead with the clearance process. Though fishermen said exchange of water was inevitable, they want the government to adopt the Chennai Harbour model and not just construct two parallel walls with groynes and access roads. Such attempts at Rameshwaram and other coastal towns have not been very successful. A senior TNPCB official said the project was designed by the state fisheries department after consulting experts from IIT Madras (Department of Ocean Engineering) who inspected the site. “Opinions of all stakeholders will be considered and recorded, he said. The public hearing meeting will take place at TNPCG district environmental engineer office at SIPCOT Industrial Complex in Gummidipoondi on October 29. It took many years for the project, mooted soon after the 2004 Tsunami, to materialize. The Centre had denied permission in 2018. Only now, considerable progress has been recorded after a two-year gap.

### **Tamil Nadu: Govt fines polluting aqua farms 67L**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/govt-fines-polluting-aqua-farms-67l/articleshow/78708758.cms>

"The Tamil Nadu government has imposed a fine of Rs 67 lakh on aqua farms in Chennai's suburbs for polluting water bodies and affecting agriculture in nearby fields. Inspections this week revealed that only 84 out of the 295 shrimp farms in and around Ponneri have valid licences and the remaining 65% were functioning illegally, Tiruvallur collector Mageswari Ravikumar told the National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Tuesday. The fisheries department wants the illegal units shut. The case was originally filed by agriculturists from Pakkam village in Ponneri. Water bodies of the village are a source of drinking water for Chennai city and part of the Pazhaverkadu bird sanctuary. In the early 2000s, shrimp and prawn cultivation flourished in the area as water availability was abundant. But the aqua farms began releasing saline water in nearby water bodies, affecting groundwater quality. When borewells in agricultural fields drew contaminated water, it affected the paddy yield. Local law restricts the functioning of such farms within 1km radius of Pulicat Lake. But complaints to state agencies about such farms close to Pulicat Lake on poromboke lands were not addressed. NGT Southern Zone, while hearing the case, constituted a panel to look into farms on not only poromboke land but also registered patta land, and study if they had caused any environmental damage.

Accordingly, the committee inspected the area and found out that the region had 182 shrimp farms in the brackish water area and another 113 farms in areas with freshwater.

The fisheries department has instructed closure of 119 brackish water shrimp farms functioning without licence and suspend activities at 113 inland freshwater shrimp farms as these were within 1km of Pulicat Lake. The fisheries department sent these farms notices and cut power supply. Fines were imposed on 28 illegal farms against which the committee was able to record significant evidence of polluting water resources and land. On hearing the committee's submission, NGT members Justice K. Ramakrishnan and Saibal Dasgupta directed the committee to inspect soil and water quality in the area. In response, the committee said samples were collected and sent to Dr MGR Fisheries College and Research Institute, Ponneri, and Agricultural Lab, Kakkalur. Results of these tests are awaited. The next hearing is scheduled on December 18.

### **Tamil Nadu: Unhygienic conditions raise a stink at new fish market**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/unhygienic-conditions-raise-a-stink-at-new-fish-market/article32892764.ece>

"Unhygienic conditions prevail at the newly constructed Kasivilangi fish market as retail vendors sell outside the shops. With the facility inaugurated only a week ago, officials say vendors will take time to settle. The Kasivilangi market, located three kilometres away from the Puthur Fish Market looks not too different from the old one. The parking area is inundated with slush and mud, inconveniencing customers visiting the market to purchase fish. Drainage channels have not been constructed well and large vehicles that are parked haphazardly add to the problem. Retail vendors too, have crowded the parking area with their stalls as they have not been allotted shops. Except for the building, the market itself does not look new at all, said P. Bharathi, a resident of Woraiyur. "We may slip and fall in the slush and mud, she said. Not stopping with shifting the market to the new place, the civic body should ensure it proper maintenance and cleanliness, she added.

The market was shifted to the new location after residents and commercial establishments in Puthur raised complaints of unhygienic conditions. Such issues could give rise to health concerns, said N. Jamaluddin, former member, State Consumer Protection Council. "At a time when the spread the novel coronavirus is yet to be contained, unhygienic areas such as the market could cause spread of infections. Why did the civic body rush to shift the vendors even without completing the construction of a shed for them? he asked. Unwanted parts of the fish removed by cleaners seated on the far end of the market also gave out an unbearable stench. "In the Puthur market, we had a shelter to sit under and clean. We are unable to bear the heat and the fish starts to rot giving out a bad stench, a cleaner woman said. Meanwhile, speaking to The Hindu, V. Rajendran, president of the Retail Fish Vendors Association said - "The wholesale

merchants are not allowing us to sell fish at any of the shops. They have occupied them and are using them as office rooms and storage areas. We are left to trade in the hot sun, he said. "Because of the heat, vendors are losing as much as ₹50,000 each day, he said. "Because of the direct sun, the fish begins to rot and customers do not buy them. We have sent requests to the civic body to construct a shelter but we are yet to receive a response, he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen to open gruel centre near Collectorate**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fishermen-to-open-gruel-centre-near-collectorate/article32887321.ece>

"At least 700 fishermen and women from five villages, including Olaikuda and Sangumal, in Rameswaram have planned to set up gruel centre (kanji thotti) near the Collectorate on Wednesday to draw the government's attention to their long-pending demands. Speaking to reporters, CITU (fishermen wing) district secretary M. Karunamoorthy and president E. Justin on Sunday said the fishing sector, particularly country boat fishermen, faced a bleak future and survival had become a big question for a majority of the community. Although there were various factors, including the pandemic, responsible for the dire situation, the prime issue was official apathy and nonchalant attitude of the governments in redressal of their grievances. Also, mechanised boats were using banned fish nets despite the tall claims of officials of the Fisheries Department. When the governments had categorically instructed that country boat fishermen alone shall venture into fishing within two to three nautical miles, mechanised boat fishermen violated the arrangement. Hence, in order to draw the attention of the authorities to their grievances and seek redress, the fishermen collected contributions from people in front of churches on Sunday to set up the gruel centre. "We have no other alternative but to look for government support for our survival, Mr. Karunamoorthy said. Even if police arrested the fishermen, they would remain in prison along with their families. At least 700 to 1,000 members would assemble near the office of the Fisheries Department on Wednesday, he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Pulicat prawns go online: Fishermen to home deliver them in Chennai**

<https://www.thehindu.com/life-and-style/food/pulicat-prawns-go-online-fishermen-to-home-deliver-them-in-chennai/article32853290.ece>

"For the longest time, fisherman M Suman has dreamed of selling the fish he catches himself. "I have been fishing from the age of eight with my father, says the 36-year-old from Pulicat. "Wholesale buyers and sellers who depend on us have prospered. We fishermen struggle financially, he adds. Since the catch changes hands at least twice before reaching the final buyer, the fisherman walks away with a low profit. "After going to sea, I come back exhausted, and don't have the energy to sell the catch, says Suman. The pandemic made life tougher for small-

boat fishermen such as him. “Once lockdown was eased, we ended up with excess, unsold fish. Then, gradually, people started coming to our markets to buy in bulk. We were overwhelmed by the sudden demand, says A Mugan, leader of the Pulicat Youth Federation. “That’s when we came up with the idea of selling our catch online. Xavier Benedict, the founder of AARDE, designed the website, which was launched last week. For the first time in history, Pulicat’s prawns, crabs, and fish caught by small-boat fishermen, were put up for sale online. Suman’s tone over phone is enough to suggest that he has a huge grin on his face. “Hopefully, we too can go to the next level in our business. Suman knows buying fish online is nothing new. “I myself supply to some online retailers, he adds.

But there is a difference: “Once customers place their order, we will let them know if it is available only once the boat arrives. We will also send them photos and videos of their fish being packed, he explains. “This way, they are assured of fresh fish that is not stored with ice. Anyone who has tasted Pulicat fish will know that it is superior in quality and taste. The order will be delivered early next morning. “Right now, we have vans leaving Pulicat at 2 am for fishmarkets at Saidapet, Red Hills, Chintadripet, and Vanagaram; we plan to transport our customers’ orders in these vans. Delivery will be done through delivery portals we have tied up with, explains Suman. Mugan says that if things go well, orders will be delivered no less than two hours after the catch arrives. “We set out for fishing in two batches: from 3 am to 10 am and from 3 pm to 8 pm. If more orders start coming in, members from our federation will deliver the fish themselves, he adds. Think about it: a fisherman at your doorstep with the fish he caught.

### **Tamil Nadu: Panel told to visit sensitive coastal areas**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/panel-told-to-visit-sensitive-coastal-areas-in-tn/article32857005.ece>

"The Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) of the Ministry of Environment has suggested that a sub-committee visit sensitive coastal areas of Tamil Nadu for examination before coastal protection measures envisaged under the Comprehensive Shoreline Protection Management Plan are implemented. The EAC also said that the shoreline change maps prepared by the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM) and the National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) be used as the basis for implementing any shore protection schemes in the State, as suggested by a team of experts from IIT-Madras in its report to the EAC. “The detailed shore protection measures should be as per CRZ Notification 2011 and subsequent amendments thereon. Implications of Coastal Economic Zone (CEZ) development under Sagarmala needs to be taken care suitably while preparing detailed coastal protection measures, the report had said. The team had also suggested that the government of Tamil Nadu circulate the plan to neighbouring States of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and union territory of Puducherry as implementation of the plan might have implications there as well. The EAC in May 2019 had

sought comments and suggestions from the neighbouring States and wanted the T.N. government to make them available. The EAC was informed at a recent meeting that the Tamil Nadu government in July this year had requested the MoEF to approve the plan pending comments from the neighbouring States. The EAC said the Ministry may send a reminder to these neighbouring States to provide their views within three months, on or before December 2020 and posted the matter for further consideration after these comments are received.

### **Tamil Nadu: Revamp bad roads leading to fish market**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/roads/article32814855.ece>

"Vendors attached to the Puthur Fish Market will sell their wares from the newly constructed Kasivilangi market, set up by the Tiruchi Corporation from Saturday onwards. The market, built at a cost of ₹ 3.32 crore, has 24 retail shops and nine wholesale shops. All vendors, who had been selling at allotted shops at Puthur, have got shops at the Kasivilangi market, on Kuzhumani Road. After vendors shift, the market in Puthur will be demolished and construction of a commercial complex will soon begin. Some vendors began sales from the new market on Wednesday when it was inaugurated. Meanwhile, a section of residents, led by CPI Urban District Secretary Suresh on Friday petitioned the Assistant Commissioner, K. Abishekapuram Zone, Tiruchi Corporation seeking relaying the road leading to the market as it was in a bad state. The road, which would be frequented by trucks transporting goods to and from the market would worsen, they said. "The road from the Nachiyar temple to the market is about a 1.5 km stretch. The road there is filled with potholes and is uneven, Mr. Suresh said. The civic body could expand its size to benefit residents and vendors, he said. Trucks from the southern districts and Andhra Pradesh ferry fish to the market. "If the road is not repaired soon, the residents will suffer, he said. Officials at the assistant commissioner's office said that the matter would be taken to the attention of the Corporation Commissioner soon.

### **Tamil Nadu: Illegal bungalows at Muttukadu continue to worry local fishermen**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/oct/11/illegal-bungalows-at-muttukadu-continue-to-worry-local-fishermen-2208741.html>

"The deferring of demolition of the illegal bungalows on Olive Beach layout at Muttukadu has irked the fishermen of neighbouring Karikattukuppam village as they fear loss

of livelihood. They are anguished that for the past two months, big boulders of the unauthorised sea wall, being built by the bungalow owners to protect their property from sea erosion, are filling up the Karikattukuppam beach which is used by the fishers to park their boats. Murugan, a fishermen leader and petitioner in the case in Madras High Court, told TNIE that every morning sharp-edged rocks of different sizes carpet the coastline. “The high-tide waves bring these rocks and at times they even badly damaged our boats. Everyday, before venturing out for fishing, we are forced to physically remove the rocks. On a few occasions, these rocks lay buried under the shallow waters and when we cast our nets or return with the day's catch, our fishing gear suffer irreparable damage, he said.

There is a thin strip of beach separating the sea and Muttukadu brackish water lagoon, which is maintained by the Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA). Karikattukuppam is located on the leeward side of the lagoon on East Coast Road. Currently, there is not enough space for the fishermen to park their boats and sea erosion has swallowed close to 150 metres of beach in the recent past. Vasanth, another fisherman, said they had demanded the government to open a new bar mouth connecting Muttukadu lagoon and sea. “This will allow us to park our boats securely in our village and access the sea through lagoon. Fishermen said the urgent requirement was to demolish the sea wall and bungalows and free up this fragile coastline from encroachments. The High Court has already ordered for demolition. “Without wasting any time, the authorities should carry out demolition and protect our livelihood, the fishermen said. Officials of the TN Coastal Zone Management Authority said though the High Court has dismissed the review petition filed by Olive bungalow owners, the court has ordered deferring of demolition for a period of one month, which ends on October 31.

### **Tamil Nadu: Tenders invited for setting up of several fish landing centres**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/tenders-invited-for-setting-up-of-several-fish-landing-centres/article32829287.ece>

"The Fisheries Department has called for tenders for several fish landing centres, including a common one for Pudhupattinam and Uyyalikuppam in Kancheepuram district, at a cost of ₹15.76 crore. Helen Nagar in Kanniyakumari will get a landing centre at a cost of ₹13.40 crore and Rajakkamangalam village in the same district will get one for ₹13.15 crore. Tenders have also been floated for a facility at Rosema Nagar in Ramanathapuram, which would be constructed at a cost of ₹9.46 crore and one in Thalanguda in Cuddalore district for ₹12.37 crore. These projects are expected to be completed in 12-18 months and would help prevent sea erosion at these locations, explained a source in the department. Selvam, a fisherman of Cuddalore, said that as in any other coastal locality, sea erosion was a major problem in his district. “What is needed is a larger study to safeguard the coastline. The sea is some 5 km away from our village, it has now inched closer and is only a kilometre from here, he said. K. Bharathi of South Indian

Fishermen Welfare Association said that though the landing centres were a welcome move, a wholesome study of erosion, sea level increase and the coastline was a must. "A long term plan must be drawn up to ensure a safe future for the coastal communities, he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Cyclone warning issued**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/cyclone-warning-issued/article32829936.ece>

"Port officials at Pamban have issued a cyclone warning after a depression formed over the west-central Bay of Bengal on Sunday, lying centred near south-southwest of Visakhapatnam about 490 km southeast of Kakinada and 520 km east-southeast of Narsapur. Officials of the Fisheries Department have asked fishermen not to venture into the sea. Tokens would not be issued and mechanised boatmen had been told not to put out to sea until further notice, a release said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Coast Guard rescues 6 fishermen, repairs sinking boat**

<https://www.prokerala.com/news/articles/a1090110.html>

"The Indian Coast Guard said it has rescued six fishermen and their sinking boat. In a statement issued here, the Coast Guard said its ship ICGS Vaibhav received a distress call from a fishing boat with six crew on board. The fishing boat's engine room was flooded due to a broken keel. The boat was 48 nautical miles south east of Manappad in Tamil Nadu. According to the Coast Guard, its personnel operated the portable submersible pumps and commenced de-flooding. Then the team undertook repairs using quick drying cement/oakum and wooden wedges. After stopping the sea water ingress and completion of repairs, the boat was directed to proceed to Tharuvaikulam Fishing Harbour in Tuticorin District. The fishing boat and the crew safely entered Tharuvaikulam fishing harbour at 3 a.m. on Thursday.

### **Tamil Nadu: Eight fishermen rescued by Myanmar Coast Guard to return to Chennai on Thursday**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/eight-fishermen-rescued-by-myanmar-coast-guard-to-return-to-chennai-on-thursday/articleshow/78530817.cms>

"After two and a half months of ordeal, eight Chennai fishermen, who were rescued by the Myanmar Coast Guard, will return to the city on Thursday. Fisheries director G S Sameeran told

TOI that the eight fishermen would board a 'Vande Bharath' flight from Myanmar around 5pm on Wednesday. They will reach New Delhi by 8pm. As they are returning from a foreign land, all the eight men had to undergo Covid-19 test. The results will be released within eight hours of taking the samples, he said. From New Delhi, they are expected to board a flight on Thursday afternoon and will reach Chennai around 5pm. Nine fishermen from Chennai went for deep-sea fishing on a mechanised boat on July 27. They went missing, and there had been no communication with the fishermen for weeks. In the last week of August, one of the fishermen informed the boat owner that all of them had been rescued and housed in a port town in Myanmar. One of the nine fishermen, identified as Babu, drowned while trying to help local fishermen. His body is yet to be traced. The Chennai fishermen's boat sank in the sea off the Myanmar coast a week ago.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fisherman's body brought from Sri Lanka**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/tn-fishermans-body-brought-from-sri-lanka/articleshow/78518784.cms>

"The boy of a fisherman from Rameswaram which was washed ashore in Jaffna in Sri Lanka was brought to his hometown and cremated on Tuesday. Six fishermen from Thangatchimadam in Rameswaram went for fishing on September 30. One of them, Carson, 24, fell into the sea after an iron hook hit his head. His fellow fishermen searched for him but could not find him. On October 4, his body was washed ashore in Jaffna, and the fishermen in TN were informed. The fishermen made an appeal to the officials of the Indian embassy. The body was sent to the government hospital in Jaffna for postmortem. The Indian Coast Guard received the body from its Sri Lankan counterpart. Fishermen from Pudukottai district received the body from the Coast Guard and brought it to Rameswaram in an ambulance.

### **Tamil Nadu: Kasimedu harbour's lack of hygiene irks fishermen**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/kasimedu-harbours-lack-of-hygiene-irks-fishermen/article32763404.ece>

"It's just been a month or so since the Kasimedu fishing harbour was cleaned by the Fisheries Department but the wharfs and empty spaces are already littered with broken boat parts and rubbish. This is due to the lack of no cleaning regimen for the harbour that gets close to 30,000 visitors daily. "There is no cleaning mechanism. People just sweep up their spaces whenever they can. But without bins to dump the waste, sweeping or removing the waste does not matter, said Vinod, who along with the police and a band of youngsters, had removed 300 tonnes of waste from the fishing harbour last year. Arasu, president of a boat owners' association, said the harbour was under the control of the Chennai Port Trust and that they were collecting wharf charges regularly. "Nobody knows what happens to that money. The port does

not want to take charge of the cleanliness, lighting or water supply inside the harbour. Control must be handed over to the Fisheries Department, he said. No exports M.D. Dayalan of the Indian Fishermen Association said due to the lack of cleanliness, fish exports do not happen here. "We have been banned by the European Union due to a lack of hygiene. We send fish to Cochin from where they are exported, which is unfair to the fishermen here since they don't get good rates for their catch. He also added that unless regular cleaning was taken up, crores of money invested by the State government to improve infrastructure would be ruined. Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar said a system would be put in place soon to clean the fishing harbour. "We will maintain our assets, he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Return of Chennai fishermen stuck in Myanmar delayed**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/return-of-chennai-fishermen-stuck-in-myanmar-delayed/articleshow/78474573.cms>

"Having suffered two losses – the drowning of a fellow fisherman and the loss of their boat, both while under the care of the Indian embassy in Myanmar the eight Chennai fishermen rescued by coast guard of that country after 50 days at sea are further distressed over the delay in returning home. The plan was for them to fly to the city on September 28. However as chartering a plane proved too expensive, the plan was dropped. They are now expected to return on October 7 or 8, sources said. South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association president K Bharathi said the mechanised deep-sea fishing boat was anchored at a harbour along the Myanmar coast. "We suspect heavy rains lashed the coast due to which water entered the boat, causing it to sink, he said. There were nine fishermen on the boat, of whom eight were rescued. Babu of Tiruchinanguppam near Tiruvottiyur, had drowned and his body is yet to be traced. The rescued fishermen are likely to be brought back on a Vande Bharath flight, said sources from the state fisheries department. A Raghupathy, a boat owner in Kasimedu fishing harbour, said the vessel in question would fetch Rs 45 lakh and accommodate at least 10 fishermen. A new boat of this size will cost about Rs 1 crore now, he said. The fishermen also carried six tonnes of gillnet, valued at Rs 24 lakh. Each net, weighing a tonne, will now cost Rs 4 lakh.

### **Indian Bank's Kisan credit card loan for Tamil Nadu fishermen**

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/indian-banks-kisan-credit-card-loan-for-tn-fishermen/article32740444.ece>

"Indian Bank has introduced a Kisan credit card loan scheme for fishermen in Tamil Nadu. Under this scheme, Kisan credit card loans of up to ₹2 lakh as working capital with low-interest rate will be provided, according to a statement. Fishermen can submit the application

through the Department of Fisheries, along with details of the mechanised boat. The features of the scheme include the availability of revolving credit up to ₹2 lakh, 7 per cent interest rate, interest subvention of 3 per cent for those who repay the loan within a period of one year. The loan can be renewed once in a year. . There is no restriction on the number of credit and debit transactions. This loan will be provided under Mudra scheme. Borrowers will get Rupay Kisan Credit Card and beneficiaries can use the card to withdraw money from ATMs, BC (banking correspondent) points, and also make purchase through merchant POS. Interested people can approach the nearest Indian Bank branch or Tamil Nadu Fisheries Department for loan requirements.

### **Tamil Nadu: Indian Bank offers new loan scheme for TN fishermen**

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/indian-bank-offers-new-loan-scheme-for-tn-fishermen/1946167>

"Public sector Indian Bank on Wednesday unveiled a new Kisan Credit Card loan scheme for fishermen in Tamil Nadu, offering a revolving credit of upto Rs two lakh. The loan would be provided at seven per cent interest rate with an interest subvention of three per cent to those who repay the loan within a period of one year, the city- headquartered bank said in a statement. A RUPAY Kisan Credit Card would be issued to customers for the loan provided under the Centre's MUDRA scheme. To avail the bank's services, fishermen need to submit their applications through the department of fisheries, along with details of the mechanised boat, it said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Govt relief cushions COVID-19 lockdown, fishing ban restrictions in TN**

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/govt-relief-cushions-covid19-lockdown-fishing-ban-restrictions-in-tn/1942631>

"The impact of the lockdown enforced to prevent the spread of coronavirus and local restriction on fishing were to some extent cushioned by Tamil Nadu government's relief measures, efforts of fisher organisations, and individual vessel owners. Around Rs 96 crore was extended as relief to 4.8 lakh members through the Tamil Nadu Fishermen Welfare Board, which gave away Rs 2,000 per head for two months for the lockdown period for fishermen, fisherwomen, allied workers and crew members, a senior official in the fisheries department said. An additional breeding season allowance of Rs 5,000 was given to each family for the ban (on fishing) period. This sum was disbursed to about 1.6 lakh families, the senior official, who did not want to be named told PTI. ""Chief minister K Palaniswami's decision to extend free ration to the fishermen having family ration cards, who were entitled to the Rs 1,000 relief amount given by Tamil Nadu government, helped to mitigate the harsh conditions imposed by the

pandemic," the official claimed. "Some of us who owned small boats went out to fish but unfortunately could not sell due to the lockdown.

The local panchayats and our organisations asked us to prioritise supply of fish to local households first." "Vessel owners provided essential commodities to the fishermen engaged on board their huge crafts," Mohan Kumar, a fisherman from Royapuram, here said. Although the state government did not restrict fishing, the ban on mechanised boats due to the breeding season from mid-April to mid-June allowed only small boats on a rotation basis from April 14. The mechanised boats couldn't ply for an additional time period of 20 days (from March 25 to 14 April) due to the lockdown and after that the annual ban period started. The state government permitted the small boats to venture into the sea on a rotational basis from April 14, ensuring that only 50 per cent of the boats left from each village on alternate days and the boats were allowed to sail up to 12 nautical miles.

### **Tamil Nadu: Mechanised boat from Kanniyakumari stranded in Azhikkal**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/mechanised-boat-from-kanniyakumari-stranded-in-azhikkal/article32667310.ece>

"A mechanised boat, which ventured into the sea for fishing with 11 fishermen on September 14, is stranded in Azhikkal in Kerala and has sought assistance for a rescue by the naval authorities from Tamil Nadu and Kerala. In a mail sent to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami, International Fishermen Development Trust president P. Justin Antony said that the boat had set off from Thengapattinam Fishing Harbour with 11 persons. The fishermen then made contact through a satellite phone that there was a technical snag in the engine and sought rescue at the earliest. According to the INFIDET, 10 among them were from Kanniyakumari district, while one was from Thiruvananthapuram district. When contacted, officials at the office of the Deputy Director (Fisheries) here said that they have communicated to their counterparts in Kerala. The Naval authorities and the Indian Coast Guard too would be intimated, they added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Chennai fisherman who was stranded off Myanmar coast feared**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/chennai-fisherman-stranded-off-myanmar-coast-feared-dead/articleshow/78268009.cms>

"One of the nine fishermen from Kasimedu in Chennai who were stranded in sea off Myanmar coast feared dead after he tried to help fishermen in another boat a few days ago. The

nine fishermen from Kasimedu, who went for fishing on July 23, had been missing for 55 days. They were traced to off Myanmar coast. The Myanmar government didn't allow the fishermen to enter the country. A team from the central government was trying to bring the fishermen back to the city. Two of the nine fishermen responded to a rescue call from another fishing boat and jumped into the sea to rescue them. However, one of them, identified as Baby, went missing. On information, fishing officials in Myanmar and a police patrol team conducted a search for him in the sea. But they could not find him.

### **Tamil Nadu: Kasimedu harbour gets new wharf, fish market**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/kasimedu-harbour-gets-new-wharf-fish-market/articleshow/78247623.cms>

"A lower wharf, 140m long, and a modern retail fish market have been added to the Kasimedu fishing harbour. The new facilities were inaugurated by chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami on Sunday. A fisheries department official said both the facilities were a long-pending demand of fishermen from Kasimedu and Royapuram areas and were built at a cost of Rs 10.5 crore. The wharf can accommodate 35 trawlers. It will decongest the existing boat parking area in the fishing harbour. It is spread over 3,600 square meters. The modern fish market has 250 stalls arranged in seven rows, the official said. ""The shops have roofs and will protect fish vendors from sunlight and rain. In a fish market, people sit very close to one another. But these new shops will ensure social distancing,"" said K Bharathi, president of South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association.

""Only two to three people can stand in front of a shop to buy fish. This is a welcome move given the pandemic."" Bharathi said the fisheries department has worked on the flooring. ""In the old facility, there would be water stagnation. The authorities have addressed that issue,"" he said. When asked about the new lower wharf, Raghupathi, a trawler owner, said the existing fishing area is overcrowded with mechanised boats and trawlers. ""The new facility will help in decongesting the existing boat-tying area in the harbour,"" he said. ""At least 35 trawlers or mechanised boats can be parked here at a time and there will be a safe distance between two boats. During a cyclone, nearly 50 boats can be tied here. Both the market and the wharf will be of great help to the fishermen,"" Raghupathi said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish landing centre opens in Ramnad**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/sep/21/fish-landing-centre-opens-in-ramnad-2199655.html>

"Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami on Saturday inaugurated a fish landing centre in Ramanathapuram district and various buildings across the State through video- conference

facility, from the secretariat. On behalf of the Fisheries Department, the centre was constructed at Kundhukal village at a cost of Rs 70 crore. Palaniswami also inaugurated fish landing centres at Kasimedu in Chennai (Rs 10.50 crore), Annamalaichery in Thiruvallur district (Rs 4.4 crore), and fish farms in various districts. Several buildings constructed on behalf of Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS) across the State were also officially opened by the chief minister. The buildings were constructed at a cost of Rs 102.63 crore. Minister for Fisheries D Jayakumar, Minister for Animal Husbandry K Radhakrishnan, Minister for Revenue and Disaster Management RB Udhayakumar and Chief Secretary K Shanmugam were also present on the occasion. With the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply & Sewerage Board (CMWSSB) bagging the SKOCH Award 2020 recently, Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami on Saturday felicitated Minister for Municipal Administration SP Velumani for the achievement.

The CMWSSB won the SKOCH Award gold in Digital India category for its implementation of 'Dial for Water 2.0' project during the 2019 drought and it also bagged the National Water Innovation Award from 'Elets National Water Innovation Summit-2020' for converting granite queries into rainwater storage points. Chief Secretary K Shanmugam and other officials took part in the event. Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami's visit to three southern districts has been deferred as he has to attend a video-conference meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 23. To review Covid- 19 prevention measures and inaugurating completed projects and laying stones for new schemes, the CM had planned to visit Ramanathapuram and Thoothukudi on September 22, and Kanniyakumari and Virudhunagar districts on September 23, but PM Modi has convened a meeting with Chief Ministers on September 23. Following which, the visits will be rescheduled. The CM will visit Ramanathapuram on September 22 and return to Chennai in the evening. The visit to other districts will be announced later. Renovated govt observation home thrown open Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami on Saturday inaugurated the renovated government observation home for boys and girls, Kellys, in Chennai through video-conference facility.

On behalf of the Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Programme, Kellys was renovated at the cost of Rs 4.40 crore on 1,554 sq.m. Palaniswami officially opened 12 rooms for girls, a dining hall with kitchen, multipurpose hall, doctor's room, reverse osmosis plant, CCTV cameras and a sewage treatment plant, among others. The CM also handed over appointment orders to seven junior assistants in the Social Welfare Department. Minister for Social Welfare Department V Saroja, Minister for Fisheries D Jayakumar and Chief Secretary K Shanmugam were also present on the occasion. Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami on Saturday launched the upgraded website of Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation and signed MoUs with various companies for providing free training to job seekers. On behalf of the Tamil Nadu Labour and Employment department, the TNSKILL website was upgraded as a Multilingual Integrated Skill Analytical and E-governance System at a cost of Rs 2 crore. The MoUs were signed with

companies, including Ramco Cements Limited and Coursera, a digital learning portal based in the US. Around 50,000 jobless youth in the state is expected to benefit under this initiative. Minister for Labour Nilofer Kafeel, Chief Secretary K Shanmugam and other officials were present on the occasion.

### **Tamil Nadu: Villagers demand better basic amenities**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/villagers-demand-better-basic-amenities/article32605570.ece>

"Demanding better basic amenities in their village, residents of Keezh Seithalai under Chandragiri panchayat in Ottapidaaram taluk submitted a petition to Collector Sandeep Nanduri on Monday. They staged a demonstration in front of the Collectorate to highlight their demand. They said the main road was in the worst shape for the past six years and most of the street lights were not glowing. Though the villagers had submitted petition to the Block Development Officer on three occasions, no step was taken. Plaint against plant Residents of Thennampatti under Ottapidaaram taluk submitted a petition accusing a solar power plant of encroaching upon the waterways taking water to the village tank. They said administration of the solar power plant, which had been set-up on over 400 acres of land, had "illegally occupied the waterways. Since the obstructions made across these waterways would effectively stop the flow of water into the village tank, Thennampatti would be denied of water and become "desert. Fishermen's plea A group of fishermen, led by one Annadurai, submitted a petition urging the Collector to negotiate with the Thoothukudi Port Trust, which was planning to close the entrance near the Port Guest House leading to the New Harbour Beach.

Since good number of fishermen, all using 'shore nets' to harvest fishes for the past several years, were using New Harbour Beach for their fishing operations and using this entrance to take the harvested fishes to the market, the decision to close this entrance would seriously affect them. Petition submitted a group of women from Srimi Nagar near Korampallam submitted a petition against a fish processing unit in their area. They said the fish processing unit, situated on the southern end of Srimi Nagar, was posing serious health hazards to the residents as it was uncontrollably discharging the water used for washing and processing the fish, crab and the prawn. As the water discharged from the fish processing unit was emanating unbearable odour, the Collector should order the company to take immediate measures to address the problems causing health issues, they said. Toll collection flayed Office-bearers of 'Siva Bharatha Makkal Iyakkam' submitted a petition against the collection of toll in the toll plazas at Vaagaikulam and Pudur Pandiapuram even as roads were not being maintained properly. Moreover, no mandatory medical facilities had been created in these toll plazas. Hence, the Collector should take steps to cancel collection of toll in these points, the petitioners said. Action sought Hindu Makkal

Katchi cadre submitted a petition accusing the Thoothukudi Roman Catholic Diocese of instigating the students to agitate against New Education Policy.

### **Tamil Nadu: IIT Madras researchers propose wall at Ennore Creek to prevent floods in Chennai**

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/iit-madras-researchers-propose-wall-at-ennore-creek-to-prevent-floods-in-chennai/article32599612.ece>

Tamil Nadu: Fishermen missing in sea for 50 days rescued  
<https://thefederal.com/states/south/tamil-nadu/tamil-nadu-fishermen-missing-in-sea-for-50-days-rescued/> "Nine fishermen from Chennai's Royapuram region who had gone missing after they went for deep-sea fishing on July 23 were rescued on Monday (September 14) off the Myanmar coast, amid allegations that the Centre and the state did nothing to help locate them. The fishermen were expected to return in 15 days after they ventured into the sea. But when they did not return for more than a month, the fishing community in Chennai complained to the state fisheries department and demanded a search operation to locate them. The fishermen were found at a Myanmar coast after 50 days and were rescued by the Myanmar Navy. A statement from the state fisheries department said they were all in good health and were being provided with food and other facilities. Necessary steps were being taken to bring them back home, it said.

“The fishermen could have been washed ashore following a possible malfunctioning in the boat, said Kurumpanai Berlin, the founder of Neithal Makkal Iyakkam, which works for the rights and welfare of the fisher folk in the state. The fishing community has alleged that the state and the Coast Guard did nothing to locate the fishermen. They just kept passing the buck, it said. According to them, after the missing complaint was made, the state government said it was taking all necessary steps to locate them with the help of the Indian Coast Guard. The Coast Guard, however, said its jurisdiction is only up to 60 nautical miles and it couldn't find any boats in that limit. The Indian Navy controls the waters from 60 nautical miles to 200 nautical miles. Though the state claimed that it was searching for the missing fishermen along with the Navy, the fishing community alleged that neither the Centre nor the state took sufficient measures to locate them. Meanwhile, the state government said that it has, through the external affairs ministry, sought search operations near the Myanmar, Bangladesh and Thailand coasts. “These fishermen went more than 300 nautical miles into the sea, from where people have been rescued in the past. During an emergency like this, it is laughable that the Coast Guard insists on going by the book. They can even go beyond 60 nautical miles to search for missing people. Beyond 200 nautical miles, the Centre can ask for help from the neighbouring countries. But in this case, such measures were not taken alleged Berlin. “It was the Myanmar navy that rescued them, but now the state fisheries department is taking credit. This is meaningless, said Berlin.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen urged to refrain from crossing IMBL**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/fishermen-urged-to-refrain-from-crossing-imbl/articleshow/78028075.cms>

"The Ramanathapuram district administration has urged fishermen from the district to refrain from crossing the international maritime boundary line (IMBL). District collector K Veera Raghava Rao appealed to them during a meeting held on Wednesday. He said that all steps were being taken to protect fishermen in the region near the border line with the help of the navy, coast guard and maritime police. But, sometimes it resulted in them venturing across the border due to natural circumstances like heavy winds, but this was a crime according to the international rules. "Fishermen should avoid getting into such situations, especially now, with the northeast monsoon set to begin. It is the duty of the fishermen to follow the weather reports and adhere to signs of warnings, Rao said. Boats should be kept in good condition and all required documents including the licence, Aadhaar and ownership documents should be produced whenever asked for by the officials. Carrying safety equipment is a must during each fishing journey. He also said that the fishermen should ensure that they always remain in groups for safety reasons.

#### **Tamil Nadu: People flood Kasimedu, Chintadripet fish markets**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/people-flood-kasimedu-chintadripet-fish-markets/articleshow/77967577.cms>

"Seafood lovers thronged the Kasimedu harbour and Chintadripet fish market on Sunday violating golden rules of the pandemic. There was no social distancing and very few people wore masks. A senior fisheries official said more than 60 tonnes of fish had arrived at the Kasimedu harbour in fibre boats and bigger vessels. While wholesale traders visited the market from midnight, members of the public began to turn up in droves after dawn. By 7am, police personnel and officials of the fisheries department were unable to control the crowd. "Many customers have come without a mask. It is so scary, said Jayaram, a fisherman. The situation was no better at the Chintadripet market where the corporation had allowed 20 shops to sell fish but on weekends retailers open 40 more stalls. On Sunday morning, more than 2,000 people rushed to the market to buy fish. Many were not wearing masks. Officials from the fisheries department and Greater Chennai Corporation expressed concern over the swelling crowd. An official said that despite several warnings, people are not following social distancing norms. "More police personnel are needed in such places to control the crowd. Otherwise, the fish markets will become another Koyambedu from where coronavirus will spread to many parts of the city, an official said.

#### **Tamil Nadu: One month on, 10 Royapuram fishermen still untraceable**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/one-month-on-10-royapuram-fishermen-still-untraceable/articleshow/77902914.cms>

"More than a month since they went missing, the 10 fishermen, including a teenager, who went on a deep-sea fishing trip in the Bay of Bengal from Royapuram are yet to traced. Fishermen association president K Bharathi said the group set sail off the city coast on July 22 and were headed towards the Andhra Pradesh coast. While state fisheries authorities were informed about the missing fishermen, no effort has been taken to trace them, Bharathi said. However, S Pavithran, whose uncle Desappan is among the missing fishermen, denied this claim saying, complaints have been lodged with the government to trace the team. Officials also reached out to counterparts in Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal and the Andaman and Nicobar islands, but have not been able to find the team. If the fishermen had reached an island where there is no human settlement or crossed the international maritime boundary limits, then only the Union government can help with the search, Pavithran said. When contacted, state fisheries department officials reiterated that they have alerted their counterparts in Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal.

But haven't received any information about the missing fishermen. The department had also alerted the Centre about the issue, an official said. The official further added that the department had written to the TN government to provide a daily allowance of 250 to the families of the missing fishermen. Relatives fear that the team's boat may have hit a ship and capsized, cutting off all contact. An official said such incidents have occurred in the past. When contacted, a Coast Guard official said both ships and Coast Guard aircraft on daily deployment carry out surveillance in their jurisdiction to check any overstay of boats in Indian coastal waters. Apart from this, the Indian Coast Guard had intimated neighbouring countries to alert them if they come across any Indian boats staying for a longer time than usual in foreign waters. So far, we haven't received any such information, the official said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Adyar river shows signs of recovery after years of state investment**

<https://science.thewire.in/environment/chennai-adyar-river-recovery-pollution-investment/>

"The long suffering residents of Chennai have been living with two dead rivers, the Adyar and the Cooum, flowing through the heart of their city. These two rivers meander sluggishly through the city carrying sewage and dangerous pollutants. Besides these two rivers, there is the third one – the Kosasthalaiyar, which flows in the northern end of the city and not as polluted as the other two. These three rivers flow east towards the Bay of Bengal. A river is considered dead when it is incapable of sustaining any form of life – fish or aquatic plants, in it. This happens when the pollution level in the river is so high that all the oxygen in the water is depleted. The fresh water flowing through the Adyar and Cooum rivers are blocked upstream of the city and diverted to storage reservoirs for the city. The rivers also have sand bars blocking

their mouth into the sea, thereby obstructing even the tidal flushing action from the sea. The Tamil Nadu government has been working for a long time to restore the three rivers and several other water bodies in Chennai. Large sums of money have been allotted for this purpose but the progress has been slow.

In the recent years, the government created a trust to coordinate a more concerted effort in cleaning the water bodies in the city. A trust for restoring the rivers and waterways The Chennai River Restoration Trust (CRRT) coordinates the work between various government departments, such as the Public Works Department (PWD), the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC), the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (Chennai Metro Water), Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) and some NGOs who are involved in this project. To facilitate the activities of the trust, a special purpose vehicle (SPV) under the Companies Act, called Adyar Poonga, was formed. In 2019, the government allocated Rs 23.70 billion and Rs 13.70 billion this year for restoring and cleaning water bodies in Tamil Nadu. The government expressed its concern over the amount of raw sewage flowing through the river and allocated this amount mainly to clean the drains which empty into the river.

However, the enormity of the problem is often difficult to comprehend. Over the past three decades, the Adyar has been used as a dumping site not only for building debris but for municipal as well as industrial waste. During the massive Chennai floods of 2015 the river was flushed clean. But once the flood waters subsided it got polluted again. A river, estuary and creek The Adyar starts its 42 km journey at Adhanur and winds its way through Thiruneermalai, Tambaram, Manapakkam, Alandur, Saidapet and finally empties itself out into the Bay of Bengal between San Thome beach in the north and Elliots beach in Chennai city. What makes the Adyar riverine ecosystem unique is that there is an estuary and a creek. The Adyar estuary region stretches from Thiru Vi Ka Bridge to the river mouth and the creek from the San Thome Causeway to the river mouth spread over 358 acres. The Adyar creek is a backwater estuary at the mouth of the river formed by a sandbar at the mouth of the river and runs along the coast. It starts near the Chettinad Palace and stretches north; surrounding Quibble Island. Early on, the authorities realised that cleaning efforts by well-intentioned citizens would be of no use as the problem was too deep and a scientific approach was needed. In 2006, the Tamil Nadu government took cognisance of the problem and set up the Adyar Poonga Trust to protect and restore the three rivers, the Buckingham Canal and other water bodies in the city. The trust was later renamed as CRRT. Moving people One of the first issues which had to be undertaken in restoring the river was rehousing human settlements along the banks, according to an official source who wished to remain anonymous.

A CRRT official added that 47 human settlement areas were identified along the Adayar River banks. Of the settlements that have been identified and located, 10 of them were beyond the project area and another 10 settlements were not affected by the project. So, one of the first tasks

undertaken by the CRRT along with the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) was the resettlement and rehabilitation of the people living along the river banks. Of the 47 slums identified, 27 were within the project area from where families were to be resettled. There were 9,539 project affected families who were part of the resettlement and rehabilitation plan and have been shifted to tenements newly constructed by the TNSCB. The irony of Adyar is that it is not just the poor and marginalised who live and play by the river.

Once the river passes under the Kotturpuram Bridge the landscape of the river changes and those living on its banks are the rich and affluent. On the banks of the Adyar is one of the oldest boat clubs in India – the Madras Boat Club. This river is one of the few in the country that is used for rowing. National and international competitions are held on these sluggish waters. Revi Thomas, a veteran rower, says, “Thirty years ago when we rowed out from Madras Boat Club to the Broken Bridge the water was clear and the surrounding wetlands were conducive to bird life. We could see large flocks of birds near the river. Sadly, now we see nothing. Plugging sewage outfalls Krishna Mohan Ramachandran, chief resilience officer, Chennai city (the Chennai chapter of 100 Resilient Cities programme, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation), said the pollution in the river increases once it enters Chennai near Porur.

According to media reports, the fiscal outlay of Rs 23.70 billion in the state budget was primarily targeted at plugging and mitigating sewage flow into the Adyar, Cooum and the Buckingham Canals. An official source said that 67 sewage outfalls into the Adyar river were identified. To plug these outfalls, it was necessary to lay interception and diversion pipelines and this task is being undertaken by the Chennai Metro Water. The project will reach completion in 2022, according to CRRT. The CRRT is also planning to set up four modular sewage treatment plants (STPs). According to the tender document, the contract of the STPs was awarded in February this year at a cost of Rs 126.2 million. Ramachandran added that one of the other steps taken by the CRRT was to demarcate the land which ‘belonged’ to the river; which in some areas was 30 metres along the river banks and in others 50 metres. To this purpose the GCC began fencing the river in 2018. This fence is also a deterrent to dumping garbage into the river. It is estimated that the GCC will spend Rs 22 crore to complete fencing along the river from Thiru VI Ka Bridge to Meenambakkam. The foundation and pillars are made of concrete with treated iron grills in between which will allow the flood waters to flow in between. Adyar creek According to an official at the CRRT, the initial restoration activities were undertaken in 58 acres of the Adyar Creek. The creek was used as a place for disposal of municipal solid waste, construction debris and sewage, which led to the severe degradation of surface and groundwater quality and destruction of habitats of avian fauna, reptiles and fishes. The creek was infested with *Prosopis juliflora* bushes, mosquitoes and bad odour which kept local people away. The official said that in order to rehabilitate the coastal ecosystem of Adyar Creek, a slew of restoration works have started in the degraded areas.

Desilting and removal of accumulated solid waste were taken up and the same were used to create mounds within the creek to enable plantation, reduce noise pollution and bring tranquillity to the restored wetland system. Sewage outfalls into the creek were identified and plugged. A total of 143,818 saplings from 173 species of Coromandel coastal vegetation including mangroves and mangrove associated plants were systematically planted in order to restore the wetland ecosystem. A glimmer of hope, finally today, there is some hope in sight as the restoration work undertaken bears fruit. These measures resulted in a substantial increase in the water spread of the creek from 5% to 59%, the CRRT official said. Planting of indigenous species resulted in a sizable increase in biodiversity of the creek due to the creation of habitat islands and edges with coastal vegetation which serve as a habitat for terrestrial animals and nesting birds.

The work done on the restoration has yielded some results. According to a policy note tabled in Tamil Nadu assembly for the year 2019-20, the faunal diversity of the Adyar Creek has gone up. The report said as many 8 species of molluscs, 13 crabs, 170 insects, 12 fishes, 10 amphibians, 19 reptiles, 120 birds and 16 mammals have been recorded. In the estuary 57,000 mangrove and 35,000 terrestrial saplings have been planted after the removal of invasive species, debris and plastic waste. The CRRT official said that besides being a 58-acre lung space within the heart of Chennai city, the Adyar Ecopark today functions as a hub for imparting environmental education to the community at large, and students in particular. But it has not been smooth sailing. The principal bench of the National Green Tribunal considered imposing a fine of Rs 10 million towards damages “for the repeated failure of the State in its duties in preventing pollution in the Adyar River, the Cooum River and the Buckingham Canal.

But, a senior official of the Tamil Nadu government said that this is not an easy project. It is complex, as it involves so many governmental departments, so many entities and finally, so many people. Hence it would take time – maybe four or five years even to finally restore the river. Governmental spending to restore the Adyar had begun in 1990s, and projects were initiated over multiple time periods. Though there is a glimmer of hope in the recent years, there is more to be achieved before the city dwellers can start seeing the river as a usable water body rather than a drain.

### **Tamil Nadu: Treat fisheries as essential service like agriculture: Study**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/aug/25/treat-fisheries-as-essential-service-like-agriculture-study-2187789.html>

"In wake of the pandemic and its impact on fisheries, researchers from Madras Institute of Developmental Studies have pointed that resilience can be built in the sector, if it is treated as important as agriculture. The State government, imposed a total ban on fisheries when India went

into lockdown from March 24. Fisheries, unlike agriculture, was not considered an essential service. Until mid-April, fishermen did not venture into the sea. The study by Ajit Menon and Maarten Bavinck looked into the cumulative impact of the pandemic and has proposed remedial and rehabilitation measures. After repeated complaints from fishers and fish workers, the Government of India relaxed restrictions and issued model Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on April 10, to include marine fisheries and aquaculture, movement of fish and movement of workers along the fishery value chain and subsequently inland fisheries from April 15.

Despite these measures, the fisheries economy suffered as the trawl fishing ban was put into place from April 15- June 14. “The government's relief package did not compensate for the average earnings of fishers and fish workers. Moreover, the usual support given by the Tamil Nadu Fishermen Welfare Board excluded the most vulnerable groups, such as women fish vendors, the study pointed. In order to build long term resilience, the Fisheries Department should set a minimum floor price for all species for the small-scale fisheries, based on market data, similar to the minimum support price for major crops, the study suggested adding that they can also provide collective support such as micro-credit, cold storage and building safe market infrastructure.

**Tamil Nadu: The sound of the sea: This community radio for TN fisher folk is changing lives**

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/sound-sea-community-radio-tn-fisher-folk-changing-lives-131084>

“Oh I enjoy listening to the (Kadal Osai) FM the most! I think it is my bad luck when I'm unable to do so. Often, you may hear the TV set blaring from within houses, but when I listen to the FM, I make sure to listen to it in loud volume so at least people in the neighbouring houses can listen to it too and benefit from it, 40-year-old Mandlin, who runs a small ornamental fishes farm in Thangachimadam in Ramanathapuram district, says. Mandlin is eager to talk about why the Kadal Osai (sound of the sea) FM radio station is most useful to her. “After all, aren't the ears the only part of the body that aren't covered naturally? And god intended it that way. That is the reason why we have to listen to both good and bad and be able to make sense of it. It is up to people to take what they want and make the most of it, she explains and adds, “I have the habit of paying attention to faraway sounds and picking up on bits and pieces of music that is carried to me by the wind. Shall I tell you the story of a child and her bulging money purse? I heard it when the loudspeaker was playing it at some Hindu festival. I am like that, I don't think it is a Hindu fable or a Muslim story and close my ears to them. I like listening to it a lot... Like Mandlin, Kadal Osai FM has scores of devoted listeners who depend on it not just for entertainment but also for their livelihood.

Kadal Osai FM 90.4 is the first community radio station in India that is exclusively for fisher folk, founded by fisherman Arm-strong Fernando with help from Nesakarangal Charitable Trust, an NGO. The station entered its fifth year this Independence Day, and is run by a small team of 12, including its station head Gayathri Usman. “We're now a 24x7 channel and have a variety of programmes aimed at the fishing community. The station covers Mandapam, Pamban and Rameswaram islands. All our programmes are focussed on their livelihood and on how to make things better here, Gayathri, also a sound engineer, explains. The station gained recognition about a year ago, especially for the programmes it features, all of which are aimed at educating and informing the fishing communities of the Rameswaram islands. Their morning routine begins with a round of daily updates, from weather to power supply to fish rates. “On 'Kadal Osai Thandora' that plays between 7.00 and 9.00 am we give weather updates that are crucial for fishermen, power supply details that are important for those who run ice factories, diesel rates and so on. When the fishermen return, they conduct auctions of their catch, so we share the rates of fishes at such auctions, then the market rate of the fishes for women... We also tell them about potential fishing zones.

These are some of the updates we dole out three to four times a day, Gayathri tells TNM. A lighthouse for students most interestingly, the station has recently begun a new show that might turn out to be beneficial for the youngsters listening to it. “We are calling it Kalangarai Vilakkam, meaning the Lighthouse, and the show is on the college courses available for youngsters from fishing communities. There is a specific quota under which they can apply when choosing Fisheries courses. For instance, there is a quota for those whose fathers have died in the hands of the Sri Lankan navy or have been injured by them, those fathers who have gone missing, those without mothers... Many may not even know that such reservations exist, Gayathri says. So far, Minister D Jayakumar, District Collector K Veera Raghava Rao, Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute's (CMFRI) Principal Scientist at Mandapam Camp Dr Rengarajan Jayakumar, have shared messages on the opportunities available. “Many of those from the fishing communities who pursue college education and secure jobs in IT companies have returned home, unable to cope in strange environments. For them, the coast is home. Once back, they've not been able to take up fishing either, because it is not something that they prepared for.

Therefore they end up unemployed, and in a way disjointed from the community as well. It is a unique predicament to be in and inadvertently the blame is shifted to education...which is highly detrimental, Gayathri explains. “This is where we want to intervene, she continues. “We want to tell them that the fault is not in gaining education but in not being able to choose a field that will be beneficial to them.

They are people of the coast and so a career closer to the coast is the most opportune choice. “We open them up to career choices such as coastal scientists or professorship at a Fisheries

college, or a government posting at Fisheries Department, or in the Navy or as a coast guard. These are fields that they would feel most comfortable in, she says. Gayathri also adds that the Nesakarangal Charitable Trust has scholarship programmes that support the education of those from the fishing communities. “Before the lockdown began, we intended to take this to all fishing communities across the state but unfortunately we have not been able to do so. But we do hope the programme gains a good reach organically. Even if it were to reach 1,000 students, it will be a success, she says. On the topic of conservation by partnering with UNICEF and UNESCO, the station has been able to bring in a variety of shows with beneficial content. “We also have programmes for children called 'Kutti Chutties' where, before the lockdown; we invited one child to host the show.

They discuss their homework, and we make them share their dreams, encouraging them to stay inspired, adds Gayathri. Mandlin's most favourite program is the listener's choice programme called 'Neengal Kettavai' (your request) that plays music but she shares with TNM that she looks forward to the beneficial tips shared on other programmes like 'Samudhiram Pazhagu' too. “The 'Samudhiram Pazhagu' (get to know the ocean) programme that plays at noon every day can be called the apple of our eye. We discuss a variety of topics on the show, ranging from climate change to good practices that need to be adopted by fishermen, Gayathri shares. The content for 'Samudhiram Pazhagu' is provided by CMFRI and on this show, the RJs, who are from the community, break down complex topics such as coral reef conservation and the impact of climate change. “It helps that even youngsters have been able to observe that certain landscapes have changed within a period of 20 to 30 years.

They tell us that some streets have now become part of sandy beaches and in some areas where they previously used to play, the sea has entered. Therefore, explaining climate change is easier. We mainly tell them why it is important for them to conserve the ocean. Why they need to stop exploiting it and what they can do for conservation, says Gayathri. In the seas adjoining the islands, fishermen are prohibited from fishing for more than one day at a time. They will have to return in 24 hours, unlike in the other seas where they are allowed to stay for 20 days or longer. The waters here too have more potential fishing zones and because of this families from Thoothukudi have migrated to this area at least two decades ago. “That is why it is important to protect this area. We explain the food chain, and the passing of information has been very slow and organic that they are responding to it well.

According to her, through this programme, the team has been able to see major changes in fishermen's habits. “We've been repeatedly telling them why it is important to save turtles. Earlier, based on a myth, fishermen were in the habit of bringing back the turtles that got entangled in their nets, believing that consuming the meat would give them better health. Now they don't do so and they share the stories with us personally, she adds. Fishermen are also becoming more conscious of the plastic they throw into the ocean. Another positive change is in

the reducing practice of open defecation. “We have been able to explain to them why it is to their disadvantage. How it reduces the export quality of their catch. Ramanathapuram brings in the biggest haul of fishes in the state; therefore, they understand how it might affect business. But the most satisfying change will be when every fisherman carries a life jacket on the boat. “Just last year, we witnessed 10 fishermen deaths.

Now would a lifejacket on board have prevented it? It may have not. But it would have helped retrieve their bodies. Otherwise, it would just be lost in the ocean. This is something that we have been insisting upon now. That every fisherman carries a life jacket when entering the seas, says Gayathri. Another interesting change that the radio station has been bringing about is by acting as a mediator between the people and the government. “We take their messages to those in power. We've requested for sea ambulances that could jump into action in case of mishaps, she adds. As Gayathri puts it, Kadal Osai sure is the voice of the sea. 55-year-old fisherman ‘Captain’ Raj’s voice is carried away by the blowing wind and is heard in fragments over the mobile phone. The experienced fisherman, Sesuraj, whose name took up the ‘Captain’ prefix for many reasons his ability to deliver speeches one among them chuckles in between his sentences while he explains to us why the station has become an integral part of his life now. “We don't have much use for TV programmes but the FM is something that I can listen to while I'm at work. Ketukite thozhil seiyalam, veetla, naatla..., (One can listen to it and continue with one's work, at home and in the country...), he says.

### **Tamil Nadu: Rs 1.6 crore sanctioned to desilt Thengapattanam harbour**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/rs-1-6-crore-sanctioned-to-desilt-thengapattanam-harbour/articleshow/77528504.cms>

"The Tamil Nadu fisheries department has allotted Rs 1.6 crore to clear 64,440 cubic metre of silt from the Thengapattanam fishing harbour, following the demands of Kanyakumari fisherfolk. This decision was taken following protests after the rough seas at the harbour claimed the lives of three fishermen and damaged 12 motorized fishing boats, since the end of July. The harbour, which serves as the main landing centre for over 500 mechanised deep sea fishing boats and 300 motorised fibre boats, was constructed at Rs 97.4 crore in May 2019. Fisheries department officials said the harbour has an 800-meter-long channel from the inner harbour towards the sea and its width ranges from 250 to 150 meters, while its entrance towards the sea is 90-metre-wide. The accumulation of silt in the harbour claimed three lives - Antony (68) of Mulloorthurai on July 23, Shibu (25) of Marthandanthurai on July 24 and Ignatius of the same village on August 7.

Officials in the fisheries engineering department had initially sent a proposal to dredge the harbour at Rs 3 crore. However, they have been provided only Rs. 1.6 crore owing to financial constraints caused by Covid-19. They have been advised to carry out the work on war footing to

avert further loss to life and property. The dredger will be brought from Nagapattinam and it would take 60 to 75 days to complete dredging from the date of commencement. An official said the dredging would be affected when the water is rough. He added that the focus will be on desilting the traffic area of boats and the nearby areas as it is carried out on an emergency basis.

### **Tamil Nadu: 10 Chennai fishermen go missing**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/10-chennai-fishermen-go-missing/articleshow/77468048.cms>

"A group of 10 fishermen from Chennai, who ventured into the Bay of Bengal for deep sea fishing on July 23, went missing. The boat, which was last spotted near Krishnapatnam in Andhra Pradesh two weeks ago, could have faced an engine failure, say authorities. A Tamil Nadu fisheries department official said Coast Guard vessels from four states (AP, TN, Odisha and Puducherry), a Dornier plane and helicopter were deployed to search the missing boat. ""So far we haven't received signals from any of the tracking equipment fit in their boats. They may be switched off after their batteries got drained,"" the official added, requesting anonymity. Equipment included a very high frequency (VHF) phone, GPS tracking device, Echo sounder and transponder. Balaji, the owner of the missing boat, said his regular crew members from AP were unable to make it to TN because e-pass was denied and local men were deployed. He said that he was not satisfied with Coast Guard's efforts and has sought help from Chinese firms to track the boat. B Muthukumar, secretary of Chennai Deep Sea Boat Owners Association, said that only 10% of boats in Chennai ventured into sea after a four-month break. So there was very little chance that the missing crew could have sought help from nearby boats using satellite phones. If they were able to communicate, other boats would help them in fixing engine faults or tow them back to shore.

### **Tamil Nadu: Government begins deployment of artificial reefs along Chennai coast to support marine life**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/aug/05/tn-government-begins-deployment-of-artificial-reefs-along-chennai-coast-to-support-marine-life-2179527.html>

"The Tamil Nadu government on Wednesday began a major exercise to deploy artificial reefs along the Chennai coast. A total of 30 sites have been chosen in Chennai, Kancheepuram, Tiruvallur and Chengalpattu districts for the purpose. Fisheries minister D Jayakumar flagged off and personally supervised the deployment of 200 units of artificial reefs over three nautical miles

off the Urur Kuppam fishing village in Besant Nagar. The idea is to revive traditional fishing grounds of small fishermen and create a cluster of artificial reefs, which act as natural breakwaters by reducing wave energy, along the coast with the focus on fragile coastal stretches as Tamil Nadu is experiencing increasing recurrence of extreme weather events and erosion of beaches. The concept is nothing new for Tamil Nadu. Since 2006, the Department of Fisheries has deployed artificial reefs in 35 coastal sites spread across eight districts and later in 2014, the International Funding for Agricultural Development (IFAD) assisted the Post Tsunami Sustainable Livelihoods Programme of Department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj to deploy reefs in six coastal sites, both with technical assistance of the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI).

GS Sameeran, director of fisheries, told The New Indian Express that the government has approved two projects. ""The government has accorded permission for installing artificial reefs in 30 locations off shore of Chennai and the neighboring districts, which were affected in the 2017 oil spill. The restoration claim of Rs 10 crore received from insurers of shipping companies is being used for implementation of the project."" As per the GO, the insurers of two merchant ships BW Maple and MT Dawn Kancheepuram that collided off the Ennore coast resulting in a massive oil spill have deposited Rs 141 crore, including the restoration claim of Rs 10 crore, besides providing a bank guarantee of Rs 84 crore. ""The compensation received has been disbursed to the affected fishermen of Chennai, Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram. Further, as a measure to improve the coastal marine fishery resources through stock enhancement, it has been proposed to deploy artificial reefs in the coastal villages of these three districts,"" Sameeran said. Later, another project costing Rs 18 crore under the Gaja Rehabilitation Project was sanctioned where artificial reefs would be installed at different offshore locations from Cuddalore to Ramanathapuram covering the entire east coast of Tamil Nadu.

CMFRI scientist Joe K Kizhakudan, who was offering technical support to the fisheries ministry for the project, told The New Indian Express that a combination of three types of artificial reef modules - Grouper, Fish and Crustacean - were used. ""These modules would start supporting life (growth of corals) from the third month and would take two years to mature and stabilise. These structures are known to act as a perfect habitat for marine life which helps in augmenting the productivity of the marine ecosystem. It increases the available area for food, shelter and breeding activities for fishes and other marine organisms. It also enhances the fish production through increased breeding activity and increases the survival of young ones."" Kizhakudan said the deployment activity would continue till the end of this month to cover all the 30 sites provided the weather cooperates. ""Each day, about 200 units would be dumped into the sea weighing close to 150 tonnes."" The fisheries director said a safety mechanism would be developed to protect these sites from trawler boats.

**Tamil Nadu: Work begins to dredge Ennore creek backwaters of fly ash**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/work-begins-to-dredge-ennore-creek-backwaters-of-fly-ash/article32216730.ece>

"The Water Resources Department has started work to dredge the backwaters of Ennore creek, earlier this month, and mitigate pollution. Layers of fly ash sediments deposited in the backwaters are being removed over the last fortnight. The department is engaged in clearing the fly ash deposits from the 2.5-km stretch between North Chennai Thermal Power Station (NCTPS) and Kamarajar port. The stretch is silted with fly ash for a depth of nearly one metre. The Ennore creek and its backwaters, the confluence point of Kosasthalaiyar river, North Buckingham canal and the sea, have been destroyed with hot water discharge and leakage of fly ash slurry, for nearly two decades now. A pipeline from NCTPS carrying fly ash along the creek added layers of silt. The long-pending work has now been taken up with the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (Tangedco) depositing Rs.28.5 crore based on a directive of National Green Tribunal, southern bench, to remove fly ash. Though the tender process was completed in March, work was delayed due to the lock down. Officials of the WRD said nearly 4.30 lakh cubic metre of fly ash deposits was estimated to be cleared from the Ennore creek backwaters and North Buckingham canal.

"We have so far removed nearly 40,000 cubic metre of fly ash and have deposited it on the banks. It is Tangedco's responsibility to dispose of the sediments cleared as per the NGT order and we have conveyed to them about the progress. As the sludge dries, there is no threat of further pollution, said an official. The department would take up similar work on a 2.4-km stretch of the North Buckingham canal flowing parallel to the backwaters at a cost of Rs.66.23 lakh. "We want to clear the fly ash sediments before the onset of the Northeast monsoon in October. This will help improve tidal action in Kosasthalaiyar river and the creek and alleviate flooding. Now, the tidal flow stops near the starting point of the creek because of the heavy sediments, the official. Besides reviving the eco-system, including the vanishing mangroves, fishermen who are dependent on the creek and Kosasthalaiyar river would have better livelihood opportunities, once the project is completed, noted the officials.

Meanwhile, environmentalists and fishermen noted that the leak from the NCTPS pipeline continued to pollute the region and the Tangedco must replace the pipeline. Unless the sludge deposited on the banks is disposed of and the leak is plugged, the environmental degradation would continue, they said. V.Desinghu, executive committee member, Nettukuppam fishermen cooperative society said, "Earlier, we used to get a good catch of crabs and prawns within one km distance. Now, we go up to 6-7 km near Kattupallikuppam in Kosasthalaiyar river. Hot water discharge from thermal power plants still continues and it affected the fish population. Measures must be taken to stop pollution.

**Tamil Nadu: Fishermen demands decrease in diesel prices to meet COVID challenges**

<https://www.onenewspage.com/video/20200802/13243707/TN-fishermen-demands-decrease-in-diesel-prices-to.htm>

"Amid coronavirus induced lockdown, industries across country are facing hardships. Among this, the fishery industry suffered a major blow due to the pandemic. In context to this, fishermen association in Tamil Nadu's Rameswaram held an executive meeting. The association demanded the centre and state government to reduce prices of diesel to meet COVID challenges.

### **Tamil Nadu: Deep sea fishermen hesitant to enter waters**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/tamil-nadu-deep-sea-fishermen-hesitant-to-enter-waters/articleshow/77272218.cms>

"The annual 61-day fishing ban on the west coast, which is usually in effect between June 1 and July 31, has been reduced to 47 days. The trawling ban that started on June 15 will end on July 31 this year as the fishermen have not been fishing from mid-March as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak. Though they have not been to the sea for more than 135 days, most of them are not likely to resume fishing on August 1. Of the four fishing harbours in Kanyakumari district, Thengapattanam, Colachel and Muttom are in the west coast and there are 1,020 mechanised boats in these harbours. It includes 230 trawlers (including a few unregistered) and 790 deep sea fishing boats. Though trawlers are ready for fishing, deep sea fishing boat owners that directly employ more than 8,000 people are hesitant and many would not go due to various factors. "Most important of all is marketing our catch after spending 20 to 40 days at the sea. In March, when Kochi fishing harbor was closed, hundreds of boats came to Thengapattanam. This had resulted in several tonnes of fish going waste and we faced loss to the tune of several crores of rupees, said P Dickson, a boat owner. Kerala has strictly enforced restrictions to bring Covid-19 spread under control.

Of the 790 deep sea boats, as many as 478 are anchored at Kochi and other harbours in Kerala, leaving only 312 at Thengapattanam. Fishermen here are unable to go to Kerala to take those boats for fishing. Boat owners here also expressed concern whether they would be allowed to sell their catch in Kerala under these circumstances. Fishermen expressed apprehension about the condition of engines that have kept idle for more than four months and they would be in trouble if the engines seize a few hundred nautical miles into the deep sea. They also expressed concern over the possibility of people developing Covid-19 symptoms, wherein they would not be able to rush to the nearest coast in other states due to the restrictions in place. On the other hand, trawlers going to the sea have raised concern over a possible outbreak as many merchants will come to the harbours to buy fish. This is unlike the deep sea fishing boats that directly sell the catch to wholesalers who in turn send it to exporters and to big companies. It may be recalled that some coastal villages such as Thoothoor region had become Covid-19 hotspots.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishers demand increase in diesel subsidy**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/fishers-demand-increase-in-diesel-subsidy/article32215293.ece>

"Citing escalation in fuel prices over the last few months, fishers have urged the Central and State Governments to increase subsidy for diesel. Opposing the fuel price hike, fishers in delta region joined their counterparts elsewhere in the country to hold protests recently. Besides Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur and Thanjavur districts in delta region, protests coordinated by the National Fishworkers Forum were also held in Chennai, Villupuram, Cuddalore, Karaikal, Ramanathapuram, Thoothukudi and Kanyakumari districts. Questioning the rationale behind the hike, the forum's national vice-president, R.V. Kumaravelu, said the hike was akin to rubbing salt on the wound. Notwithstanding the economic impact of the lockdown, the Tamil Nadu government hiked the State VAT on diesel. It was immediately followed by a sharp hike in central excise on diesel by the Central government despite a drop in prices of crude oil globally. The hikes led to oil companies increasing their consumer prices by Rs.5.23 per litre. Despite huge hikes at both State and Central levels, there was no change in subsidies for fishworkers, Mr. Kumaravelu said.

The incomes of fishworkers collapsed during the lockdown, and fishers were struggling to resume their professional activity for the new season. The fuel price hike also came at a time when the whole sector as well as the identity of fishworkers in India was being threatened with the National Fisheries Policy 2020, which was released without any consultation or intimation, he said. The Central and State governments earned almost Rs.53 for every litre of diesel. At present, Tamil Nadu only subsidised the State VAT for fishers, but had not ameliorated the impact caused by the hike in central excise. Marine fisheries provided direct employment to over one crore people and over four crore were employed in allied sectors. The Central and State governments could ill-afford to ignore the demands of fishers, Mr. Kumaravelu added.

### **Tamil Nadu: In India's Chennai, River Restoration Lands Hardest on the Poor**

<https://undark.org/2020/07/29/chennai-river-restoration-impacts-poor/>

"Construction materials line the first floor of buildings, and bulldozers roll through the wide and dusty streets. Vijay Vasanth says he arrived here in early January on government provided transport. His family and their belongings were left on the sidewalk in the middle of the settlement, named Perumbakkam. "When we came here, we had to be homeless. Vasanth said, "They just lifted us and dropped us here, now we have to stay. Vasanth says he grew up in the heart of Chennai, the capital of the state of Tamil Nadu, in a neighborhood alongside the Cooum River called Sathyavani Muthu Nagar. But in late 2019, officials evicted 500 families living

there, Vasanth included, without initially informing residents why they were evicted or where they were going. They were the first batch of 2,092 families set to be evicted. “They started marking our houses by writing letters and numbers on the door, said Vasanth. He asked why and was told it was because his house was along the river. The markings on the door were to tell the families their house was set for demolition.

The families like tens of thousands of families before them were moved to settlement colonies like this one, miles from the city center and far from the sources of work and income that they once knew. When they arrived, the apartments they finally moved into did not have running water or electricity. “There was only one light, an emergency light on the veranda, said Vasanth, who has struggled to find work. It is too expensive to travel to central Chennai, where he sold electronics, nearly 19 miles away. “For three months we struggled hard. We were stir crazy, he said. It's a familiar sentiment. Sathyavani Muthu Nagar is one of hundreds of informal settlements in the process of being demolished by Chennai officials part of a vast effort, they say, to restore the city's heavily polluted and constricted waterways.

The government's first step, according to project documents, is what is officially called “slum clearance or the removal of “encroachments. Supporters of these restoration initiatives say they are sorely needed. Chennai's rivers are plagued by rampant pollution and overdevelopment, leaving them uniquely vulnerable. Science suggests that both problems are only amplified by climate change and will continue to be so in coming years. The long-term goal, officials say, is the restoration of crucial riverbank wetlands that can act as a buffer against both flood and drought. The neighborhood clearance projects are carried out in coordination with various municipal organizations, including the Chennai Rivers Restoration Trust (CRRT), the state Public Works Department (PWD), and the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB). The problem, critics say, is that the implementation of these otherwise well-intentioned programs weighs heavily on and has little regard for the thousands of low-income inhabitants eking out already difficult lives in dozens of informal communities along Chennai's rivers.

“When we came here, we had to be homeless. They just lifted us and dropped us here, now we have to stay. Indeed, under the new eco-restoration initiatives, it is not just the 2,092 families in Sathyavani Muthu Nagar including Vasanth's whose lives will be impacted. Nearly 60,000 families, or roughly 200,000 people, are currently marked for eviction from the banks of Chennai's rivers, according to the TNSCB, which handles the relocation of residents. The families are considered to be living in “objectionable locations, which means in low-lying, flood-prone areas. Many have already been relocated. But experts worry that at best, these environmental initiatives while ostensibly for the common good will continue to result in severe consequences for the city's poor. At worst, they say, climate change and ecological restoration are being used as pretenses for evacuating the city's slums so that new and equally imprudent infrastructure can be built.

“Even without climate change, we are a city that has been built to drown itself, said writer Nityanand Jayaraman, who works on environmental justice campaigns in Chennai. “We don't need extreme weather events. Regular weather events are enough to finish us off. Either way, what is officially referred to in project documents as “resettlement and rehabilitation of families invariably results in them being sent, often against their will, to distant settlements referred to by housing advocates as ghettos, or satellite slums. “Is this restoration? asked Vanessa Peter, a researcher at the Information and Resource Center for the Deprived Urban Communities (IRCDUC), a Chennai-based information clearinghouse for the city's poor. “Or is this just another way of convincing everybody that we should get rid of our slums? IN A VIDEO posted to YouTube in 2015, a crowd can be seen standing on a concrete bridge spanning the Cooum River one of three major rivers coursing through the city watching the swollen water rush underneath. It laps against the bridge, threatening to rise up and over the wall onto the road. On either side of the waterway, rooftops are visible above the turbid, olive-green water.

The structures are almost completely underwater. Another video, taken from a bridge near the neighborhood of Koyambedu, shows a similarly bleak reality: the Cooum flowing over more rooftops, some houses completely washed away. Seen from overhead, the vulnerability of the city is staggering. Few areas lie above sea level; the rest is swallowed by water. In 2015, this particular flood, deemed a once-in-a-hundred-year event, damaged or destroyed nearly 500,000 houses, killed at least 470 people, and caused \$3 billion in economic losses, according to official estimates. The flooding disproportionately impacted the city's poor, who mostly lived in low-lying settlements along the river. Following this historic rainfall, a series of abnormally weak monsoons and a subsequent heatwave resulted in a severe drought that peaked in 2019 with the city's main reservoirs running dry. Of course, cycles of flood and drought have been a feature of life on the Bay of Bengal for millennia.

But with climate change pushing the Bay of Bengal ever further inland, studies suggest that water-proximate, pollution-clogged neighborhoods like Sathyavani Muthu Nagar are facing a future of continued inundation. On top of a swelling sea, the city faces an increase of extreme weather events as the northeast monsoon gets stronger. But Chennai's problems, critics say, are as much structural as meteorological. “People have the tendency to hide behind climate change, said S. Janakarajan, president of the South Asia Consortium for Interdisciplinary Water Resources Studies and an expert on water management. Drought and flood, he said, are as much a result of Chennai's rapid development as they are of extreme weather. “Is this restoration? Or is this just another way of convincing everybody that we should get rid of our slums? Ecologically vital wetlands, estuaries, and rivers fell victim to decades of negligent land-use policy and an insatiable urban sprawl. Over the past 40 years, paved surfaces have expanded 10 times over, according to a report by Care Earth, a nonprofit that does extensive restoration work throughout the city. Jayshree Vencatesan, a managing trustee of biodiversity and conservation with the organization, noted that in order to build the industrial center and house an expanding

population, developers of flashy IT campuses and looming apartment buildings deliberately cut off rivers, lakes, and wetlands. “Once that is done, the land becomes dry and very easy to convert, said Vencatesan.

“These landscapes were usurped by the big players. These wetlands and waterways serve as systems for recharging the city's aquifers, absorbing heavy rain and providing drinking water for the city, and climate change is likely to challenge the wisdom of this development. According to a report published in the aftermath of the 2015 flood by the Citizen Consumer and Civic Action Group, a local consumer and environmental advocacy group, the increased frequency of climate change-amplified events threatens to exacerbate already pressing environmental problems. The report called for extensive mapping of the storage and carrying capacities of local waterbodies, which had degraded due to “incessant construction on the waterbodies, dumping of debris, and encroachments. And yet, when it comes to addressing issues like these, Jayaraman said blame too often falls on informal settlements like Sathyavani Muthu Nagar, and the primary focus of the post-2015 restoration push remains the elimination of Chennai's riverside communities. That's because these informal settlements are often built directly into the riverbank and are perceived by many officials as well as Chennai's middle-and upper-class residents as making the flooding worse, mainly by blocking the drainage area.

And so ecological restoration of the Cooum focuses on “slum eviction as an achievable first step, noted a 2010 analysis written by Karen Coelho, a scholar of urban ecology and associate professor at the Madras Institute of Development Studies, and urban planner and community advocate Nithya Raman. “This shortcut approach is openly announced, the paper continued, “confidently addressing a growing urban middle-class constituency who hold slum-dwellers responsible for the state of the rivers, and regard their summary removal as the crux of eco-restoration. As climate change increasingly lays bare the city's complex ecological crisis, nearly all interventions seem to begin with this familiar logic. “For some strange reason, said Jayaraman, “they believe that the only encroachers in the city that are problematic are the poor. Such thinking leaves some of the more complicated realities of city-wide ecological restoration unaddressed, Jayaraman and other say. These include deeper, more harmful ecological disruptions, like the decimation of vital wetlands outside the city, or mega-projects like the port expansion being pursued by multinational company Adani, which will affect nearly 3,000 acres of critical tidal wetlands north of the city, threatening local fishing towns. The eviction drive stems from a post-flood call from the chief minister of Tamil Nadu for massive investment in housing for those most affected. Despite a 2016 high court order that directed the government to examine resettling riverside residents “near the area where they were originally relocated, CRRT-driven evictions have increasingly sent these families to hastily-built colonies on the periphery of the city.

In a resettlement action plan prepared by the Tamil Nadu Housing and Habitat Development Project, with funding from the World Bank, the authors acknowledge the need for new housing, not just because of a housing shortage, but as a clear climate issue, citing CRRT's work as expected to “contribute positively in “managing climate-induced extreme events. But CRRT, a wholly owned division of the Tamil Nadu government, has long been criticized for using ecological restoration as a mere pretext for allowing new development projects. In their 2010 article, Coelho and Raman described CRRT's first project along the Adyar River, which evicted hundreds of huts and threatened thousands more with demolition. The aim was to create an eco-park and restore local flora, fauna, and the ecological function of the river. But the Tamil Nadu government had already permitted new office buildings, multi-storied luxury residential complexes, and five-star hotels on what was left of the estuary at the mouth of the river, irreversibly damaging the fragile ecology of the creek. “These efforts to restore the creek were already moot, Coelho and Raman wrote.

Further complicating matters, the relocation settlements are often built on wetlands themselves, like the colony Kannagi Nagar, which filled in part of the essential Pallikaranai wetland to avoid flooding, and in the process blocked drainage of the Okkiyam Maduvu channel, an estuary so ecologically critical it has been dubbed the “aorta of the marsh. CRRT's scope is limited, says S. Vishwanathan, an official with the trust. Their main focus is restoring the allotted project areas. The trust, officials added in an email message, has not prioritized aesthetics or “allowed any real estate agency to pave for individual interest. For decades they feel they have been caught between environmentalists, who want to restore function to the city's heavily damaged waterways, and social advocates, who criticize the resulting displacement as unnecessary, unjust, and anti-poor. “CRRT gets sandwiched between these two, Vishwanathan said. Officials say they must walk the fine line of addressing flooding hazard and restoration, while meeting the needs of affected families.

They also argue that they are being more surgical in their removals than is typically portrayed by critics. “My focus is not to remove the entire slum, said Vishwanathan. “We identified that part of the slum that lies within the river itself. The resulting impact on families is addressed in an official “Resettlement & Rehabilitation Scheme for affected families people like Vasanth and his family who are deemed vulnerable to flooding. Officials point to social and community development programs, financial relief, and a provision of utilities and basic services. Acknowledging the difficulty of the distant displacement, Vishwanathan says the alternative is worse. “They lose everything every year to flooding, he said, and they have no facilities. According to Vishwanathan, the resettlement colonies are a step up. Yet years of documentation and research by advocates have shown that the evictions have negative impacts on the livelihood of residents.

The issue, according to a World Bank report published in February, is that the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, which is ultimately in charge of the resettlement and rehabilitation of families, “does not have a standardized environmental or social framework for projects. Instead, “it implements ad-hoc measures to suit each intervention. The Covid-19 pandemic further exposed these deficiencies, as enforced lockdowns left residents struggling to survive in isolation. “While TNSCB is experienced in managing physical construction and delivering housing units, they do not have all the necessary expertise or experience in addressing key issues, World Bank representatives wrote to Undark in an email. Issues, they say, like ensuring residents have the means to secure an economic livelihood, and an environmentally sustainable, climate-resilient apartment building. “My focus is not to remove the entire slum.

We identified that part of the slum that lies within the river itself. Despite evictee grievances, removing families may still be necessary, they say. While relocating families to nearby housing is always preferable, it is often not an option, and displacing families from the riverbank is necessary due to the high risk and inhabitability. As of now, officials say, the TNSCB has indicated willingness to expand social and environmental reforms. In late June, The Government of Tamil Nadu signed on to a \$250 million dollar project with the World Bank to “strengthen the state's housing sector policies, institutions, and regulations. It is part of a two-pronged approach to shift the responsibility for the development of low-income housing away from the TNSCB and the public sector more broadly and encourage more private sector involvement. The program also indicates expanded environmental and social reforms to alleviate some of the current housing development concerns. So far, advocates have criticized the Tamil Nadu government for lack of transparency, citing the lack of community participation of the most impacted communities, like Vasanth's.

The policy draft was unavailable for community input, and furthermore, there was no copy in Tamil, the local language. IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS being razed like Sathyavani Muthu Nagar, most residents were wage laborers, autorickshaw drivers, and domestic workers. Some families had ties to the area along the river going back three or four generations. Now in the new settlements, many families are saddled with arduous, expensive, and often impossible journeys to the city in order to maintain work. At such distances, many displaced residents are effectively locked out of the predominantly working class, cash-based network that undergirds Chennai's dense urban economy. Schools, public safety, and health care services are also scarce and inadequate in these colonies, according to a 2019 report by the Information and Resource Center for the Deprived Urban Communities. Other public services are cost-prohibitive for most settlement residents, according to research by the Housing and Land Rights Network, a New Delhi-based human rights organization. The concentration of poverty contributes to high crime rates, and despite government efforts, access to electricity, water, and affordable food is often unreliable. In December, the evictions in Sathyavani Muthu Nagar were temporarily halted amidst widespread protest and civil disobedience.

Two residents jumped into the putrid river to demand the government at least postpone the evictions until after their children completed exams. And even advocates for river restoration and better water resource management say that Chennai's relentless displacement of poor and working families is unfair. The best-case scenario, they say, would be relocation to government lands located within the city center. "The worst-case scenario, said Janakarajan, "is what we are seeing today. Having lived along the Cooum for years, Vasanth recalls the impact the 2015 floods had on his community. "People who live down by the river really struggled during the flooding, he said. "Water entered all the houses. Many families lost their dwellings completely. Vasanth's home was located above the bank, however, and was spared any damage. When the TNSCB came to evict the first batch of 500 families, Vasanth's included, he couldn't understand why.

"They didn't give any reason, like flooding, they just told us it was dangerous to live near the river, he recalled. Dangerous for some, he argued, but his family had been spared over years of cyclones and floods. For Vasanth, Sathyavani Muthu Nagar was more livable than Perumbakkam, the resettlement colony where he was delivered early this year. Before the eviction, everything was nearby: food, work, his community. Perumbakkam, he says, is too far removed, and most of his money would have to go to paying for bus tickets to travel back into the heart of Chennai for work. "I miss everything, Vasanth said. "Everything was near to us. A 2017 report from the IRCDUC found that resettlement job programs were lacking, with little follow-through. Faced with overcrowded, mismanaged schools, students dropped out at high rates after displacement across the resettlement sites; if they decided to keep their existing schools, the average daily commute would be between three and five hours. Parents were also hesitant to send students to school citing poor educational quality and safety concerns, especially for girls. The tenements themselves are also barely livable at times. Residents reported having to sleep outside the buildings until their apartment is finished being built, and when it is, some had to still wait for electricity. If elevators do not work, some residents must carry heavy water jugs up as much as eight stories, a near impossible task for older or disabled residents...

**Odisha: These Odisha migrant workers in Tamil Nadu are glad to have missed the train**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/these-odisha-migrant-workers-in-tamil-nadu-are-glad-to-have-missed-the-train/article32198345.ece>

"Like several other migrant workers from Odisha, Sumant Naik made innumerable calls throughout May to enquire about a train back home from Perundurai in Erode; he also weighed the costs of returning by bus. Despite several calls, the journey back did not materialise. Now two months later, as the pandemic induced lockdown has eased in Tamil Nadu, 30-year-old Mr. Naik has little time to think of returning home as the spinning mill he works at is humming again. "The months of April and May were emotionally draining. Everyone wanted to be with

their families as if the end of the world was nearing. However, during the past two months, I have not given any thought to my return. I would have been left jobless had I been in my village, said Mr. Naik, who hails from Keonjhar. Iswari and Bhakta Batsala Das from Jorada village of Odisha's Ganjam district, who were left stranded in Chennai as they could not board a train home, echo Mr. Naik and are happy in hindsight. "The situation back home is grim. Hundreds of people are testing COVID-19 positive every passing day. People are left with no jobs. We are better off here. At least, our livelihood is protected, said the couple.

**Livelihood hopes** According to civil society organisations and activists, more than 10,000 migrant workers have decided to stay back in Tamil Nadu. The steep rise in positive cases in Odisha and lack of employment opportunities has been a major factor in their decision. In July, the State's COVID-19 tally just tripled while the death toll has increased by almost five times. On the other hand, employers across India have also gone the extra mile to ensure the workers do not face any problem on industry premises. "If we return home we would have to undergo 21 days of quarantine. Moreover, there is every chance of fellow villagers boycotting my family. Instead of undergoing such mental trauma, it is better to keep earning away from home and consider returning Odisha after normalcy is restored, said Mr. Naik. The situation is serious in Ganjam, which has emerged as the epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic in the State. The district, incidentally, sends the maximum number of migrant workers from the State across the country including Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. More than two lakh people from Ganjam are employed in the apparel sector of Surat alone.

"People competed among themselves to return home from Surat in the beginning of May. The government has paid ₹2000 to those who completed their quarantine period. Upon their release from quarantine centres, they faced harsh reality of unemployment. While there were few takers of Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Act jobs, other work was hard to be come by, said Srikant Padhy, a labour leader. As sources of income dried up without any job, villagers have been sending feelers to their employers over the last month to return to their work spots. The lack of public transport has put a spoke in many workers' plans to return. Six buses have been sent to Ganjam to ferry workers back to Surat. The workers migration back to their workplaces has failed to pick up in the absence of without any public transport. "I have been receiving frequent calls from Odisha with people requesting help for their return to their workplaces over the past few weeks. Though COVID-19 situation in Surat continues to be serious, workers are ready to take chances. After all, livelihood worries have dwarfed the fear of contracting the disease, said Bhabagrahi Panda, a senior executive at a Surat-based apparel company. **Kick-starting industries** Mr. Panda said Surat-based employers were incurring heavy losses due to lack of workers to resume work kick-start the industry with full capacity. "A train is running between Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh. Workers have started arriving from Uttar Pradesh.

If Odisha government could think on similar lines, workers will get back their jobs, he pointed out. At Tamil Nadu's Perundurai, 27-year-old Satyananda Guru from Odisha's Bargarh district said he has no plans to return anytime soon. "We have been getting diminishing returns from agriculture. If all members of family are involved in one profession, the division of labour would make the task easier. However, the harvest will from the crop will also have to be divided. Rather, we must look for earning individually and learn to keep living with coronavirus, said Mr. Guru. For most migrant labourers, staying back is a conscious decision. The time is not far when jobless people will start flocking cities in search of employment. As the COVID-19 has already made poor poorer, there will be additional workforce ready to claim jobs in the cities. Instead of killing time in villages, it is better to make best utilization of the period, said Rajendra Bedila, from Narayanpatna of backward Koraput district of Odisha.

### **Tamil Nadu: Protest against check dam at Thengaipattinam fishing harbour**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/protest-against-check-dam-at-thengaipattinam-fishing-harbour/article32207832.ece>

"Fishermen across the State have planned a black flag agitation on Friday demanding removal of a check dam in the Thengaipattinam fishing harbour in Kanniyakumari district. They said that the dam being constructed to prevent salt water intrusion had led to sand accretion at the mouth, which resulted in deaths of several fishermen. "In the past few weeks alone two men died in separate incidents. From the time construction began in 2019, several deaths have happened. It is being constructed without the permission of the fishers. If the work is continued, the harbour would be destroyed. We don't have enough space to anchor 700 mechanised boats and 4,000 traditional craft. They are not taking up work for our development, said A. Sesadimai, president, Thoothur Deep Sea Boats Association. M.D. Dayalan, Indian Fishermen Association, said that the natural fishing harbour at Thengaipattinam was being used by fishers of 15 villages but did not have facilities like ice units or auction halls. "Immediate steps need to be taken to prevent the deaths. All boat owners associations will join in the agitation, he said. Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar said that an expert committee would be formed to look into the issue.

### **Tamil Nadu: Rameswaram fishermen protest over National Fisheries Policy**

<https://newsable.asianetnews.com/india/rameswaram-fishermen-protest-over-national-fisheries-policy-in-tamil-nadu-qe0zew>

"Opposing the National Fisheries Policy - 2020, fishermen representing various workers' unions including the CITU, hoisted black flags on their anchored boats and staged demonstrations in Rameswaram on Friday (July 24). Participating in the nationwide call for a strike, the fishermen said that the policy was neither friendly to them nor did it protect their interests. It was aimed at enhancing the profits of certain corporate houses, as the policy was

highly export-oriented and curtailed the movement of fishermen to deep sea fishing, Sesu Raja, a fishermen association leader said. The policy would only lead to insecurity and uncertainty for the fishermen. Already, under the guise of crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL), the fishermen were harassed and attacked by the Sri Lankan Navy personnel. The policy encouraged deep sea fishing, which would not be feasible, the leader charged. Citing the COVID-19 pandemic, he said that a majority of the fishermen had lost their livelihoods in the last 120 days.

At a time when the fishing industry looked to the governments for relief, such policies only triggered them to take extreme steps, he claimed. In Pamban, country boat fishermen association leader Rayappan said that the state government should voice its opposition on behalf of fishermen and ensure that the Centre withdrew the policy. "The policy should at least be amended in such a way that it is friendly to the fishing community, as there are different classes in the sector, he said. Expressing their concern, over 1,600 anchored boats including country and mechanised boats raised black flags. The fishermen said that the protests would be intensified in the days to come, if the governments failed to take notice of their appeals. Already, some of the fishermen associations have not been venturing into the sea since last week, blaming the Tamil Nadu Fisheries Department for not issuing subsidies for diesel. The government, which had permitted the fishermen to venture into the sea from June 1 after the COVID-19 lockdown and the annual ban period, the fishermen in Rameswaram set off for fishing only from June 13. However, within two days, four fishermen went missing and three among them had died mid sea.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fear of livelihood engulfs repatriated Kanniyakumari fishermen**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/jul/23/fear-of-livelihood-engulfs-repatriated-kanniyakumari-fishermen-2173748.html>

"After facing months of hardship and the pandemic in a foreign country, the recently repatriated Kanniyakumari fishermen are already bracing for another hurdle as fear of livelihood and questions about the future caught hold of them. Some said the future "looks bleak as they mulled over how to reclaim their lost livelihood and support their debt-ridden families. On July 1, 535 Kanniyakumari district fishermen, who were stranded in Iran, arrived in the first batch. Two weeks later, 58 more, including 24 from Kanniyakumari district, arrived in the next batch. A fisherman from Colachel, A John Kennady, had recently completed his quarantine. He said that he could not even earn the `1 lakh he had spent to go to Iran, as the pandemic broke out just after

he had landed in the foreign country. John, a father of two, has been struggling to repay the loans and support his family. With the pandemic spread, it was difficult to go for fishing, said one S Jesu Reegan from Kanniyakumari.

Despite being glad to return home to his family, he said, he was afraid of the fear of livelihood loss. A Selvaraj of Manakudi has been observing quarantine at a facility in Azhagappapuram. He said that himself and the 23 fishermen he had arrived with were being given food and care, but he has been consumed by the fear of his future. South Asian Fishermen Fraternity General Secretary Father A Churchil requested the government to provide them financial assistance, as given during the fishing ban. Besides, boats and fishing equipment should be provided to them, he added. Meenavar Orunginaippu Sangam General Secretary Captain Johnson said that the State Fisheries Department and the district administration helped the fishermen reach the district, after they had arrived at the Thoothukudi Port in INS Jalashwa ship and the Chennai airport in a flight. While most of the fishermen arrived in the ship, 58 were left stranded as they could not board the ship. Hearing their plight, one Sanjay Prashar, a private maritime shipping founder from Himachal Pradesh, covered the ticket cost for their flight journey, said Johnson, requesting the government to help them revive their livelihood.

### **Tamil Nadu: Kasimedu fishing harbour timings changed to avoid overcrowding**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/new-timings-introduced-at-kasimedu-fishing-harbour/article32154115.ece>

"After Saturday's fiasco when the Kasimedu fishing harbour was overcrowded, sale timings have been changed. Fish will be sold to wholesalers and mid-sized retailers from 3 a.m. to 8 a.m. Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar said boats would be parked at demarcated bays and only three men, including the owner, would be allowed per boat to sell the fish. Others would have to remain on the craft till the end of the sale. Sale of catch from boats arriving after 8 a.m. would be allowed only the next day. Wholesalers and retailers would be allowed to enter the harbour in batches of 150 persons. "All of them have been issued passes. A total of 800 passes have been distributed. On Tuesday, we saw a trial for the boats and it looks fine as of now. The timings have been changed to suit the needs of consumers, said an official source. Fishermen leader M.E. Raghumathi said many fishers were bothered more about their livelihood than protecting themselves against COVID-19. They were worried about alleviating hunger in their families. None of the fishermen had money in their hands, Mr. Raghumathi added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Extending Kisan Credit Card Scheme (KCC) facility to fishers and farmers for their working capital requirements**

"The Union Finance Minister in the Budget speech during 2018-19 has announced to extend the facilities of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) facility to Animal Husbandry Farmers and

Fisheries to meet their working capital requirements. In pursuance to the Budget announcement, Reserve Bank of India had issued detailed guidelines on extension of KCC facility to Animal Husbandry Farmers and Fisheries for meeting their working capital requirements and advised the Banks to implement the schemes as per the RBI Guidelines. For fisheries Sector, the Scale of Finance for the working capital has been fixed and approved by the State Level Technical Committee (SLTC) and circulated to the concerned Banks. The Fisheries Department is continuously following it up with the banks to provide Kisan Credit Card (KCC) to fishers / fish farmer (individuals & groups/partners/share croppers/tenant farmers), Self Help Groups, Joint Liability Groups and Women Groups and other fisheries stakeholders.

**Tamil Nadu: Fishing for funds: Tamil Nadu writes to Centre for Rs.1,000 crore for harbour development**

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/fishing-for-funds-tamil-nadu-writes-to-centre-for-1000-crore-for-harbour-development/article32129630.ece/amp/>

"Tamil Nadu is seeking Rs.1,000 crore for the development of fishing infrastructure and an additional Rs.247 crore for the development of seaweed farming from the Central government's Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) scheme. The Rs.20,050-crore fisheries development scheme was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in May, as part of the government's plan for jump-starting the Covid-19-hit economy. The Central government would bring in Rs.9,407 crore, states Rs.4,880 crore and the (beneficiaries) private sector Rs.5,763 crore and the scheme is to be implemented between 2020-21 and 2024-25. Of the Rs.20,050 crore outlay, Rs.5,000 crore has been earmarked for the development of fishing harbours and Rs.640 crore for seaweed cultivation. Funds for fishing infra Tamil Nadu's Director of Fisheries, GS Sameeran, told BusinessLine that the State government is close to finalising the pitch for Rs.1,000 crore grant for the development of fishing infrastructure. This includes improving infrastructure at the 11 fishing harbours and improving the infrastructure of the 600-odd 'fish landing points' into 'fish landing centres' with a shed and an auction hall, where the catch would be handled hygienically. The private sector would be invited to set up cold rooms in harbours. According to data provided by Tamil Nadu's fisheries department, the State is home to 1 million marine fisherfolk in 608 marine fishing villages and has 62 reservoirs. Another 2,30,000 fishermen are engaged in inland fisheries. Tamil Nadu has sent a proposal to the Centre for Rs.247 crore required for seaweed development in the State. The report includes a 'seaweed park' in Rameswaram, a sort of an industrial estate where the private sector would set up processing units.

Asked if it was not a high proportion of the Rs.640 crore meant for the whole country, Sameeran said that Tamil Nadu needed the money because it already had a robust seaweed industry, which could be developed further. Seaweed production Seaweeds are referred to a huge range of

marine plants, rooted and floating, which are rich in nutrition. Their extracts are used in food, pharmaceuticals and plant nutrients industries. At Mandapam in southern Tamil Nadu, about 900 families of fisherfolk have been engaged in seaweed farming for three decades, with each family earning between Rs.8,000-12,000 a month from this activity. Seaweed farming has been recognised as a women-centric employment generation activity. Although India has immense potential, this vocation has remained confined to Mandapam, but now the government of India is keen to take this all along the country's coastline.

The country today produces about 20,000 tonnes of seaweed. Rajeev Ranjan, Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries, said that the country's production can be easily scaled up to 1 million tonnes. Global production is estimated at around 33 million tonnes, valued at \$8 billion. China accounts for over half of it and Indonesia and Philippines making up for most of the rest. Tamil Nadu aims to take the lead Sameeran spoke about setting up skill development centres and R&D labs to be set up in the next five years. Nurseries have been planned to be built in the sea where fish could also be cultured. An idea for creating an authority, on the lines of the Tobacco Board, has been mooted to conduct auctions so that seaweed farmers are not exploited.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen apprised about alternative livelihood options**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/fishermen-apprised-about-alternative-livelihood-options/article32106364.ece>

"The Nagapattinam district administration on Wednesday advised fishermen using banned purse seine and double knot nets to avail themselves of government schemes for alternate means of income generation, in the interests of their sustained livelihood and preservation of State's marine resources. District Collector Praveen P. Nair said Rs.1.2 crore credit facility with 40% subsidy component will be provided for purchase of deep sea fishing boats. Under the State government's scheme, Rs.60 lakh loan with 50 subsidy will be extended for purchase of gill netter cum tuna liners. The loan scheme for conversion of pair trawlers into gill netters with Rs. 15 lakh subsidy component could also be availed, the Collector said. Meanwhile, security has been beefed up in the fishing hamlets surrounding Thirumullaivasal, Pazhayar, Poompuhar, Tranquebar, and a few other places following an announcement made earlier this week by fishers in this belt that they will be ending their lives in the sea with family members opposing the government's restriction on use of purse seine nets. Over 1,500 police personnel drawn from central districts have been stationed in these areas as a precautionary measure, sources said.

### **Tamil Nadu and Kerala: 58 Indian fishermen repatriated from Iran after 4 months of no work, pay**

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/coronavirus-58-indian-fishermen-repatriated-from-iran-after-4-months-of-no-work-pay-2263178>

"58 Indian fishermen, who were stranded in Iran for over four months without work and wages amid the coronavirus pandemic, arrived in Delhi today. Their return was made possible by the generosity of International Maritime Federation's Chairman Sanjay Prashar, who paid for their tickets within days of getting an SOS call and ""hard lobbying"", according to Thiruvananthapuram MP Shashi Tharoor. ""The mental and physical exhaustion on their faces is evident. They now have to get on a connecting flight,"" the team that helped these fishermen - 18 from Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram and 40 from Tamil Nadu - reach home said. The fishermen were brought to the Tehran airport in a bus on July 14. They landed in Delhi today around 3AM through Mahan Airways, which has been operating flights under the government's Vande Bharat Mission to repatriate Indians stranded abroad. Earlier this year, the 18 fishermen from Kerala's coastal village of Vizhinjam left for Iran for the first time to work on fishing vessels for private employers. ""I had paid Rs 50,000 to my agent to get to Iran.

Each of us from Kerala had paid that amount. I even mortgaged my wife's wedding necklace (tali) for this. I am returning with nothing. I had to borrow from friends to be able to eat even one meal a day. I now need to pay off this debt,"" Aruldas, 36, who could only manage to work for 10-12 days, told NDTV. Melbai V, 50, could only manage to work for four days before being left jobless. ""We were not even paid for the work that we had manage to do. We were told that our employer could not sell fish in Dubai because of the lockdown."" he said. Mr Melbai's two sons in Thiruvananthapuram are in the same boat as their father's. They too have not been able to catch or sell anything for months because of the temporary ban on fishing activities in the district to avoid large gatherings. Congress's Mr Tharoor, who had worked closely with the Ministry of External Affairs for the return of about 600 Indians, mostly fishermen, from Iran in June, said bringing these men back was a huge challenge. ""I have been in touch with Foreign Minister S Jaishankar all through... The Embassy helped evacuate a first batch on an Indian Navy ship, but there was no room for this last group. We again worked with the External Affairs Ministry and the Embassy, lobbied hard for these fishermen to be put on a plane. Then came the question of the cost of their tickets, which Capt. Parashar met out of his own resources. Throughout this period, I have received dozens of messages, videos and voicenotes from the fishermen detailing their desperate situation. I am delighted they are home safe at last,"" Mr Tharoor told NDTV.

""The 40 fishermen from Tamil Nadu were living in two rooms; 20 each in each room. They would eat one or two meals in a day. It was a tough time for them and they had little hope of ever returning until the repatriation flight worked out,"" L Praveen Kumar, the General Secretary of Maritime People's Welfare Association told NDTV. It was Mr Kumar who made an SOS call to Mr Prashar about the possibility of helping repatriating these stranded fishermen. ""Within five working days, the arrangements were made and tickets sponsored,"" he said. ""The fishermen who arrived today... have been having a harrowing time. When I was a captain on big ships and would see our fishermen brothers on the sea, I would always be struck by their guts. I am happy that I could help them. After all, we all are Indians,"" Mr Prashar told NDTV. Drawing attention

to the challenging conditions in which Indian fishermen work to make ends meet, Mr Tharoor said, "I have been repeatedly calling on the government for a relief package for the fishing community. It is time the country wakes up to the huge problems these poor people face."

### **Tamil Nadu: Avoid purse seine nets, TN govt tells fishermen**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/avoid-purse-seine-nets-govt-tells-fishermen/articleshow/76988162.cms>

"The Tamil Nadu government on Wednesday requested fishermen not to use banned purse seine nets and abide by the court orders. The request was made at a meeting convened by fisheries minister D Jayakumar with the representatives of fishermen from Cuddalore, Nagapattinam and Villupuram. Purse seine nets ruin the ecosystem and also the livelihood of traditional fishermen. "The minister requested the fishermen to not violate the court orders but set out to deep sea availing government support, an official release said. Chief secretary K Shanmugam and DGP J K Tripathy were present. Maintaining that they would suffer huge loss due to the ban and it would take three to five years to move onto alternative fishing methods, the fishermen requested the government to allow them to use purse seine nets for six months a year.

### **Tamil Nadu: Mechanised boats to resume operation from Kasimedu today**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/mechanised-boats-to-resume-operation-from-kasimedu-today/article32084187.ece>

"After a break of over 110 days, mechanised boats will leave the Kasimedu fishing harbour on Wednesday. Sources in the Fisheries Department said around 3,000 passes had been issued to those who have work inside the harbour. "Those without passes will not be allowed to enter. We will ensure temperature checks for those entering, the official said. Of the 1,000-odd mechanised boats, only around 150 will leave due to a lack of migrant workers. A senior official said only wholesale auctioneers will be allowed, while retailers will have to purchase from the markets at Chintadripet, Red Hills and Pattalam. Gradually, local fishers from neighbouring villages will also be allowed. "We need to begin restoring normalcy because this is a question of livelihood, the official said. However, G. Arasu of the Chennai Chengai Singaravelar Visai

Padagu Meenavar Sangam said they were worried about retailers not being allowed inside. "About 70% of our catch is small fish, which can only be sold by retailers, he said.

**Tamil Nadu: Fisherman ends life abroad; wife seeks relief from T.N. govt.**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fisherman-ends-life-abroad-wife-seeks-relief-from-tn-govt/article32067293.ece>

"A 22-year-old woman, with her two-year-old daughter, and parents appealed to the District Collector to get her relief from the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund as her husband ended his life in Dubai about a month ago. Speaking to reporters, Minipriya said that her husband Kaleeswaran, a fisherman, went to Dubai in search of a job a year ago. The joblessness in the coastal hamlet made him go overseas and work with a fish exports firm. Though he went there with high hopes of earning and settling his debts, it was not so in reality, his wife said. With the COVID-19 pandemic, things turned from bad to worse, she said. Unable to come to terms that the family was in dire straits and that he too got stuck abroad, Kaleeswaran, while on the job, allegedly jumped into the sea and died on June 16. After the body was recovered, the post mortem was performed and the last rites were conducted there itself, the woman said and looked for assistance from the government. M. Karunamoorthy, district secretary CITU fishermen workers' union here, said the State government should consider the plight of the woman and her girl child and offer assistance from the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund. The district administration should protect the family as they had no means for survival in the present situation, he added. Assistance for overcoming suicidal thoughts is available on the State's health helpline 104 and Sneha's suicide prevention helpline- 044-24640050.

**Tamil Nadu: Fishermen stranded in Iran look to head back home**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishermen-stranded-in-iran-look-to-head-back-home/article32060822.ece>

"It has been 18 months since Kanniyakumari-native Maria Gildas left home for work in Iran. He has been stuck there since, waiting for a seat on a return flight. A total of 65 fishermen, including 40 from Tamil Nadu, 19 from Kerala and one from Puducherry, are holed up in a room in Iran, waiting for help from the Central and State governments. "A ship brought many home... He did not get a seat on it. We don't have money for a ticket. The last time too, when he tried coming home before the COVID-19 outbreak, he did not have money for a ticket and had to work for two months to earn the money. They now have found a sponsor for the tickets, said Jeeva, wife of Mr. Gildas. Ms. Jeeva has now pinned her hopes on the kindness and compassion of Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami. "He has been kind enough to bring back many

fishermen. He has written to the Union government asking them to expedite the return of those stranded in Iran, she said. Mr. Gildas said that they were waiting for details about a flight to Delhi on July 16. The struggle “We struggled for a seat on that ship. It had a capacity of only 700 persons, so we were left behind. People here are from several districts, including Nagapattinam and Cuddalore, said Mr. Gildas, the captain of a boat, speaking over the phone to The Hindu. “We are not bothered about eating or sleeping. We just want to return home, he said. Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar said that steps were being taken to bring back the men. “They will be brought back at the earliest, he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen protest against ban on fishing**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fishing/article32014230.ece>

"Protesting the district administration's decision to ban fishing indefinitely in the wake of sudden rise in COVID-19 cases, mechanised boat fishermen blocked vehicular traffic on New Harbour Road in front of the fishing harbour here on Tuesday. As influx of COVID-19 fresh cases is on the rise in the district, the administration organised a special camp at Teresapuram, housing over 2,000 fishermen families, to take samples from residents of this area, known for its insanitary conditions and high population density. Of 200 samples taken from suspected cases, 40 of them were found to have contracted SARS-CoV-2 virus. Consequently, a few streets of the highly congested Teresapuram have become containment zones. Since more than 95% of residents of Teresapuram are fishermen, the administration banned fishing activities in this area, with over 1,500 country boats, in a bid to check entry of outsiders, particularly fish traders, who may contract the infection here and pass it on to others. Moreover, fishing operations from Thoothukudi Fishing Harbour were also stalled as a good number of fishermen from Teresapuram are working in mechanised boats.

So, country boats of Teresapuram and the Fishing Harbour's mechanized boats abstained from fishing operations on Tuesday. While country boat fishermen accepted the fishing ban after understanding the reality, fishermen of mechanised boats from other areas refused to accept it and staged a road roko in front of the fishing harbour. “After losing income for about 90 days, we started fishing operations on June 1. The ban will affect mechanised boat fishermen. The administration may tell boat owners not to employ workers from containment zones while allowing others to continue fishing operation, the protesting fishermen said. When the police and fisheries department officials held talks with the protesters, it was decided to allow fishing operations by mechanised boats from Wednesday strictly with fishermen from non-containment zones. Accepting it, the fishermen withdrew the hour-long agitation.

### **Tamil Nadu: Rameswaram fisherman dies mid-sea**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/rameswaram-fisherman-dies-mid-sea/article32010089.ece>

"A 27-year-old fisherman died mid-sea while he was engaged in fishing along with three other fishermen. His body was brought to the shore in the early hours of Wednesday. Fisheries Department officials said that on Monday, 626 mechanised boats had obtained tokens and ventured into the sea with over 4,000 fishermen from the shores here. They were to return on Wednesday night or in the early hours of Thursday. In one mechanised boat, owned by A. Marcopolo, four fishermen had gone to sea. They were identified as Subash Chandrabose, Tamilselvan, Cycil Dennis and Sesu Alangaram -- all from Rameswaram. They were engaged in fishing at midnight. It is said that Subash Chandrabose suddenly fainted on the boat. Immediately, the fishermen returned to the shore and rushed him to the Rameswaram Government Hospital. However, the doctors said that he was 'brought dead'. The body was sent to the GH for a post-mortem. The cause of the death was not immediately known. Police have registered a case and are investigating. After the lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government had accorded permission to the fishermen to venture into the sea from June 1. However, the fishermen here set off for fishing only from June 13 for various reasons. On the first day itself, four fishermen went missing. After rescue operations were carried out for about two days, only one of the four was saved and the other three fishermen had died. Their bodies were found by Thanjavur fishermen.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Sardine fish caught with banned nets auctioned for Rs.4.56 lakh**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/sardine-fish-caught-with-banned-nets-auctioned-for-456-lakh/article31940123.ece>

"The Fisheries Department on Sunday auctioned for Rs. 4,56,400 seven lorry loads of sardine that were confiscated while crossing the Veppur check-post due to prohibitive fishing practice of netting the catches by mechanised boats. The fishes that were caught using purse seine nets in violation of Tamil Nadu Marine Fisheries Regulation Act 1983 were confiscated. Three of the lorries were loaded with fishes caught by Nagapattinam fishermen and the rest by Karaikal Fishermen. The money was deposited in government account, Joint Director of Fisheries, Nagapattinam District, R. Amal Raj, said. The district administration had formed a team comprising officials of Marine Enforcement Wing, Coastal Security Group, Fisheries Department, and Revenue Department, for checking the banned fishing practice. On Friday, the team comprising Fisheries Inspectors T. Karthikeyan and N. Artheeswaran, and Marine Enforcement Wing Inspector P. Rajagopal confiscated three lorries transporting 8,250 kg of sardine. The fish catch was auctioned for Rs. 2.06 lakh.

#### **Tamil Nadu: TN grabs first position in fish production, Kerala in third spot with 15.4% decline**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/kerala/2020/jun/30/tn-grabs-first-position-in-fish-production-kerala-in-third-spot-with-154-decline-2163468.html>

"India's marine fishing sector registered a marginal increase of 2.1 per cent in production in 2019 compared to the previous year. However, certain alarming factors including warming of the Indian Ocean have led to decline in stocks of commercially valuable fish species, causing concern among the fishing community. The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) on Tuesday released the figures of India's fish production in 2019, which reported a marginal increase in fish landings at the national level. The country's total landings stood at 35.6 lakh tonnes compared to 34.9 lakh tonnes in 2018. Tamil Nadu grabbed the first position with 7.75 lakh tonnes of landings overtaking Gujarat, which has been leading the table for years. Fish landings in Gujarat declined from 7.80 lakh tonnes in 2018 to 7.49 lakh tonnes in 2019. Kerala retained third position with 5.44 lakh tonnes but total fish landings declined from 6.43 lakh tonnes in 2018 to 5.44 lakh tonnes in 2019.

The data indicated a worrying feature of a sharp increase of stocks of commercially unimportant fish species. The red-toothed trigger fish, which has little demand in the domestic market and is mostly caught for the purpose of feed mills, dominated the landings with 2.74 lakh tonnes. The landings of the species stood at 72,000 tonnes in 2018. Warming of the Indian Ocean due to the El Nino factor has led to a steep decline of commercially valuable fish species along the Indian coastline. While the availability of the Indian mackerel and oil sardine shrunk by 50 per cent, there was a steep rise in the stocks of red-toothed trigger fish which is used only for fish meal. According to the CMFRI, there was no breeding activity of mackerel and oil sardine along the Kerala coast during the breeding season this year. The Indian mackerel, which was in the first spot with 2.84 lakh tonnes of landings in 2018, suffered the biggest setback with a decline of 43 per cent. While West Bengal recorded a 55 per cent increase in landings, Andhra Pradesh reported a 34 per cent increase. Odisha's catch grew by 14.5 per cent and Karnataka's landings climbed by 11 per cent while Tamil Nadu's catch shot up by 10.4 per cent. Meanwhile, the catch in Goa shrunk by 44 per cent and Maharashtra's share declined by 32 per cent. Kerala reported a reduction of 15.4 per cent compared to the previous year with a total of 5.44 lakh tonnes. Ribbon fish with 2.19 lakh tonnes climbed to the second position in landings followed by penaeid prawns with 1.95 lakh tonnes and non-penaeid prawns with 1.80 lakh tonnes.

The fishing sector suffered a setback as the number of fishing days declined due to eight cyclonic storms that disturbed the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal. Six of the eight storms were very severe and the West Coast was worst affected by the suspension of fishing activities. A sharp decline in the catch of oil sardine and Indian mackerel, the two major resources of the state, was the major factor that brought down fish production in Kerala. Oil sardine dropped to a meagre 44,320 tonnes, the lowest catch in two decades, while the landings of Indian mackerel plunged to 40,554 tonnes witnessing a steep decline of 50 per cent compared to the previous year. In 2012,

the catch of oil sardine touched a record high with 3.9 lakh tonnes. Since then, the state has been witnessing a substantial decrease in catch every year, though there was a slight increase in 2017. The oil sardine landings again continued to decline for the past two years thanks to the unfavourable changes in ocean environment.

After analysing the correlation between the ocean environment and biological cycle of the oil sardine, the CMFRI had forecast in January last year that sardine landings would decline in Kerala waters. The contribution of Kerala towards the overall landings in the country reduced to 15.3 per cent from 18.4 per cent in 2018. Anchovies with 74.194 tonnes topped the list of the most landed resources in the state followed by red-toothed trigger fish (62,782 tonnes) and penaeid prawns (46,615 tonnes). The estimated value of marine fish based on price at landing centres stood at Rs 60,881 crore in 2019 registering a 15.6 per cent increase. The unit price per kg of fish at landing centre rate was Rs 170.5. At the retail level, the estimated value of marine fish rose to Rs 92,356 crore. The unit price at the retail market level was Rs 258.7. The producers' share stood at 66 per cent while it was 70 per cent in Kerala. CMFRI Director A Gopalakrishnan released the documents in Kochi on Tuesday. Principal scientists T V Sathianandan, Prathibha Rohit, P U Zacharia, P Laxmilatha, E M Abdussamad, C Ramachandran and Josileen Jose were present.

### **Tamil Nadu: 700 Indian fishers stranded in Iran to return**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/700-indian-fishers-stranded-in-iran-to-return/articleshow/76634103.cms>

"Nearly 700 Indian fishermen, of which 673 are from Tamil Nadu, who were stranded in Iran, will be repatriated by INS Jalashwa and expected to arrive at the Tuticorin port early next week. The fishermen have been seeking help from February when Covid-19 positive cases started spiralling in Iran. After a tussle with their owners and a battle for help through various organisations and representations from the state government, they have finally got help. Some even struggled to get the exit visa stamped by their Iranian employers. Fishermen said they started from various fishing harbours like Kish Island and headed to the port city of Bandar Abbas, from where Jalashwa will leave . On Thursday, many of them boarded the ship, while some weren't lucky. "We are happy to return and delighted that we will be seeing our families, said Ascar, 27, a fisherman from Kanyakumari district before boarding the ship. "Despite our efforts, 64 people could not be accommodated in the ship due to various reasons, secretary of Meenavar Orunginaiipu Sangam, Charles Johnson said. The association has been closely following the issue from the beginning. "One of them had high temperature when he was tested before boarding the ship, he added. There was high drama near the ship as those who could not make it staged a protest and engaged in a heated argument with the authorities. Meanwhile, fisheries minister D Jayakumar in a statement recalled the efforts taken by the state and Union

governments including the chief minister's letter to the ministry of external affairs to bring them back home. He added that 673 fishermen from Tamil Nadu will be sailing home in the ship.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen want Kissan Credit Cards to be issued soon**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishermen-want-kissan-credit-cards-to-be-issued-soon/article31893728.ece>

"The KCC was extended to fishermen and those in animal husbandry so that they too could avail of small loans for running day-to-day business.. Fishermen have urged banks to speed up the process of issuing Kissan Credit Cards (KCC) that will enable them to withdraw loan amounts for repairing nets and boats. The KCC was extended to fishermen and those in animal husbandry so that they too could avail of small loans for running day-to-day business. M.E. Raghupathi, a boat owner and community leader in Kasimedu, said it had been several months since application forms were collected but banks were yet to process them. "Many owners do not have any money on hand and no bank will lend them money to restart their businesses. The loans will come in handy if speeded up, he said. Nanjil Ravi of Akhila Indhiya Meenavar Sangam said fishermen were waiting for the KCCs so that they can buy diesel for their trips after the lockdown.

"The Centre has only made an empty promise saying it will give loans via KCC. Banks need not worry about repayment since the diesel subsidy deposited by the State government can be taken by them, he said. Fisheries Department officials said 35,000-odd applications were collected and submitted to various banks. "But only 50 cards have been issued so far and 440 cards are under process. We have raised the issue with the banks and the Department of Financial Services, Government of India. We hope there is progress in the coming month, an official said.

### **Tamil Nadu: A sea of troubles: Fish vendors in Tamil Nadu staring into abyss post lockdown**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/jun/21/a-sea-of-troubles-fish-vendors-in-tamil-nadu-staring-into-abyss-post-lockdown-2159371.html>

"Balaraman was just sixteen when he first 'went to the sea'. Over the last three-and-a-half decades of his life as a fisherman, never has he stayed away from the ocean this long. "Even when the Indian Ocean Tsunami came in 2004, we kept away only for a couple of months. Now it has been around four months since we ventured into the sea. This is the longest I have stayed away, says the 52-year-old fisherman from Kasimedu. Many businesses, traders, and vendors have been hit by the several spells of intensive and not-so-intensive lockdowns in the State, but none suffered as much as the fishermen. In between these various spells, almost all other commercial activities got a breather of few days, to earn a few bucks or collect pending salaries.

Thanks to the fishing ban that came into effect mid-April and lasted till the first week of June, those dependant on fishing were deprived of even that tiny window of relief. Later, even as they started limping back to normalcy, yet another lockdown has dealt a brutal blow. Visuals that went viral on Friday – of a fish vendor throwing tonnes of fresh catch into a dumpster in Villivakkam after the city corporation, in a late-evening move, banned trade during the lockdown period – encapsulates the pain they have been going through.

The anger, frustration, and hopelessness among the fishing communities across the Tamil coast is palpable. “I used to make at least Rs 500 a day, says Kumar\*, a fisherman from Kasimedu. “I have two daughters, studying in classes 10 and 7, and the money was enough to barely get by. My average daily expense would be around Rs 300. Now, the last few months have been like a nightmare. Kumar has already pledged two of his wife's gold chains for money. “Despite that, and after cutting back on our expenses, we have had to borrow Rs 40,000 till date to get by. The State government has announced Rs 1,000 relief for ration card holders per month apart from groceries, and another Rs 1,000 through the welfare boards for fishermen. But, that hardly helps. “How are we to make ends meet in the city with that money? During the lockdown, cost of essentials have also been on a rise. The association has approached the government seeking more support. “We are not sure if help will come our way. Chennai is just the starting point for a long chain of trouble that trails all the way till Thoothukudi. The lockdown in Chennai and its neighbouring districts has hurt fishermen in Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, and Kancheepuram equally, for most of their catch is sold in the capital city.

As we travel southward along the coast, it's not the ban in Chennai that hurts them. It's the disruption in international trade that has dealt a body blow to fishermen, traders large and small, and massive seafood exporters who were employing tens of labourers. Big fish eat small fish. The sharp rise in Covid cases in India has made it an unpopular destination for seafood trade. Many countries that used to relish the shrimps, prawns, crabs, and cuttlefish from the waters of Indian Ocean, have now stopped buying fearing transmission of the deadly virus. The fact that the Chinese think the virus originated in the wet-market of Wuhan has not done any good for the seafood trade, internationally. The fishermen of Rameswaram, who enticed the palates of Japanese with the succulent shrimps caught off the Tamil coast, are now languishing at homes. The seafood exporters, who sell fish and associated products to other countries, are at the top of the chain. Below them are the traders engaged to buy fish from boat owners. At the very bottom of this chain are the fishermen who work for these boat owners, and go to the sea in groups. The ban on sale has affected all of these people, though unequally. In Ramanathapuram, for instance, two of the four major seafood processing companies have slashed buying rates by a whopping 70 per cent.

That means, shrimps, crabs, prawns, and cuttlefish that were being bought for Rs 500 per kilogram was being bought for a mere Rs 150 after the lockdown came into effect. Now that

there is no regular cargo movement, the trade has completely stopped. The companies are not buying fish anymore. Fishermen across the State are worried that once the business resumes, to improve their profits lost during the lockdown period, seafood companies may try to buy fish at dirt-cheap prices. A pattern of this fashion has already emerged. As all these fish products exported from Tamil Nadu can be deep-frozen and stored for months, many exporters are holding on to tonnes of stock. However, they are yet to pay the fishermen for the procured commodities. Speaking at a stakeholder meeting held at the Nagapattinam Collectorate recently, a Thoothukudi-based exporter openly said that he was not sure about paying “reasonable rates to the fishermen and traders to whom he owes money. “We need to be given a minimum support price for our catch to ensure our livelihoods are intact, says RMP Rajendra Nattar, a fisher-representative from Nagapattinam. But, Nattar knows it's easier said than done. When normalcy returns, the big boat owners have no choice but to sell their catch to exporters for remunerative prices. It is always better than the going local market rate.

“We get the best catch in a year in the first two months after the fishing ban ends, for the fish stocks would have rejuvenated. And yet this year, we are struggling for money, says Nattar. Further down in Rameswaram, the fishermen are battling a crisis of different nature. Those who ventured out to the sea recently realised the fish stocks have actually depleted and not rejuvenated. “It has gone down by 40 per cent, says Martin\*. “We think it could be because of the change in ocean currents, induced by Cyclone Amphan. The hunt for elusive schools of fish has become further costlier now, thanks to the Centre's decision to hike fuel prices. Feeding Frenzy A day's fishing trip costs around Rs 1 lakh, say boat owners. This includes Rs 50,000 spent on fuel, loading labour charges, ice loading charges, food, water, and rations of fishermen going to the sea, and other miscellaneous expenses. That apart, 25 per cent of the catch is allotted for 10 fishermen on the boat. “The boat owner has the responsibility to ensure the livelihood of fishermen who work for him, so that he returns the next day, says K Anandavelu, a boat owner from Akkaraipettai. The difficulties in selling fish is as much as catching them. The bargain a fisherman can strike with the mid-level trader who comes to procure stock for export companies will determine the success of his venture. “We can hold on to our catch only for a day or two. By then, we have to sell them to traders who retail it locally or to those who sell it, in turn, to export companies, says S Mohandas of Akkaraipettai. “If the trader does not offer a good price, we are ruined. Our losses mount. We are then forced to dump the catch in the sea.

Rudder Shudder At the end of all this comes the boat maintenance costs. Usually, the boats are given for repair during the ban period. Now that they have been idle for an extended duration, the fishermen are worried that costs could escalate. “The nets have been torn apart by rats, engines have been idle, and the belt chains gathered rust, says Kumar. He has no idea where the money would come from. It's the chicken or egg conundrum -- the boat needs money to be fixed, he needs the boat to make money. Fishermen across the State have been demanding loans under the Kisan Credit Card Scheme of the Centre. While it was launched for farmers, it was recently

extended to include fishermen. However, in many districts, the loan amounts were not released due to the lockdown, allege fishermen. In Nagapattinam alone, there are 2,000 applications filed of which 1,000 are for mechanised boats. Not many of these applications have been cleared, they say.

“We need to get out there to make money, to overcome the losses we have been suffering over the last few months. But, without loans, we are having to pawn of the jewellery of our women and children. Or, we are at the mercy of loan sharks, says K Arutchezhiyan, the leader of Pazhayar Registered Boat Owners Association. “Those who cannot settle for either of these options go to sea on faulty boats. What happens to them if the boat conks is a mere two-column accident report on newspapers. Those like Kumar and Arutchezhiyan are stranded in this sea of financial troubles, with a mere Rs 2,000 aid to row to safety. Will they make it to the shore with that, or will the government throw in more life-support, only time will tell. Sinking deep in despair Apart from crippling their business for about three months, the lockdown has also spawned add-on woes for fishermen and boat owners International embargo hits tail-end fishermen Exporters are not able to sell the catch in international market as most countries have stopped importing fish from India over the fear of Covid. As a result, the prices of catch have plummeted.

This has hurt seafood processing companies, and in the process, the small fishermen who sell to these companies fishing ban period another blow for industry Owing to relaxations made in the different phases of lockdown, most other traders could get a breather. However, the fishing ban remained even though fisherfolk from across the State clamoured for it to be shortened. Coupled with lockdown, this had led marginalised fishermen into a debt trap Rising petrol & diesel prices burn hole in fishers' pockets Riddled with problems already cornering from all sides, boat owners have another coming on their way. The drastic rise in the prices of petrol and fuel has eaten into their already rotting business. On Saturday, the fuel prices were increased for straight 14th day. In Chennai, petrol price shot to Rs 82.87, diesel to Rs 75.29 Long idle period triggers chicken or egg conundrum The almost three month-long stalemate, which includes the fishing ban period, has shown a rusting effect on boats and nets. Fishermen and boat owners need money to fix the rusted engine of the boat, but on the other hand, they need to take the boat to the sea in order make a good catch to make some money Mid-level traders turning sharks using crisis The fishermen depend on mid-level traders, who come to procure catch for export companies, for good pricing of their catch. They can't hold on to the catch for more than one or two days, as they would begin rotting. These traders, using it as an opportunity, force the fishermen to accept a low procurement prices.

### **Tamil Nadu: Mechanised boats to resume fishing from June 22**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/mechanised-boats-to-resume-fishing-from-june-22/article31872264.ece>

"Mechanised boats in Nagapattinam district will be venturing into sea from June 22 after 90 days due to the COVID 19 lockdown. Representatives of fishing hamlets have urged the Fisheries Department to make arrangements for auction of the catches in conformity with social distancing norms at the Nagapattinam Harbour. According to Fisheries department officials, exporters have been told to offer the right prices for their catch including squid and shrimp. Operators of mechanised boats had the option of venturing into the sea from June 1, but chose to wait as there was no assurance on procurement of the catches by exporters and other traders. The traders, on their part, had expressed problems faced by them due to interception of the loads at the check posts. The district administration subsequently convened a meeting of fishers and exporters to arrive at a solution. This year, the 61-day fishing ban period that commenced on April 15 was preceded by COVID 19 lock down restrictions that prevented fishers from entering into the sea. At a meeting this week, representatives of Keechankuppam, Akkaraipettai, Nagore and a few other fishing hamlets urged the Fisheries department to disinfect the harbour and to make arrangements for thermal scanning at the location. It will be ensured that 40 to 50 mechanised boats are operated every day on a turn system from June 22 onwards, officials said, adding that the safety protocol will be complied with.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Fishing harbour closed as trader tests positive**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fishing-harbour-closed-as-trader-tests-positive/article31875248.ece>

"The fishing harbour, which became alive on June 1 after being idle for more than 90 days owing to COVID -19 outbreak and mandatory annual fishing ban, plunged into darkness again on Thursday night after a trader from Seythunganallur who came to the fishing harbour tested positive for the viral infection. Sources in the Department of Fisheries said disinfection was going on in the harbour since Thursday and it would remain closed till Sunday. After six workers of a seafood export unit at Pazhayakaayal near here tested positive for the viral infection, the unit was closed and disinfection was on. Moreover, other workers were being screened for the viral infection, Department of Public Health officials said. A commercial complex near Cruz Fernandez statue was also closed on Friday after two shopkeepers tested positive for COVID -19.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Meat and fish shops to remain shut in Chennai during lockdown from June 19**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/jun/18/meat-and-fish-shops-to-remain-shut-in-chennai-during-lockdown-from-june-19-2158324.html>

"It sure is going to be a complete lockdown for meat and fish lovers in the Chennai. All meat and fish shops within the city corporation limits will remain shut during the intensified lockdown from June 19 to 30, according to a late-evening statement by the Greater Chennai Corporation. The city corporation's slaughterhouses in Perambur, Villivakkam, Kallikuppam and Saidapet will also remain shut during this period, the statement issued on Thursday said. Since the relaxation after the earlier lockdown, the city corporation has been sealing meat shops and other shops in the city that failed to enforce social distancing norms. It had also issued showcause notices to several shops which it felt were increasing the risk of COVID-19 spreading. The Corporation also recently asked shops along the MKN road, the Alandur market area and the Arya Gowda road to close down to reduce the spread after several infections were traced back to the hubs. The measures come even as the TN government had announced relaxations to their original government order issued.

The relaxations announced on Wednesday were as follows: - Pre-paid autos, taxis and private vehicles allowed to ferry passengers from railway stations and airports. - Police personnel will regulate these vehicles in railway stations and airports and e-pass will be issued by TN e-governance agency. - Headquarters of banks and financial institutions are permitted to function with minimal staff. - Bank branches with minimal staff may function from June 20 to June 26 from 10 am to 2 pm for cash transactions relating to distributors and retail dealers of essential items like petroleum products and LPG. No direct service to public is permitted. - Workers staying within the premises of industries need not be tested for RTPCR. - E-passes will be issued by the Industries department to managerial and supervisory categories of industries for movement in and out of Greater Chennai Police - - - - Commissionerate areas and other areas enforcing lockdown to their industrial units. - Seaports will be permitted to handle cargo for essential commodities, medical equipment and other medical services with minimum staff. - Telecom, essential IT-ITES services to function with minimal staff and e-pass will be provided to workers in the list provided by the companies. - Milk and drinking water vehicles permitted. - Permission to staff working in petrol bunks provided they carry id cards, delivery of LPG cylinders allowed.

### **Tamil Nadu: Is Kasimedu the next COVID-19 hotspot in Chennai?**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/jun/15/is-kasimedu-the-next-covid-19-hotspot-in-chennai-2156646.html>

"A mistake repeated more than once is a decision, wrote celebrated Brazilian writer Paulo Coelho. A visit these days to the nerve centre of Chennai's fish trade, the Kasimedu harbour, would throw up a natural question: Aren't we on the brink of repeating a costly mistake? As the first rays of morning sun hit Kasimedu on Sunday, thousands of people from far and wide of the city flocked to the busy fishing centre. Soon, social distancing went for a toss and it was

impossible to come out of the market without rubbing against at least a dozen others. As if to add some background effect, loud speakers from police vehicles ceremoniously warned people about the threat of the coronavirus, and the need for maintaining social distance. With Chennai alone accounting for over 30,000 cases, a repeat of the Koyambedu chapter could prove disastrous. Ban remains on paper It was after foreseeing the possibility of crowding at Kasimedu, the State on June 6 announced a ban on retail sale of fish at the wharf area of the harbour. The ban, however, remains only on paper. A police official who was on duty at the harbour on Sunday morning said, "Patrol vehicles are deployed and several sleuths are involved in spreading awareness about distancing.

The fishermen also continuously shout at people. But no one seems to take notice. Meanwhile, fishermen attributed crowding to closure of smaller fish markets. They said people from as far as Tambaram and Avadi came to Kasimedu. The crowd has burgeoned after the two-month fishing ban came to an end on June 1. When the government announced the ban on retail fish sales at wharf area, the fishermen were told to shift to the temporary stalls set up on the northern side of the harbour. A Soundar, a member of the Kasimedu Fishermen Association told The New Indian Express, "The 200 stalls promised by the government are still under construction. We fear that there won't be any decrease in the flow of people if the local markets are not opened across the city. Earlier, when only retail vendors used to buy fish after auctions, there used to be lesser people, said Soundar.

"We have requested the government to open local markets as soon as possible to save fishermen and their families from contracting the virus. We are scared that Kasimedu might become next Koyambedu, he said. When contacted, G S Sameeran, Director of the Fisheries Department, said the crowd has reduced in recent days and even the wholesale auctioning is conducted in small batches. "The crowd has drastically reduced since start of the month. We have set up temporary retail stalls North of the harbour. The permanent retail stall are under construction and will be over this month, he said. However, fishermen said the makeshift stalls had inadequate space and that's why they were yet to shift to the new place. They added that they have sought larger space from the government. Fishing yet to gain pace Even two weeks after the fishing ban came to an end, the fishermen are unable to meet the high demand thanks to lack of workforce. Several boats at Kasimedu are unable to venture into sea as their workers have returned home during the lockdown. Since the demand is high, the price of fish has gone up in the last few days.

### **Tamil Nadu: Poor catch, say fishermen on return to shore**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/poor-catch-say-fishermen-on-return-to-shore/article31827670.ece>

"After nearly three months of fishing ban period and the COVID-19 lockdown, the fishermen who ventured into sea for fishing on Saturday and returned on Sunday, claimed that

the catch was moderate and not exciting as it used to be. Attributing climate change and lesser working hours in the sea, fishermen association leader Jesu Raja said that the factors against the fishermen had resulted in very little catch this season. Though the governments had announced June 1 for fishing, the fishermen in this region decided to venture into the sea only in mid-June as they wanted time to repair their boats and also prepare for the fishing during the COVID-19 pandemic period. The catch, according to the fishermen, was far lower than the earlier seasons. "Usually, after the annual fishing ban period of two months, when we venture into the sea, each fisherman would return with at least 400 to 500 kilograms of fish and prawns. This time, we could get only 150 to 200 kgs, said Antony, a fisherman. Moreover, the climate change too had played a spoilsport for them, he added. Another fisherman pointed out that they would normally set off into the sea for more than a day or two, while this time, they returned within 20 hours. Hence, the catch was not as expected. A fisheries department official said that the physical distancing was adhered to by the fishermen at the market place and those who returned to the shore were directed to wear face masks.

### **Tamil Nadu: Kasimedu fisherfolk to get passes**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/kasimedu-fisherfolk-to-get-passes/article31808185.ece>

"While mechanised boat owners are holding discussions about leaving for fishing, the Fisheries Department has begun issuing passes for those, who require to enter the Kasimedu fishing harbour. As on Thursday, 6,000 applications were received from boat owners, wholesale traders and allied workers. Boat owners had announced they would send boats for fishing from June 15. Close scrutiny "We are issuing passes to avoid entry of consumers and retailers into the fishing harbour. Some people have applied for the sake of getting a pass. We will scrutinise all applications with the help of the associations, said an official source in the department. Meanwhile, fishermen have been asked to remove their stuff, including ice crushers, ice boxes, and boat parts from the wharf area in Kasimedu fishing harbour. This is to facilitate sale of fish while maintaining personal distancing. However, a section of fishers objected to the issuance of passes. They said without security personnel at the gates the passes would not be of any use.

### **Tamil Nadu: Mechanised boats to resume fishing from June 15**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/mechanised-boats-to-resume-fishing-from-june-15/article31805932.ece>

"Decks have been cleared for resumption of fishing by mechanised vessels from June 15, after the fishing ban period ends, by the district administration by convening a meeting of representatives of boat owners and exporters on Wednesday. The meeting was conducted in the backdrop of demand by fishermen for fixation of minimum price for seafood items like

cuttlefish, squid, shrimp and fishes that are that are exported in large quantities to France, Italy and other European countries. Procurement problem was a major reason for the reluctance of the mechanised boat owners to enter into the sea from the start of this month, despite the State Government's decision to cut down the fishing ban period by a fortnight. The concerns raised by both sides were addressed by the District Collector Praveen P. Nair in the presence of R. Amal Xavier, Joint Director of Fisheries; S. Pandiarajan, Deputy Director, Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), Nagapattinam; G. Sankaran, Lead District Manager, Nagapattinam; and Assistant Directors of Fisheries Department. Representatives of boat owners raised concerns over what they described as low price offers by exporters.

On their part, the exporters had expressed optimism for resumption of exports only from September. The importing countries had cancelled their orders, the exporters said. They also highlighted the difficulties they faced in transporting seafood products through the district and state borders. The fishermen representatives sought subsidy assistance from the government to the exporters and for them as well for storage of fishery products till resumption of export activities. Responding to the demand of the fishermen for Kisan Credit Cards, the Collector advised the Lead District Bank to ensure bank loans for them. Exhorting exporters to fix a minimum reasonable price for exportable fishery products, the Collector said the administration will correspond with the Chairman of MPEDA, Cochin, to resolve the issue by exploring the possibilities for marketing the seafood items to other European countries to safeguard the fisheries sector. Necessary action will be taken for free movement of vehicles transporting seafood at the district borders. The district administration will also prevail upon the Director of Fisheries, Chennai, to ensure free movement of vehicle at State borders, the Collector said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Surfing instructors turn fishermen for a living during lockdown**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/jun/12/surfing-instructors-turn-fishermen-for-a-living-during-lockdown-2155533.html>

"The boat was a speck in the vast expanse of the Bay of Bengal. A couple of friends bound by common threads of vocation and expectations were trying to make a living in these hard times of Covid-19 when money is hard to come by. Born and brought up in the fishing village of Covelong, a salubrious getaway for Chennaiites during good old times, the friends were unlike others in the village. Before the lockdown, they were pursuing a profession different from their peers – surfing and yoga. Dharani Selvakumar has won a few national and international surfing awards while his friend Anand Dandhapani is a surfing enthusiast with a penchant for yoga. They were afloat a paddleboat searching the waters of the cove for livelihood – fish. Devoid of their usual jobs as surfing instructors for the numerous watersport buffs

arriving from the city, the two, like a dozen others, have gone back to the profession of their forefathers. “Fishing is in our blood and comes to us naturally, said Dharani.

“During surfing days they could earn Rs 15,000 to Rs 20,000 a month, said Murthy M, who co-founded Covelong Point, a surfing school in this village. “Since the lockdown, everything has been shut no surfing school and no training. The surfing instructors, around 15, in the village have turned into fishermen now. They paddle boats in the shallow waters or go deep into the sea on motorboats. Murthy said that the catches are good enough to survive well. Ananth used to make Rs 18,000-20,000 a month before the lockdown, enough to lead a good life. But now, he relies more on fishing and a few online yoga classes. Dharani's income would have been around Rs 20,000 a month as an instructor. But they are not complaining. Their catch fetches them Rs 8,000-Rs 10,000. “On Tuesday, we caught fish that fetched us Rs 8000 and that way, we don't have to struggle for a living, Dharani said, hoping the number of those seeking surfing training would increase once the lockdown is lifted.

“I love and miss surfing. “Sometimes we go out fishing at night around 9 pm and come back in the morning, he said. At times the catch is not good as well. Today (Wednesday) was not good, he said pointing to the meagre fish in the boat. Because of the surfing school, even the fishermen had a brisk business or two. But now it's only fishing. “We can go out fishing only three days a week and sometimes we are lucky to return with good catch and sometimes like today, very little, he said pointing towards the boat with hardly any fish after spending hours under the scorching sun close to the shores. Murthy, whose surfing school changed the village and gave youngsters a chance to take up the sport as a profession, felt it would take a bit more time for them to reopen the school. “Until and unless people feel safe to come here and the government allows them, we will not start the school, said Murthy. “Since we can fish and are enjoying that too, I think we will survive the crisis well. Murthy just hoped times would get back to normal. “It will be good for the people here and once the school starts all our surfers will be back for training, he said.

**Tamil Nadu: Chennai’s fisherfolk set for business, while Telangana’s brick workers vow never to return**

<https://theprint.in/india/chennais-fisherfolk-set-for-business-while-telanganas-brick-workers-vow-never-to-return/438887/>

"India is witnessing a massive surge in Covid-19 cases with more than 2.76 lakh cases and over 7,700 deaths at last count. For more than 10 weeks, ThePrint's reporters and photojournalists have travelled across India to bring you the most accurate local news of how the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown have impacted the lives of millions of people. This week, our journalists visited a fishing harbour and a car manufacturing unit in Tamil Nadu, and a cemetery and brick kilns in Telangana. They spoke to fisherfolk, contractual labourers,

graveyard staff and local leaders to understand how they are dealing with the pandemic. In Chennai, ThePrint's Revathi Krishnan and Manisha Mondal met disaster management specialist Dr J. Radhakrishnan, who has been roped in as the special nodal officer for the Greater Chennai Corporation to streamline efforts against Covid-19. He was the district collector of Nagapattinam in 2004 when the tsunami hit and the health secretary during the 2015 Chennai floods. He was also put in charge when the Kumbakonam school fire broke out in 2004. Chennai's Kasimedu Fishing Harbour, one of the largest in Tamil Nadu, is now buzzing with activity.

The period from April to June is a lean one for fisherfolk, as it is the breeding season, and fishing trawlers are banned from going out to sea. However, this year, the lockdown coincided with this period, leaving them with no income. The ban period was thus cut short due to the lockdown and ended on 31 May. ThePrint found that even though the Kasimedu Fish Market is still shut, likely for another week, the fisheries department is leaving no stone unturned to ensure that once it opens, social distancing is maintained, from set timings to a cap on customers. The sector has faced a production loss of around 30,000 metric tonnes in the last two months. Over in Sriperumbudur, Chennai's automotive corridor, India's only Hyundai manufacturing unit produced 200 cars on the day it reopened from lockdown on 8 May, and has sold 12,583 units since then. Spokespersons from Hyundai told ThePrint that stringent Covid-safety norms were being followed there. Bharati Desan and Ram Kumar, contractual labourers who work mainly in engine packaging, told ThePrint that while they were paid throughout the lockdown, Hyundai has now said it will only pay those workers who come to the factory. Brick kiln workers in Telangana want to return to Odisha.

At a brick kiln near Kongara Kalan in the Rangareddy district, Neeran Jaal told ThePrint's Aneesha Bedi and Suraj Singh Bisht that he has been trying to go back home to Odisha for weeks now, but neither is he getting paid nor has his "seth ji (the owner of the kiln) arranged any transportation for him. He added that the recent rains ruined the bricks that were ready, and he won't be paid for them. Neither he, nor the other families from Odisha, who came here to work at the kilns have received the rations promised by the government, and Jaal vowed that once he finds a way to leave, he will never return to a place that treated him so shabbily. It is a refrain ThePrint's journalist heard at every kiln. Workers from Odisha form up to 90 per cent of the labour force at these kilns. According to many kiln owners, if the workers quit, it could really hurt the industry. They also insisted that they had done what they could for their labourers given that their own hands were tied due to lack of subsidies and materials coming in. In Hyderabad, ThePrint met the director of the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Rakesh Mishra, who explained that the institute's new test could significantly increase India's testing capacity. Acknowledging the concerns about India's testing strategy, he said the new test, if all goes well, could increase daily capacity by up to 50,000 times.

Mishra also explained the central government's efforts to develop a Covid-19 vaccine as well as an alternative to plasma therapy. He was also glad about one fallout of the pandemic, which is India realising the importance of investing in scientific research. About 16 km from Hyderabad, in Balapur, lies the Faqeer Mullah Kabristan. The graveyard covers an area of 50 acres, and 10 acres have now been reserved for those who died of coronavirus. The move came from AIMIM president and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi, after he found that the staff at many burial grounds were refusing to bury Covid-19 patients because of the stigma. Ahmed Saji, who supervises the graveyard, told ThePrint that while mostly Muslims were buried there, the section is open to victims of all faiths. Last Tuesday, the staff buried their youngest coronavirus victim, a three-month-old. "Even we were really upset when we saw such a small body being buried and sadly not a single family member was around as the parents had been quarantined, and no other relatives wanted to come because there is a stigma attached to the disease, said Habib Asif, who works at the cemetery. "Even the ambulance driver and staff were heartbroken. We read the namaz together, that's the least we could do, he added

### **Tamil Nadu: Lockdown improved coastal ecosystems of Gulf of Mannar, says study**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/lockdown-improved-coastal-ecosystems-of-gulf-of-mannar-says-study/article31746814.ece>

"The COVID-19 lockdown has had a positive impact on the coastal ecosystems of the Gulf of Mannar along Thoothukudi district. Limited industrial activities and human interference has reduced the levels of pollution, increased the number of fish species and density and has improved the overall quality of marine water, reveal findings by the Suganthi Devadason Marine Research Institute (SDMRI) in Thoothukudi. Director of SDMRI, J.K. Patterson, says that while collecting data for a State government project, the institute conducted a study between May 25 and June 2 to assess the level of plastic pollution during the lockdown along the coast of Thoothukudi district. There has been a remarkable reduction in the macro and meso-plastic pollution levels at eight locations along the coast -- Manapad, Tiruchendur, Thoothukudi Harbour beach, Inigo Nagar, Muthunagar beach, Therespuram, Vellapatti and Tharuvaikulam. The average reduction in the level of macro-plastic is 51.4% and that of meso-plastic is 28%. Plastic spoons constituted the highest quantity of plastic that was found, followed by plastic cups. "This reduction in plastic pollution levels can be attributed to the absence of movement of people along the coast, as before the lockdown, a large number of people used to throng pilgrimage and tourist destinations at these locations. This is also a significant outcome as plastic pollution threatens the existence of marine biodiversity and can enter the human food chain, says Mr. Patterson.

Another major outcome of the study is the increase in the number of species of coral reef fishes from 89 in February to 96 in May, at the Thoothukudi group of islands of Gulf of Mannar --

Vaan, Koswari, Kariyachalli and Vilanguchali. The average fish density has also increased by 22%. “Generally, fish tend to migrate in the summer due to high temperatures. But, despite the high water temperature due to climate changes and subsequent coral bleaching this summer, the fish population has increased, thanks to less human disturbance during the lockdown period, he says. Usually, more than 300 fish-traps are illegally deployed every day to collect reef fishes like *Scarus*, *Lutjanus*, *Lethrinus* and *Siganus*. These species are highly exploited as they command high commercial value in the market, he adds. Fortunately, due to the absence of trap-fishing and reduced human intervention during the lockdown period, the population of *Scarus ghobban* (parrot fish), has increased by 39%. “The *Scarus ghobban*, a herbivorous reef fish that feeds on seaweeds, plays a highly significant role in maintaining the ecological balance in the coral ecosystem.

The increase of herbivore fish population between April-June 2020, is expected to increase the coral cover, he says. Also, a study conducted to assess the quality of water at stressed locations -- Therespuram, Roche Park and Thoothukudi Port -- showed that there is an increase in dissolved oxygen levels and a significant decrease in concentration of metal and microbial concentrations. “Thus, the lockdown has brought about a considerable positive change in the coastal ecosystems, which will help in the conservation of biodiversity. These findings encourage us to protect the coastal ecosystem in the post-lockdown period too, he says.

### **Tamil Nadu: No guidelines on exports, fishers in TN stare at uncertainty despite fishing permit**

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/no-guidelines-exports-fishers-tn-stare-uncertainty-despite-fishing-permit-125998>

“We are selling our fish at rock-bottom rates. Fish that was sold at Rs 350 per kg is now being sold at Rs 150 per kg. We do not even have money to pay for our workers. We are buying fish at higher prices in the harbour and selling them for low rates, laments Anto, a fish exporter from Thoothukudi. Seafood exporters from the coastal district believed that once fishermen enter the sea, business will return to normal. However, with no clarity on new export routes, exporters are bewildered over their business prospects. “This is our peak season. (Usually), immediately after the annual fishing ban is revoked, fisherfolk will enter the sea. People from Kerala, Karnataka, and foreign countries will buy the catch from us. However, the pandemic has left us confused; there is no clarity on the future of the business. Currently, Thoothukudi has started exports. Maybe if ports in all the countries begin to operate, we will get clarity. But it will take till August and soon, the monsoon will set in Tamil Nadu, washing away our business, he says. Anto and fish exporters like him are worried about storage facilities while they wait to get route clearances. “We do not have the capacity to buy an insulator fridge for Rs 5 lakh. We just use open ice boxes to transport fish. With the lockdown, we are finding it difficult to transport

immediately after the catch. Squids do not have much demand in local markets so we transport them to foreign countries.

However, COVID-19 has stopped the export even of essential items. The fishermen of Thoothukudi, the only district to venture into the sea amid the lockdown period, are getting good catches but are finding it difficult to sell the fish for the same price as before, according to fishermen associations. “In Thoothukudi district, mechanized boats will go for fishing only between 5 am to 9 pm every day. Unlike other districts, we will not be in sea for three or more days till we get a haul. Now, on account of the lockdown and the coronavirus crisis, only 120 boats are sent everyday on an alternate basis. Though we have enough catch, we are not getting the usual price for the fish due to less demand for fish in the market, says RJ Bosco, Joint Secretary, Thoothukudi Deep Sea Mechanised Boat Fishing Development Association. Many fishers to get back to sea on June 15 many fishermen associations, except those in Thoothukudi, have decided to stay off the coast till June 15. The Central government gave its nod for fishermen to resume fishing by June 1 but fishermen have decided to extend the ban period. This is because fishermen are faced with a slew of problems, forcing them to remain on shore. The lockdown period, followed by the fishing ban, has given them little time to repair their boats and mend the nets needed for fishing. The lack of labourers has made fishermen halt operations and wait for the government's nod to resume activities.

Mechanized boat owners are largely dependent on exports for survival. Hence, fishermen associations say that they will wait till June 15 for transportation systems to ease and resume fishing operations. “Since we stayed on shore during the lockdown period, the boats and nets need repair. The government has allowed scrap shops and fishing to commence on June 1. So we need to wait till the workers come and help us with mending the nets, says K Bharathi, President, South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association. “The fishermen are also facing problems with the export. Dry ice is not easily available and amid the lockdown, with no adequate transportation in Chennai, we have decided to wait. We will venture into the sea on June 15, he adds. As fishermen are gearing up to venture into the sea during the pandemic, Anto says, “The government should provide us a loan amount. We are completely relying on government banks but they don't give us loans during a pandemic and instead, give loans for buying vehicles. The vehicle loans cannot be of use for us. The government should help us pay our dues in installments to reduce our burden. TNM has reached out to Fisheries Department Director GS Sameeran and will update this story once we receive a response.

### **Tamil Nadu: Retail sale of fish banned at Kasimedu wharf area**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/jun/07/retail-sale-of-fish-banned-at-kasimedu-wharf-area-2153323.html>

"In a move to contain the spread of the coronavirus and to avoid crowding, the State government has banned the retail sale of fish at the wharf area of Kasimedu harbour from Sunday. Instead, the public can buy fish from 200 retail stalls set up on the northern side of the harbour between 5 am and 11 am. Also, temporary arrangements will be made near NTO Kuppam by setting up 50 stalls for retail sales. By the month end, retailing will be allowed on the southern side of the harbour where stalls are being set up. "The public will be allowed to buy fish only from retail stalls and will not be allowed to go to the fish auction centre or the wharf area, said Fisheries Minister D Jayakumar. The Minister further said fishermen with mechanised boats would venture into sea from June 15 as the fishing ban has come to an end and this would increase the supply. Chief Secretary K Shanmugam, senior police officials and other officials had visited the harbour on June 5 to take stock of the measures being taken to ensure physical distancing there.

### **Tamil Nadu: Seafood exporters await Tamil Nadu policy for better catch**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/seafood-exporters-await-tn-policy-for-better-catch/articleshow/76203819.cms>

"Much before the lockdown, a marine food exporter from Chennai bumped into state fisheries minister D Jayakumar on a flight from Delhi to Chennai. "How is the industry doing," asked the minister, in all keenness. "It is doing very well sir, in every other state except Tamil Nadu," the exporter replied. "We will do something," the minister promised. While the industry continues to wait, the conversation sums up the state of the seafood industry in Tamil Nadu. The marine products export industry has had an appreciable performance over the past decade, registering a growth of 500% during the period and clocking an estimated turnover of Rs50,000 crore last financial year, Seafood Exporters' Association of India said in a recent letter to Union commerce minister Piyush Goyal. Of this, around 65% comes from shrimps, with Andhra Pradesh alone accounting for 70% of that. Tamil Nadu, which has the second longest coastline in the country after Gujarat, has remained a small player with an insignificant share, with industry estimates ranging from Rs4,000 crore – Rs5,000 crore, thanks to some of the export consignment papers moving through authorities in Chennai. "Beyond the geographical reasons like limited or near absence of perennial riverine areas and brackish water sources, there is lack of focus on the part of the state government as well as entrepreneurial spirit among rural farmers in the coastal belt," feel experts from the marine food industry. "Indian marine food exports have the potential to touch Rs1 lakh crore by 2025. With West Bengal and Odisha joining Andhra Pradesh to focus on shrimp cultivation and exports, it is high time Tamil Nadu gets the much needed focus to grab this industry's growth opportunity," said Elias Sait, secretary general, Seafood Exporters' Association of India. According to the industry, there is a need for more proactive measures from the state including land allotment and numbering. "Saleability of shrimps is linked to its traceability.

The state has the potential to make this a Rs10, 000-crore industry, from the present Rs4,000 crore if it gets into the act," Sait said. In the late 1980s and 1990s, Tamil Nadu indulged in scientific farming of shrimps, but lost focus somewhere down the route, with lack of perennial rivers, brackish water and creeks adding to the problem. The state could have focused in a different way with sea water-based farming. "While the state government could have unveiled a policy for aquaculture, the social atmosphere too was not conducive as one gets closer to the coast. Unlike Andhra Pradesh, the farmers were not ready to take risks," said D Ramraj, president, All India Shrimp Hatcheries Association (AISHA). While the acreage under shrimp cultivation exceeds 1.5 lakh acres in Andhra Pradesh, it is not more than 15,000 acres in Tamil Nadu.

"We don't have much brackish water here, while just one creek in Nellore offers shrimp farming opportunities nearly 25,000 acres. In Tamil Nadu, we need to identify zones for shrimp farming and create common infrastructure for farmers," Ramraj added. The industry generally seems to be wary about the increasing demands for cash, which at times gets to extortion levels, from the locals in Tamil Nadu coast. "Shrimp farming is a legal and legitimate act. But, the situation on the ground is totally different with locals (fishing communities). They find hatchery operators to be easy prey. They disrupt the pipeline to bring seawater time and again. It was there 15 years ago and has grown to be a bigger issue recently," says Ravi Kumar Yellanki, a leading shrimp hatchery operator and former president of Society of Aquaculture Professionals. A senior government official with the state's Fisheries department denied lack of a conducive atmosphere. "Extortion is only a perception.

Whenever we get information, we inform police and action is taken," the official said, on condition of anonymity. "We are coming out with an aquaculture policy for the state soon. There is going to be a national policy on aquaculture and our policy will be in tandem to it. Tamil Nadu exported around Rs5, 500 crore of seafood last year (2018-19)," the official said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen from three districts to start fishing on June 13**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fishermen-from-three-districts-to-start-fishing-on-june-13-ramanathapuram/article31751024.ece>

"The fishermen from Ramanathapuram, Pudukottai and Thanjavur districts have decided to venture into sea from 1 p.m. on June 13 (Saturday). The decision was made at a meeting of fishermen association leaders and representatives from Rameswaram, Thangachimadam, Mandapam, Soliakudi, Kottaiattinam, Jagathapattinam, Sethubavachatram and Mallipattinam. Speaking to The Hindu, fishermen association leader Jesu Raja said the fishermen unanimously decided to venture into sea from all these places at 1 p.m. on June 13 and return to the shore the next day. The meeting, which went on for about three hours, also thanked the governments for COVID-19 pandemic relief measures announced for the fishermen. Earlier, presiding over a

meeting of fishermen, Collector K. Veera Raghava Rao appealed to them to follow the guidelines while venturing into sea. The district administration, he said, would provide all assistance to them when they returned with their catch. The government had announced last month that the fishermen could venture into sea from June 1. However, the fishermen decided to postpone it by 15 days since they were all indoors due to COVID-19 pandemic. They also had to come out of the loss caused by Cyclone Amphan. They had to repair their mechanised, country and fibre boats, they said. The Collector, along with Fisheries Department officials, inspected the damage caused to boats and property at Pamban and Thangachimadam. The exporters also expressed concern as their workers, mostly migrants, had returned to their home States, they said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Temporary fish market coming up at Kasimedu**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/temporary-fish-market-coming-up-at-kasimedu/article31752194.ece>

"In a couple of days, a temporary retail fish market will be ready inside the Kasimedu fishing harbour. The stalls are being marked and made allowing for social distancing among vendors and buyers. This follows the request of mechanised boat owners, who wanted the government to ensure facilities for retail sales. M.E. Raghupathi, a boat owner, said that without a space for retail sales, the landing boats would not be able to sell their catch. "The department and corporation also need to take steps to open fish markets in the city. They must regulate these facilities to ensure personal distancing, he said. The department is also constructing a permanent structure for housing over 150 retail vendors, who had to move due to the Ennore Manali Port Road Improvement Project. "Being constructed as part of a Rs. 10.5-crore project, these will have electricity, water and drainage facilities. It will be ready in a month's time, an official added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Coastal Regulation Zone clearance to oil firm: NGT to review order today**

<https://www.dtnext.in/News/City/2020/06/03040539/1233864/Coastal-Zone-Regulation-clearance-to-oil-firm-NGT-.vpf>

"The southern bench of National Green Tribunal has decided to review its judgment regarding the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearance granted to an oil firm after accepting the petitioner's submission that the bench did not look into the precedents on the question of interpretation of statutes on environmental laws. The case pertains to grant of CRZ clearance by the Centre to a private company to draw pipeline and establish oil storage facility in CRZ II zone near Ennore. The petitioner, KR Selvaraj Kumar, cited various orders to contend that tribunal did not consider the real object of the passing of CRZ Notification, 2011, in its right spirit. "The

tribunal did not look into the precedents on the question of interpretation of statutes on environmental laws and also its impact on the environment while making liberal construction and extending the activities outside the notified port area, the petitioner said in his review application. Countering this, the private oil firm said even if wrong interpretation was made, it was a matter for appeal and not review.

“There is no prohibition for granting storage facility of edible oil in CRZ II area. Para 3 of CRZ Notification, 2011, deals with prohibited activity with some exception, it contended. When the matter was taken up for hearing via video conference, judicial member Justice K Ramakrishnan and expert member Saibal Dasgupta said, “The review applicant has produced additional documents to be considered by this tribunal. The larger aspect of the impact of the decision is not considered while liberally interpreting the provision against the principles of interpretation of statutes in respect of environmental laws, which will amount to an error apparent on the face of the record which is likely to cause a miscarriage of justice on the question of environment. Setting aside the tribunal's February 19 order, the bench said the matter has to be reconsidered and posted it for hearing on Wednesday.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Fishers stranded in the Andamans return**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishers-stranded-in-the-andamans-return/article31718369.ece>

"A total of 43 fishermen from Tamil Nadu, who were stuck in the Andamans for over two months reached Chennai Port on Sunday. They were among 163 persons who were brought back from the islands by the NanCowry ship, said Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar. Seven persons from Maharashtra and two from Goa, who were on board the ship have been sent to the Community Centre at Vepey till arrangements for their trips are made. “All passengers were checked for symptoms and their bags were sanitised. They were then sent to their respective districts on eight buses. They were also provided with food and water, the Minister said. Around 200 fishers, who were stuck in the Andamans demanded that the government take steps to bring them back. A few days ago, one batch returned by flight to Kochi. They were then sent to their respective villages in Tamil Nadu. Home quarantine “We have been checked for COVID-19 but are under home quarantine, said Selvam, a fisherman from Cuddalore, who returned from the Andamans by flight. Mr. Jayakumar said efforts were on to bring back fishermen stuck in Iran and other countries.

#### **Tamil Nadu: Ban lifted, but fishers remain on the shore**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/jun/02/ban-lifted-but-fishers-remain-on-the-shore-2150942.html>

"The annual ban on fishing ended on May 31. But mechanized boat fishers across Nagapattinam district refrained from going to the sea because of no export opportunities due to lockdown -- globally and also within the country. Exotic species such as squids, prawns and sardines are exported to Europe and other countries. Sardines have good market in Kerala. However, with many countries under lockdown, the export business is bleak. "There is no point in going to the sea when we do not have exporting options. If we fish, we cannot sell our catch. If we cannot sell our catch, it is a loss our workforce, fuel, ice and other investments, said A Kumar, a fisher-representative from Nambiar Nagar. Mechanised boats in harbours such as Nagapattinam, Pazhaiyar, Poompuhar and landing centres such as Nambiar Nagar, Thirumullaivasal, Chandirapadi, Tharangambadi did not venture out. Fishers requested the government to ease interstate transport. "The government should at least allow us to export to other states, said K Arutchezhiyan, fisher-representative from Pazhaiyar.

Joint director of fisheries department R Amal Xavier said, "Some of the exporters said that they already have 300 tonnes of items and are unable to export to foreign countries and hence they do not want to get from us. Release of lockdown at global level only can untangle the current situation, adding that fish trucks are allowed to come from Kerala. Similarly, around 270 fishers in Karaikal district in Puducherry Union Territory too did not go into the sea. They wanted transportation restriction lifted between TN and Puducherry. However, fishers from Pazhaiyar ventured into the sea in around 30 steel boats. They took their passes and went to the sea on the contrary to the unanimous resolution made by Nagai and Karai fishers.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen want to go to sea only by June 15**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/tn-fishermen-want-to-go-to-sea-only-by-june-15/article31678427.ece>

"The announcement from the Union and State governments permitting fishermen to commence operations from June 1 has not been welcomed by the their associations. At a meeting here, representatives of various fishermen's associations appealed to the governments to postpone the commencement at least by 14 days. Speaking to reporters, fishermen association leader P. Sesuraja said all the fishermen remained indoors till date due to the lockdown. Due to Amphan cyclone, many boats were damaged in the heavy winds in Rameswaram, Thangachimadam and Pamban. Hence, fishermen and boat owners had to ascertain the damage, arrange for funds and get the repairs done. Also, many fishermen had to get the fish nets ready as they were off sea since March 20.

Moreover, the workers had to be mobilised to carry out the repairs on the sea shore, where the boats have been anchored, Mr. Sesuraja said and added that the fish exporters too had expressed inability to keep their shops open from June 1. The exporters have said that the workers have left for their native places. Hence, they may not be in a position to function immediately and

sought time for normal functioning. Considering the situation that had arisen due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the association members said that though they had requested the government to lift the lockdown earlier, the events that took place during the last 30 to 45 days had only aggravated the issues. The members, through a resolution, urged the governments to announce the date of fishing from June 15. They also thanked the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for announcing Rs.20,000 crore as relief to the fishermen and the State government for giving them Rs.5,000 for two months and another Rs.1,000 as COVID-19 relief. Last week, District Collector K. Veera Raghava Rao and fisheries department officials made spot visits to assess the damages caused to the boats during Amphan cyclone. At least, 70 to 90 boats were damaged either partially or suffered minor damages. The former minister and MLA Manikandan too visited the hamlets and the damaged boats. He promised to take it up the issue with the State government for necessary relief, a release stated.

### **Tamil Nadu: Relief for fishermen as Centre lifts ban early**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/relief-for-fishermen-as-centre-lifts-ban-early/article31674910.ece>

"The Centre on Monday decided to allow fishing by all fishing vessels from June 1 on the east coast. Thus, the fishing ban has been reduced by two weeks, taking into consideration the curbs imposed on fishing since March 24 in the wake of the COVID-19 lockdown. The move will benefit Tamil Nadu more than any other southern State as it has the largest number of 5,800 mechanised boats in the region. Around four lakh people, directly or indirectly, depend on fishing by mechanised boats for their livelihood, according to a senior official in the State Fisheries Department. This year, the Central Department of Fisheries, through an order of March 20, stipulated that States on the eastern coast of the country would have the annual ban on fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) beyond territorial waters from April 15 to June 14 and in respect of the western coast, June 1 to July 31. Representation to Centre Four days later, the countrywide COVID-19 lockdown was imposed and since then, fishing had been prohibited. From April 11, only traditional crafts were allowed. Tamil Nadu and other eastern-coast States had represented to the Centre that the ban period, which would have even otherwise been for two months, should be cut short. "We were in the forefront of urging the Central government to reduce the ban period. We had suggested that the ban period be brought to an end on May 23, said the official here. In an order issued to Fisheries Secretaries of all maritime States on Monday, the Centre said that considering the restrictions on fishing since March 24 in the wake of lockdown and representations of the States to change the ban period, it had decided to change the ban period from April 15 to May 31 for the eastern coast and from June 15 to July 31 for the western coast. The change was "applicable only for the current year and would not set any precedent for future, the order clarified. Rajeev Ranjan, Union Fisheries Secretary, told The Hindu that while considering the request of the States, the Centre had to take into account

conservation and effective management of fishery resources, apart from the factor of safety of fishermen in the sea.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishers pledge nets to meet daily expenses**

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/fishers-pledge-nets-to-meet-daily-expenses/article31667239.ece>

"Fishers in many villages have resorted to pledging their nets to tide over the present crisis due to the ongoing COVID-19 lockdown. With fishing not being allowed for bigger boats and no arrangements made for retail sale if traditional craft go for fishing, they have run out of cash even to meet daily needs of their families. Last resort K. Bharathi of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association said that fishers, who usually fish in groups of 40 or 50 and use long nets, were resorting to this. "They promise the wholesaler all the fish in their next catch and take advance. Almost all the big valai (net) groups are doing this. They get about Rs. 2 lakh to Rs. 3 lakh and divide it amongst themselves to buy provisions, he said. Durai Mahendran of Pulicat said that this was the practice whenever they needed large sums for building a boat or buying a net or even to organise a family function. "That is not done often and is the last resort. This is perhaps the first time they are doing so to buy rice and provisions. This is because they are unable to sell fish that they catch, he said. Most villages are going for fishing only to bring back fish for their own homes. This is because arrangements had not been made for retail or wholesale sales as promised by the Fisheries Department, said fishermen.

### **Tamil Nadu: GIS helps reach food to fishing community**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/gis-helps-reach-food-to-fishing-community/articleshow/75955580.cms>

"After successfully using Geographic Information System (GIS) in marine conservation, a team from Omcar Foundation, an NGO, is using the tool to feed fisherfolk in coastal villages of Thanjavur hit hard by the national lockdown. Mapping using GIS allows one to answer questions about data that relate to a location. "When we go to fishing villages, there are chances that we reach areas where we have already distributed provisions. With GIS mapping, we have a ready-reckoner of sorts to check and work accordingly, said marine scientist Vedharajan Balaji, who heads the team. The documentation of relief work using GIS and Google Maps helped the NGO reach out to more people in need of relief material. "We update the GIS map "Omcar Covid-19

Relief Support every day after distributing relief material. The documentation helps us get a clearer picture of who received what, said Balaji.

The team shares its maps with the Covid control room of the collector's office in Thanjavur to help the administration understand the geographical range of donations made by them. Omcar's volunteers, recruited for conservation of dugongs, were deputed to prepare a list of people whose livelihood had been affected due to the lockdown. They found that many fishermen in coastal areas, particularly in Sethubavachatthiram block, had no food or money. "This is the first time we used the map for marking houses. So we had to be careful about identifying the geographic location of each house, unlike in the case of mapping a larger area." Omcar volunteers are not new to using GIS. The team first used GIS to map mangroves and land use patterns in Palk Bay in 2012-14. Between 2014-18, the team used GIS for mapping dugong feeding grounds in northern Palk Bay. The team has donated relief material to more than 20 villages and plans to cover six more.

### **Tamil Nadu: Amphan effect on Nagapattinam; fishing harbour wall damaged**

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/amphan-effect-on-nagapattinam-fishing-harbour-wall-damaged/story-ncJnXYK1kYCLaTmluoYhGL.html>

"High tides due to the 'Amphan' cyclone that played havoc in West Bengal have caused damage to the rubble mound wall in the fishing harbour under construction at a cost of Rs 120 crore at Tarangambadi Nagapattinam district. The sea in Tarangambadi coastal area has remained very rough for the past one week and many coastal hamlets witnessed seawater seepage. The fishing harbour, under construction, came under the tidal wave. The rubble mound wall on the seafront was damaged to a length of 800 metres on the southern side and 300 metres on the northern side. On information, Poompuhar MLA S Paunraj visited the construction site on Thursday and interacted with the officials and local fishermen. The MLA had said he would draw the attention of the Fisheries Minister. Following this, Director of Fisheries, Tamil Nadu, G S Sameeran visited the site on Friday. While interacting with the director, Tarangambadi fishermen association members pointed out that the rubble mound wall was low in height and width. They appealed to the government to increase the height and width of the wall considerably so as to avoid damage during natural calamities in the future. The fishing harbour construction work commenced last year in 6.7 hectares of land and was expected to benefit thousands of fishermen in 24 hamlets around Tarangambadi.

### **Tamil Nadu: Boat owners want ban on fishing lifted soon**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/may/23/boat-owners-want-ban-on-fishing-lifted-soon-2147025.html>

"The mechanised boat fishers have requested to lift the annual fishing ban soon as they had completed over two months of not venturing into the sea. Mechanised boats were banned from fishing since the lockdown was announced on March 23. The lockdown ban was already coinciding with the 61-day annual fishing ban. Since the two months are already complete, the fishers have requested to lift both the bans immediately. ""A prolonged ban would be too much for us. At least 10-20 families depend on my boat. A prolonged ban could push them to the brink of desperation, "" said S Kaliyamurthy, a mechanised boat owner from Nagapattinam. The 61-day annual fishing ban falls in the period between April 15 and June 15 every year. This year, they were made to stop nearly a month before April 15. ""We respected the government's advisory on Coronavirus and refrained from fishing even before they had announced the lockdown. It is more than two months of ban now. So, it only fair to let us fish, "" said S Arumugam, another mechanised boat owner.

The report in March 31's publication of TNIE said that the State government had sent a proposal to the Centre to advance the annual fishing ban to the period between March 23 and May 23, so that the fishers can go into the sea. But, there is yet to be a significant development in the correspondence, and the proposal is still with the Centre. Meanwhile, the annual one-time livelihood assistance of `5000 has been distributed to 1.8 lakh around fisher families in the State, including 21,000 families in Nagapattinam district. An additional amount of `2000t in two installments is also being credited as lockdown relief to the 4.64 lakh Fisheries Department's welfare board members that has 56,000 members. ""The livelihood assistance is 'peanuts' in terms of our survival. The relief is also not sufficient. There are other livelihoods dependent such as that of labourers, ice boys, diesel boys, janitors, fish sellers, traders and vehicle drivers. They are affected, "" said RMP Rajendra Nattar, a fisher-representative. While speaking to TNIE, a senior official from the Fisheries Department said, ""Our Department had proposed for the advancement of the annual fishing ban to March 23-May 23. We are still waiting for a response. The Centre may come up with a response after consulting other coastal states such as Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal. We are hoping for the ban to lift in a week. ""

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishers pledge nets for money, as they run out of cash during lockdown**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishers-pledge-nets-for-money-as-they-run-out-of-cash-during-lockdown/article31639216.ece>

"Fishers in many villages have resorted to pledging their nets with buyers to tide over the present crisis due to the ongoing COVID-19 lockdown. With fishing not being allowed for bigger boats and no arrangements made for retail sale if traditional craft go for fishing, they have run out of cash to feed their families. K. Bharathi of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association said that fishers, who usually fish in groups of 40 or 50 and use long nets, are resorting to this. "They promise the wholesaler all the fish in their next catch and take money in

advance. Almost all the big valai groups are doing this. They get about ₹2-3 lakh and divide it amongst themselves to buy provisions, he said. Durai Mahendran of Pulicat said that this is a practice that fishers followed when they were in need of large sums for maybe building a boat or buying a net or even a family function. "That wouldn't be done often and would be the last resort. This is perhaps the first time they are doing so to buy rice and provisions. This is because they are unable to sell the fish that they catch, he said. Most villages are going for fishing only to bring back fish for use at their own homes. This is because no arrangements have been made for retail or wholesale sales as promised by the Fisheries Department, said fishermen.

### **Karnataka: Govt bans entry of people from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu till May 31**

<https://www.freepressjournal.in/india/karnataka-govt-bans-entry-of-people-from-gujarat-maharashtra-kerala-tamil-nadu-till-may-31>

"The Karnataka government on Monday banned entry of people from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala and Tamil Nadu till May 31. Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa while addressing media said, ""We have decided not to allow entry of people from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala and Tamil Nadu till May 31."" This came after Yediyurappa held a meeting with state ministers and senior government officers to discuss the guidelines issued by the Centre regarding the fourth phase of nationwide lockdown. ""State road transport corporation buses in Karnataka and private buses will run. Strict lockdown measures in containment zones and economic activities will be permitted in other areas. Sundays will be total lockdown across the state. Home quarantine will be strengthened,"" he added. The Chief Minister further said that all shops will be allowed to open and all trains running within the state will be permitted. The central government on Sunday extended the ongoing COVID-19 induced nationwide lockdown till May 31, but with a set of new relaxations commencing from Monday. The Union Home Ministry has also given powers to States/UTs demarcate areas in Green, Orange and Red zones, which will allow them to start activities except in containment zones.

### **Tamil Nadu: 100 boats damaged in heavy winds**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/100-boats-damaged-in-heavy-winds/article31615599.ece>

"At least 100 anchored boats were damaged in the heavy winds that lasted for about an hour late on Sunday night in the coastal stretches of Pamban, Rameswaram and Thangachimadam, fisheries department officials said on Monday. Following the forecast that a cyclonic storm 'Amphan' had centred over the same region at 5.30 p.m. on Saturday, the cyclone warning signal two was hoisted by officials here. The IMD bulletin had said that the storm was 1040 km south of Paradip (Odisha) and 1200 km south-south west of Digha (West Bengal) and

1,300 km south-south west of Khepupura (Bangladesh). While anticipating heavy winds in this region, fishermen were advised to stay off from venturing into the sea here and in Thoothukudi stretch. The storm, which turned into a super cyclone since late Sunday night, had very little impact on the coastal side of Tamil Nadu, a State government official in Chennai stated in a press release. The winds, accompanied by showers, were experienced till Monday forenoon in many parts. Fishermen association leaders in Rameswaram said that with COVID-19 pandemic, the fishers were indoors since March 20. With the government announcing certain relaxation in the curfew norms beginning May 18, when things appeared to be sunny, the storm had damaged most of the anchored boats here. With the fishing ban period in vogue due to annual fish production time, when a majority of fishermen were off sea and indoors, they may require huge funds to repair the damaged boats, Rayappan, a fishermen leader urged the State government to provide funds for repair and upkeep. A highways official in Ramanathapuram said the Sunday night winds had uprooted many trees that had fallen in the middle of the roads in at least a dozen locations. As a result, power shutdown was affected as a precautionary measure. Work to re-install the poles back in its place was under way on a war-footing speed, TANGEDCO engineers at the site said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Pulicat fisherfolk keep out Covid-19, fight to survive**

[https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/pulicat-fisherfolk-keep-out-covid-fight-to-survive/articleshow/75782484.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cppst&from=mdr](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/pulicat-fisherfolk-keep-out-covid-fight-to-survive/articleshow/75782484.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst&from=mdr)

"Thirty-two fishing hamlets in Pazhaverkadu, or Pulicat, about 50km from Chennai, have become model villages, untouched by the raging Covid-19 pandemic. They are, however, struggling to survive. The norms have been strictly implemented and the residents have cooperated fully, said P Ethiraj, head of Arangamkuppam hamlet. When the lockdown began on March 24, fearing that they would not be able to find agents to sell their catch, the fishermen decided against putting out to sea. The common net available to the community was pledged for Rs 5 lakh. "Each family was given Rs 1,000 in cash and some groceries. The fisheries department provided fishing ban subsidy of Rs 5,000 and the state government gave Rs 1,000 to each family as lockdown assistance. But this was not enough to help sustain the fishermen families, said Ethiraj. Now, most families are struggling and have been unable to bring their plight to the attention of the authorities concerned. G Rajalakshmi, president of the women's self-help group at Goonankuppam village under Light House panchayat, said the state government had provided for free 20kg of free rice, atta, oil, sugar and dhal to each family. But, of the 20kg rice only 5kg was raw rice and was of good quality. The rest was of very poor quality. "Many complained of health problems. We have been unable to cook and eat three times a day, she said. Rajalakshmi said the villagers wanted to complain to civil supplies department authorities about the poor quality of ration items and to the fisheries department about their poor condition but no

officials had visited the area because of the lockdown. Unlike the fishermen in Chennai district, most of who own fibreboats and have been able to put out to sea to catch fish, those in Pazhaverkadu have been struggling at home, Ethiraj said. “Fisheries department staff and district administration officials should make a visit to the fishing hamlets in Pazhaverkadu to understand the pathetic conditions, he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Pulicat fisherfolk keep out Covid-19, fight to survive**

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"Thirty-two fishing hamlets in Pazhaverkadu, or Pulicat, about 50km from Chennai, have become model villages, untouched by the raging Covid-19 pandemic. They are, however, struggling to survive. The norms have been strictly implemented and the residents have cooperated fully, said P Ethiraj, head of Arangamkuppam hamlet. When the lockdown began on March 24, fearing that they would not be able to find agents to sell their catch, the fishermen decided against putting out to sea. The common net available to the community was pledged for Rs 5 lakh. “Each family was given Rs 1,000 in cash and some groceries. The fisheries department provided fishing ban subsidy of Rs 5,000 and the state government gave Rs 1,000 to each family as lockdown assistance. But this was not enough to help sustain the fishermen families, said Ethiraj. Now, most families are struggling and have been unable to bring their plight to the attention of the authorities concerned. G Rajalakshmi, president of the women's self-help group at Goonankuppam village under Light House panchayat, said the state government had provided for free 20kg of free rice, atta, oil, sugar and dhal to each family. But, of the 20kg rice only 5kg was raw rice and was of good quality. The rest was of very poor quality. “Many complained of health problems. We have been unable to cook and eat three times a day, she said. Rajalakshmi said the villagers wanted to complain to civil supplies department authorities about the poor quality of ration items and to the fisheries department about their poor condition but no officials had visited the area because of the lockdown. Unlike the fishermen in Chennai district, most of who own fibreboats and have been able to put out to sea to catch fish, those in Pazhaverkadu have been struggling at home, Ethiraj said. “Fisheries department staff and district administration officials should make a visit to the fishing hamlets in Pazhaverkadu to understand the pathetic conditions, he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Desalination plant near Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park to get CRZ clearance**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/desalination-plant-near-gulf-of-mannar-marine-national-park-to-get-crz-clearance/article31573118.ece>

"The proposal was earlier not cleared as the location was only 25 metres from the boundary of the park's eco-sensitive zone. The Tamil Nadu Water and Drainage Board's (TWAD) proposal to set up a 60 MLD Sea Water Reverse Osmosis (SWRO) plant at Kuthiraimozhi village in Ramanathapuram has been recommended for CRZ clearance by the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) of the Environment Ministry after a modified proposal was submitted. The proposal was earlier not cleared owing to the location being within the eco-sensitive zone of the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park, to be precise, only 25 metres from its boundary. The TWAD filed a modified proposal to the EAC for clearance submitting that the intake and brine disposal point has been shifted away the eco-sensitive area. Under the earlier proposal, the project site was supposed to be located at Latitude 09°07'28.35 N and Longitude: 78°26'30.77 E. As per the revised proposal, the project is now proposed to be located at Latitude 09° 07' 8.27 N and Longitude 78°25' 28.73 E the Committee also noted that the intake and brine disposal point has been shifted away from eco-sensitive area.

The Committee noted that the revised proposal requires intake flow of 139 MLD instead of 154.8 MLD. The EAC had earlier asked the TWAD to look at the possibility of reusing the brine water fully by giving it to authorised salt pan agencies instead of discharging it into the sea. According to the minutes of meeting, the EAC was informed by the TWAD that it proposed to create a series of artificial lagoons filled with brine from the desalination plant and 'drastically reduce' the brine disposal into the sea. The artificial lagoons are proposed for 1 metre shallow depth to collect the brine and the surplus to be utilised either by Tamil Nadu Salt Corporation Ltd or private salt pan owners at Periasamy Puram, about 10 kms from the proposed desalination plant. The EAC noted the submissions that brine discharge will reduce from 94.52 MLD to 42 MLD with the new technology proposed, of using Counter Flow Reverse Osmosis (CFRO) instead of Conventional Sea Water Reverse Osmosis. "In CFRO Plant, the recovery rate will be 64% as against 45% for conventional Plant, the TWAD submitted. The project proponent further informed the EAC that brine discharge into the sea will only be for two months when salt pans are non-operational and will be stored in the lagoons or other applications for the remaining 10 months. "The Committee appreciated the project proponent for coming out with good model with reduced brine discharge by way of creating artificial lagoons using the brine, which will help as foraging grounds for migratory birds, according to the minutes. The EAC, however, urged the TWAD explore the possibility of zero brine discharge from the plant and develop the plant as a model project for others to follow suit.

### **Tamil Nadu: Mechanised boat owners seek revival package**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/mechanised-boat-owners-seek-revival-package/article31584331.ece>

"Owners of mechanised boats, who form the backbone of the fish export industry in the State, who have been hit hard by the lockdown, hope for a revival package and have submitted a list of demands to the State government. "The whole industry has come to a grinding halt and unless the government steps in, like it did after the 2004 tsunami, there is no chance of revival, said M.E. Raghupati, a boat owner. There are 5,798 mechanised boats in the State and in 2017-18, they contributed to exports of 1.17 lakh tonnes of sea food and foreign exchange earnings of ₹5,420 crore. "A major portion of what is caught in Tamil Nadu is sent to Kerala due to lack of processing industries and parks. Kerala is benefiting from our work, said Nanjil Ravi, Akhila Indhiya Meenavar Sangam. Owners of mechanised boats want the government to convene a meeting of exporters, transporters and MPEDA; provision of interest-free loan of ₹5 lakh a boat with subsidy; streamlining of local retail markets and steps to bring back workers from their homes. K. Bharathi of South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association said that though it was construed that the 61-day long fishing ban was on, nobody knew when it would end. "We hope it will be lifted by May 23. The State government had written to the Centre about this but there is no response from them as yet, he said.

**Tamil Nadu: Indian embassy wants us to pay \$100 per head to return: Fishers**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/indian-embassy-wants-us-to-pay-100-per-head-to-return-fishers/articleshowprint/75726921.cms>

"An audio clip purportedly of an Indian embassy official in the Iranian capital of Tehran asking fishermen, including many from Tamil Nadu, stranded in that country to mobilize \$100 each to return home by ship has stirred a controversy after it got widely circulated on social media. "If you are serious about returning home you should have \$100 US ready, the official is heard saying in the interaction with Tamil fishermen staying on Kish Island. This has left the desolate 700 fishermen from Tamil Nadu and their relatives here worried. "The conversation took place on Tuesday when our mates Stalin and Vincent called the official. On Wednesday I spoke to another official in the embassy who reiterated the same. Arranging Rs 7,500 plus (\$100 US) now is an uphill task as we have not been working for nearly three months, says Robinson, 34, of Kanyakumari who is working on Kish Island. The fishermen including those from Gujarat and Kerala have been pleading with the government to facilitate their return since February 22. Robinson told TOI that the embassy official told him that the money is the ferry charge for the ship that would take them to India.

"We don't even have money for our food. We told the officials that we will try to arrange the money after we return home, but they said 'no'. My relatives are struggling to arrange the money, he said. The official told them that it could take about two weeks for the ship to arrive. He asked the fishermen to get their passports from their employers and prepare the exit visa. "We told them that our employers are refusing to allow us to return and sought the embassy's intervention

in this regard. However, he said they cannot intervene and that we will be informed five days before the ship arrives, Robinson said. Robinson and another fisherman, Sahaya Ascar, working in Chiruyeh said the embassy had provided them raw materials to prepare food only once. "We received supplies in the third week of March but they lasted a week. Since boat owners don't provide us much, we have one or two meals a day, Ascar said. "We don't want to waste time in repatriating them by waiting for the government to waive the fare. But their relatives here feel that the embassy should permit them to deposit the money in an Indian account, said Meenavar Orunginaipu Sangam (MOS) secretary Charles Johnson.

### **Tamil Nadu: Radio links govt with fisherfolk**

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/radio-links-govt-with-fisherfolk-11589312327380.html>

"Gayathri Usman's life as station head of community radio station Kadal Osai, based on the island of Pamban that lies halfway between mainland India and Sri Lanka, could until recently be described as idyllic by city standards. A typical workday at Kadal Osai (meaning 'sounds of the ocean' in Tamil) involved broadcasting information about the price of fish, wind speeds and the weather, interspersed with traditional songs popular with the fishing community in the tiny island. Now, like the rest of the world, the coronavirus pandemic has upended old routines at the radio station and the lives of its listeners. Usman was forced to improvise the station's tried-and-tested programming format to bring news of the pandemic and the lockdown to fisherfolk unprepared for an extended lockdown and the precautions they need to take. From busting fake news to creating awareness about social distancing, the radio station in Ramanathapuram district in south Tamil Nadu has gained not only significance but also listeners over the lockdown. Such community radio stations, mostly run by nonprofits, are still the only voices that reach communities in remote places such as Pamban, their on-air patter often a lifeline for isolated communities. The fishing community in Pamban, much like others in India, is not used to the new measures to contain the spread of the virus. From the usual practice of four men to a boat, to scores of workers handling the catch during auctions at landing centres and then the retail markets, everything needed to be adapted to the new order. Officials from the fisheries department, the police and the panchayats use the radio station to announce new protocols, social distancing measures and other updates. "Many fishermen believe the salt in the air and the fish in their diet will give them immunity.

It is a difficult task to convince them to follow social distancing norms and wear masks," said Usman, who works for the Nesakkarangal Charitable Trust, which runs the station. Fisherfolk, most of whom live off each day's catch, were already worried about their livelihood when the lockdown came on 25 March. Most fishermen had stopped going to sea by 10 March as the winds were not favourable, said Usman. The lockdown, which came into force weeks ahead of

the annual 61-day fishing ban from 15 April to help sea species regenerate, increased the anxiety in the community. "We are getting a lot of requests to play traditional songs from the community. The most popular request is to play the amba song, which is sung by fishermen as they heave in unison dragging their boat from the shore and into the sea," she said. "The sea is life, and not being able to go out is very hard both mentally and physically."

V. Vivekanandan from the South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies and a former Food and Agriculture Organization consultant to the Tamil Nadu government, said, "With development activity pushing them from the shore side, and sea erosion squeezing them from the sea side, fishing hamlets are shrinking. This makes social distancing very difficult to enforce." People from the fishing community call the radio station with questions about the pandemic. So, the shows now have local municipal staff, doctors and the police as guests to understand the concerns that fishermen have, and work out how to address them. Government officials say there is now a semblance of order in fishing towns. "Landing centres are often the most crowded place as the auctioning happens. We have enforced social distancing norms...We have also told fishermen to take turns and go out fishing on alternate days," said Prabhavati, deputy director for fisheries department in Ramanathapuram district.

### **Tamil Nadu: Stranded fishermen from Karnataka, TN return**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/vijayawada/stranded-fishermen-from-karnataka-tn-return/articleshow/75664524.cms>

"The state government has brought home 921 fishermen from Andhra Pradesh who were stranded in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu since the lockdown was imposed. While 236 fishermen from Malipi and Mangaluru harbours in Karnataka reached the state on Sunday morning, 685 fishermen from Tamil Nadu came by train later in the evening. "Recently, the government had prepared a list 5,034 fishermen who got stranded in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The rest of the fishermen would start coming in phases from next week, said Arijili Dasu, a fisherman-activist in the state. The fishermen brought back are from the districts of Visakhapatnam, Vizianagram and Srikakulam. They have been sent to quarantine centres for 14 days upon their return. "The government has already announced a compensation of Rs 5,000 for each of the migrant fishermen from the state who got stranded at their workplaces because of the lockdown. The total number of beneficiaries would be around 10,000, added Dasu. Earlier, the government had evacuated 4,054 fishermen from Veraval Port in Gujarat and brought them back by buses. In addition, another 48 fishermen from neighbouring Odisha have also been brought home by the state government.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishing days raised in 31 coastal villages**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/fishing-days-raised-in-31-coastal-villages/articleshow/75587189.cms>

"The fisheries department in Kanyakumari district has increased the number of fishing days in 31 coastal villages starting Thursday. The decision comes following representations from fishermen and their associations. Till Wednesday, the villages were given turns to go for fishing twice a week from each of the villages. In some villages, where there are more boats, fishermen could go to the sea only once and this hardly helped them sail through the weekly expenses. "We also had to stop the fish landing and sale due to uncontrolled crowds that threw social distancing in the air and posed a threat to the spread of Covid-19, a fisheries official said. Fishermen associations said the crowd could be reduced if the number of fishing days is increased.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishing fest held flouting curfew rules**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/fishing-fest-held-flouting-curfew-rules/articleshow/75665347.cms>

"Around 100 people from Keelapatti village near Melur took part in the annual fishing festival held at the village tank on Sunday, violating social distancing norms. The participants brought various kinds of nets and tried their hands at fishing. While many had a good catch, a few were not lucky enough and returned. Villagers said that they have been conducting the festival for a long time now. They would make sure no one takes up fishing until the festival is conducted. While most of them took fish they caught home to be cooked and eaten with family members, some sold their catch to others. There was a good demand following an order from the district collector T G Vinay ordering a ban on function of fish and meat stalls on Sundays to prevent crowd gathering and spread of Covid-19.

### **Tamil Nadu: Bad weather delays fishers' return trip**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/bad-weather-delays-fishers-return-trip/article31552739.ece>

"A cyclonic system near the Andamans has put off the return journey of fishers from Tamil Nadu who were stuck there. Of the 260 fishers, 125 were to be brought back home on May 6 by a ship. But now that has been postponed. The fishers have no place to go and are staying on their boats. "It has been raining here and since there is no water in the well, we bathed in the rain. Now many of us have caught cold and some seem worse, said Selvam, a fisherman from

Cuddalore. The fishers from Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Kanniyakumari, Ramanathapuram and Rameswaram had gone to work on boats belonging to owners in the Andamans. "Only seven are boats from Kanniyakumari. We have been stuck in the boats for 45 days now without work. If the administration and owners fail to help us, we will end up dying of hunger. All of us want to come home, said P. Veeramani of Adhiramapattinam. An official in the Fisheries Department of Andamans and Nicobar said that only 125 persons had opted to go back home. "We had to reschedule the ship slated to leave on May 6 due to some cyclonic activity near Andamans. Very soon, a fresh date will be chosen and the fishermen will be sent back. Until that time, nobody will go hungry. Both the boat owners and the administration are providing them with rations, said an official. Nanjil P. Ravi of the Akhila Indhiya Meenavar Sangam, who has been trying to help the fishermen, said some owners had taken the Aadhar cards of the fishermen and were not permitting them to return. "The Tamil Nadu government must interfere and take steps to bring back all the men, including those pressured by the owners to stay there, he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen seek increase in diesel subsidy**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishermen-seek-increase-in-diesel-subsidy/article31529567.ece>

"After the recent hike in diesel prices, fishermen have urged the State government to increase the subsidy given to them for purchasing diesel. Even small boats going to the sea now require around 30 litres of diesel per trip per day, which translates into Rs.3,000 a month, and the fishermen will find it difficult, said M.D. Dayalan, Indian Fishermen Association. "In each boat 3-5 men will go and sometimes they will get as low as Rs.50 each a day. In such a situation coughing up an additional Rs.3000 a month would be too much, he added. Nanjil Ravi of the Akhila India Meenavar Sangam said that bigger boats which get subsidy for 1,800 litres would stand to lose much more. "For one 10-day-long trip, they require 7,000 litres, which means at current diesel rate, boat owners would have to spend around Rs.21,000 a month," he said. The increase in diesel price would also lead to a hike in fish prices, added Mr. Ravi. "Already fish prices are very high due to reduction in supply," he added.

### **Tamil Nadu and Odisha: A workshop on marine life to fund fisher families**

<https://www.thehindu.com/society/a-workshop-on-marine-life-to-fund-fisher-families-in-tamil-nadu-and-odisha/article31525855.ece>

"How do octopuses and cuttlefish put their excellent camouflaging abilities to use? What is a mantis shrimp? How important are food webs in the ocean ecosystem? How do coral reefs grow? Science enthusiasts Arun M Viji and Adam M Libby have the answers. Class X students of Chennai School Sishya, they are set to host Zoom sessions on Oceans and Marine Life for

children aged eight to 11. According to Arun, the hour-long sessions will teach participants about ocean ecosystems and the many “strange and wonderful creatures in them. “We plan to present lively videos and photos on the subject, says Arun, adding that they will also be inviting experts from research organisations such as the Indian Institute of Science and World Wildlife Fund to be part of the sessions. “The idea is to keep them interactive, so that kids develop a curiosity over the topic and the ability to engage with it, he adds. The registration fee for the six sessions is Rs.3,000, and the amount will go as donation towards Dakshin Foundation. The NGO is mobilising funds to distribute essential supplies kits to 3,300 families from fishing communities in Tamil Nadu and Odisha that have been affected by the COVID-19 lockdown. “When we came across the announcement, we decided to hold a fundraiser to support the cause, says Arun, who is also a surfer, and as a result, counts the fishing community amongst his friends and teachers. “We thought we would raise funds through meaningful interaction and teaching, he adds. “Each participant will be supporting the needs of one family from the fishing community for a month.

### **Tamil Nadu: Four days fishing allowed in 31 Kanyakumari villages**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/four-days-fishing-allowed-in-31-kanyakumari-villages/articleshow/75574110.cms>

"Following representations from fishermen and their associations, the fisheries department in Kanyakumari district has increased the number of fishing days in 31 coastal villages starting Thursday. Till Wednesday, the villages were given turns to go for fishing twice a week from each of the villages. Now, they get four days. These villages come under the officer of the deputy director of fisheries, Colachel. In some villages, where there are more boats, fishermen could go to the sea only once and this hardly helped them sail through the weekly expenses. “In some villages, we had to stop the fish landing and sale due to uncontrolled crowds that threw social distancing in the air and posed a threat of the spread Covid-19, a fisheries official said. This affected fishermen further. Fishermen associations in their representations said the crowd could be reduced if the number of fishing days during the ban period is increased more customers could get fish. Accordingly, the department issued an order on Wednesday saying they will be allowed to catch and sell fish on four days a week – Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday – abiding by social distancing norms. This is applicable only for traditional country craft and fibre boat fishing boats. Fisheries department officials said that the catch will be seized, licence given to the boats and permit given to the villages cancelled if the fishermen or village committees failed to abide by the 13 conditions listed out to them along with the permit to catch fish for four days a week during the lockdown period. However, the coastal villages have expressed concern over fishermen spending money on liquor instead of using it for their families. Tasmac outlets will reopen on Thursday. “Closure of Tasmac outlets helped us keep the

village in control during the lockdown. We don't know what will happen when the liquor shops reopen tomorrow, a village committee representative said

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen seek easing of stringent norms**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/fishermen-seek-easing-of-stringent-norms/articleshow/75543903.cms>

"Fishermen have appealed to the government to relax the stringent norms that are in place to govern fishing and sale of fish during the lockdown. One of their key demands is to allow them to fish six days a week against the existing practice of allowing fishermen from a village only twice a week. In its representation, Meenavar Orunginaipu Sangam (MOS) stated that the Centre's guidelines on May 1 allowed fishing activity as usual except for fishing ban clause. "But the Tamil Nadu government's report on May 2 has not given any specific information on the fishing industry which employs and feeds millions of people against the grave situation of growing unemployment and declining economy, president of the association, J Vincent said. Secretary C Johnson claimed that the fisheries department is arbitrarily stopping fishing and sale activities in some coastal villages. "Officials are doing it on the pretext that fish auction is attracting big crowds, he said. Meanwhile, the restrictions have resulted in shortage of fish availability in the market. "We give the first 200 tokens to our village, after which we give for outsiders, said a village committee representative who is handling fish sale in Vallavilai in Kanyakumari district. Such practices are leaving many consumers disappointed. They feel that permitting more boats to go fishing will bridge the demand-supply gap.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fibreglass boat fishermen seek permission to fish**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/may/02/fibreglass-boat-fishermen-seek-permission-to-fish-2138260.html>

"Fibreglass boat fishers in Kariakal have requested permission to resume fishing in the ongoing lockdown and ban period. They are currently under the fishing ban like their mechanised boat counterparts. Puducherry government officials took the decision this year after fishers were allowed to venture out to sea the previous year. Karaikal fibreglass fishers are growing anxious seeing their Nagapattinam counterparts who have been allowed to fish in the ban season. ""The fibreglass fishers want to fish at least thrice a week. They need to survive. We need fish at least to guarantee our food. Nagai fishers are fishing now, please allow Karaikal fishers to fish as well,"" said S Murali, a fisher from Kilinjalmedu. There are about 400 fibreglass fishing boats in 11 villages in the district. The villages are Mandapathur, Kaalikuppam, Akkampettai, Kottucherrimedu, Kasakudimedu, Kilinjalmedu, Karaikalmedu, Madhagadi, Karukkalacheri, TR Pattinam Pattinacherri and Vadakkuvanore. All have been banned from fishing.

There was an initial consideration to allow fibreglass boat fishers to fish during the ban season this year, like every year before. But it was dropped after officials in Puducherry objected to fishing altogether during the ban season, which is meant to allow fish to breed. Then, they had allowed catamarans and other non-motorised vessels to fish, as they do not have engines. The fishers stated the new directive has been hard on them. ""We are used to fishing only in fibreglass boats. We cannot sail in catamarans as we are not proficient with them. It is like asking us to ride bicycles after we are accustomed to motorcycles. We want to fish in our fibreglass boats. If we are allowed to fish, we assure we would follow all rules."" said G Dhanabal, a fisher representative from TR Pattinam Pattanacheri Speaking to TNIE, Deputy Director, Fisheries department, R Kaviyaran, said, ""We have written to the government to consider the possibilities of allowing fibreglass boat fishers to fish at least thrice a week. We are hopeful of getting a favourable response.""

### **Tamil Nadu: Fisheries sector affected in Tamil Nadu amid lockdown**

<https://in.news.yahoo.com/fisheries-sector-affected-tamil-nadu-133900987.html>

"Corona outbreak and nationwide lockdown has affected the fishermen in Rameshwaram to great extent. Fishermen are unable to repair their boats due to lack of spare parts amid lockdown. The annual 60-day fishing ban, which begins annually on April 15 to protect marine fisheries, will begin on April 15 when fishermen will work on repairing their boats and maintaining fishing equipments, including their nets. Workers are now unable to work as curfew is in effect. Some people are employed, but they are unable to work on the boats as there are no parts to repair it. Fishermen have demanded the government to take steps to open lath workshops, wooden spare part shops to repair the boats and to exempt curfew period for workers to work.

### **Odisha: Sea Voyage with Fiber Boats from Tamil Nadu**

<https://kalingatv.com/state/sea-voyage-with-fiber-boats-from-tamil-nadu-to-odisha-surprises-authorities-and-fishermen/>

"Sea voyage of fishing workers from Tamil Nadu to Odisha and Andhra Pradesh their home states, has surprised both the authorities and the local fishermen. "They know the sea, the climate and the wind. For them sea is nothing new. What's surprising is the use of fiber boats, not

known to travel such long distances and for long duration, said K. Bharathi, president of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association. Around 250 fishermen families from Odisha and Andhra Pradesh are living here. They work in big fishing boats and their income depend on catch per trip. Boat expenses are met by the boat owner. "Money was not a problem for them. They pooled money to buy nine fiber boats for Rs 1.5 lakh a boat, Bharathi said. They return to their home towns during the fishing ban season. But this time, the Covid-19 lockdown had confined them to the shore. It was followed by the fishing ban season. The workers were putting pressure on boat owners to send them home. But the Fisheries Department and the police didn't allow them to travel during the lockdown. Finally, they bought nine fibre boats and sailed out some five days ago, Bharathi said. The Coast Guards might have missed the boats, sailing not far away from the shore. They had stocked food and fuel before setting sail. The fishermen from Andhra Pradesh disembarked at Srikakulam, while others proceeded to Odisha. The Fisheries Department officials said they were not aware of their journey till the news broke out.

### **Tamil Nadu: Strong winds damage boats in Rameswaram**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/strong-winds-damage-boats-in-rameswaram/article31462501.ece>

"About 20 to 25 mechanised boats berthed in Rameswaram fishing jetty were damaged after gusty winds battered the area in the early hours of Wednesday. According to fishermen in the vicinity, the wind was so strong and it blew for about 20 to 30 minutes. As the lockdown was in force due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the residents did not venture out. Boat owners had to shell out amounts ranging from Rs.10,000 to Rs.1 lakh for repairs, said fishermen leader P. Sesu Raja. "All the boats have to be towed and anchored safely to the shore. While towing them, damages are bound to occur. Without repairing, it wouldn't be advisable to take them to sea, he added. With the lockdown and the annual ban on fishing already affecting their livelihoods, the fishermen are looking to the government for help. The damage to the boats only added to the woes of the fishermen, Mr. Sesu Raja said and hoped the government would immediately take steps for inspection of the damages and compensate the fishermen. "There is no way the fishermen can raise money for the repairs, he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fibre boats' use to navigate sea**

<https://www.newkerala.com/news/2020/75689.html>

"They know the sea, the climate and the wind. For them sea is nothing new. What's surprising is the use of fibre boats, not known to travel such long distances and for long duration," K. Bharathi, president of the South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association, told IANS. Around 250

fishermen families from Odisha and Andhra Pradesh are living here. They work in big fishing boats and their income depend on catch per trip. Boat expenses are met by the boat owner. ""Money was not a problem for them. They pooled money to buy nine fibre boats for Rs 1.5 lakh a boat,"" Bharathi said. They return to their home towns during the fishing ban season. But this time, the Covid-19 lockdown had confined them to the shore. It was followed by the fishing ban season. The workers were putting pressure on boat owners to send them home. But the Fisheries Department and the police didn't allow them to travel during the lockdown. Finally, they bought nine fibre boats and sailed out some five days ago, Bharathi said. The Coast Guards might have missed the boats, sailing not far away from the shore. They had stocked food and fuel before setting sail. The fishermen from Andhra Pradesh disembarked at Srikakulam, while others proceeded to Odisha. The Fisheries Department officials said they were not aware of their journey till the news broke out.

### **Tamil Nadu: Rough times for fisheries to get worse after Covid-19 lockdown is lifted**

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/rough-times-for-fisheries-to-get-worse-after-covid-19-lockdown-is-lifted-120040400841\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/rough-times-for-fisheries-to-get-worse-after-covid-19-lockdown-is-lifted-120040400841_1.html)

"The fishing industry in the southern part of Tamil Nadu has been impacted ever since the Government announced lockdown 12 days ago. Though fish has been mentioned as an essential in the Government list, fishermen simply aren't able to sell as several restaurants and markets are closed. The situation is expected to get worse after the lockdown is lifted as the annual fishing ban will come into effect on April 15. South India Fishermen Welfare Association President, K Bharathi, fishermen returning with their catch have been stuck as the fish supply chain on land is restricted. Many had already ventured out to sea when the lockdown was suddenly announced. And now, not even small non-mechanised country-boats are being allowed to go into the sea. The total ban is affecting the survival of those in this trade. ""They are allowing the movement of vegetables, milk and even fish feed in inland farms, but not fish. Why this double standards for those in the land and those at sea,"" asks Bharathi. There are around 4.5 million people relying on fishing in 13 coastal districts in Tamil Nadu. Chennai's Kasimedu fish market usually has 150-200 tonnes of fish on Sundays and 100-150 tonnes on other days. There are large fish markets like this in Kanyakumari, Thoothukudi, Rameswaram, Pudukottai, that sell similar or more quantities, apart from small boats venturing from other coastal villages. At least the fiber boats can be given permission to venture into the sea, Bharathi said. He noted, in Puducherry and Kerala, fishing is allowed with restrictions. The Association has requested the Fisheries Director to allow fiber boats to go to the sea thrice a week and allow selling the fish for restricted hours abiding the social distancing guidelines. While these are the challenges during the lock in period, post that from April 15 the other challenge for fishermen is the annual ban on fishing, which comes into effect on April 15 for 61 days to protect fishery resources and biodiversity during the breeding season. The Government enforces the ban every

year, restricting the fishing activities by all mechanised and motorised vessels fitted with inboard or outboard engines, excluding the non-motorised crafts. Fisheries Department has now informed the fishermen that it will consider the ban period from March 23, instead of April 15 and it will go extend May 23.

Normally, the government offers Rs 5,000 per family during the 61-day ban. It is now working on a total compensation fund of about Rs 242 crore, the Department said. However, there is no use of money if it does not come at the hour of the need and there is no timeline mentioned by the department for disbursement of the money, said Bharathi. The share of fisheries sector in the total GDP (at current prices) increased from 0.40 per cent in 1950-51 to 1.03 per cent in 2017-18. The sector contributed Rs 1,75,573 crore to the GDP (at current prices) during FY 2017-18 (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 2020). Southern states account for a major chunk of this. For example, the total fish production in Tamil Nadu is estimated at 712,000 tonnes during 2017-18. Tamil Nadu ranks fourth in total fish production of the country. It exported 88,257 metric tonnes of marine products and earned foreign exchange of Rs 4,341.78 crore during 2016-17. The contribution of fisheries to Andhra Pradesh's GSDP is 6.04 per cent. Overall fish production has more than doubled in the past one decade from 814,000 metric tonnes in 2005-06 to 2.76 million metric tonnes in 2016-17. During 2009-10, the total value of marine exports from Andhra Pradesh was Rs 2,100 crore, which is a 20 per cent share in total Indian sea food exports and enhanced to about Rs 17,000 crore during 2016-17.

### **Tamil Nadu: Rough times for fisheries to get worse after Covid-19 lockdown is lifted**

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/rough-times-for-fisheries-to-get-worse-after-covid-19-lockdown-is-lifted-120040400841\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/rough-times-for-fisheries-to-get-worse-after-covid-19-lockdown-is-lifted-120040400841_1.html)

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### **Tamil Nadu: Artificial reefs brim with marine life**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/apr/27/artificial-reefs-brim-with-marine-life-2135780.html>

"The artificial coral reef sites in and around the city have turned into reservoirs for marine life, thanks to restrictions on fishing activities following the Covid-19 spread and the subsequent lockdown. With trawler fishing banned and the dip in demand, there is little

disturbance in reef areas, resulting in arrival of newer fish stocks. Scientists at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) carried out a performance assessment study in March just days before the lockdown was enforced, at 10 reef sites mostly along the Chennai coast and neighbouring districts. They found healthy population of fish, including many commercial varieties like seer (vanjaram) that is sold for up to `1,000 per kg, in the areas. CMFRI principal scientist (mariculture division) Joe K Kizhakudan told Express that artificial reefs were set up almost a decade ago. “We continuously monitor these ecosystems and they were never as healthy as they are now. Sites in Besant Nagar, Kovalam, Chinna Neelankari, Valravankuppam, Lighthouse Kuppam and Semmancheri are all brimming with life. He said fishermen are even reporting presence of lion fish in the waters, which indicates healthy prey fish density.

We will also conduct a full assessment after the lockdown is lifted. As per our prediction, we expect bountiful catch during August and September provided the demand increases. Many reef fishermen, whom express spoke, also confirmed an increase in marine life. “We are able to net snappers, scads, perches, seer, seabass, croakers and trevally with ease. Since, there is very little demand due to the closure of hotels, restaurants and inter-district transport, we are only catching fish for local consumption, said Kaderivan, a fisherman from Pulicat. Venkat, owner of Ocean Delight Scuba in Kovalam, said reefs have really come alive in the region. Officials in State fisheries department also confirmed that lockdown coupled with annual fishing ban was replenishing the fish stocks. Since 2006, the Department of Fisheries has deployed artificial reefs in 35 coastal sites spread across eight districts and later in 2014, the International Funding for Agricultural Development (IFAD) assisted Post Tsunami Sustainable Livelihoods Programme of Department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj set up reefs in six coastal sites. Both initiatives received technical assistance from the CMFRI.

### **Tamil Nadu: Country boat fishermen suspend operations**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/country-boat-fishermen-suspend-operations/article31426004.ece>

"Even as fish price is skyrocketing, country boat fishermen in the district have decided to stop fishing operations as inmates of coastal hamlets fear that a huge number of traders would throng these villages causing viral infection. Fishing operations across the State came to a grinding halt in the third week of March after the State and the Central governments declared lockdown driving seafood lovers towards dry fish. Even as this stock was depleting, country boat fishermen urged the State government to allow them to resume operations so that consumers would continue to get seafood. The State government allowed country boat fishermen to fish in a regulated manner. However, mechanised boat fishermen could not do so as the 60-day annual fishing ban started on April 15. When the Centre exempted fishing operations by country boat

fishermen from the lockdown, the fishing schedule imposed by the State government vanished allowing country boat fishermen to go for fishing on all days. Though country boat fishermen of Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi districts agreed to resume their operations and sell catches as directed by officials, their counterparts in Kanniyakumari decided to abstain from fishing.

Each country boat is permitted to carry a maximum of four fishermen with mask and sanitiser. The catches should be brought to the shore and sold to traders in a regulated manner instead of allowing a huge gathering on the shore for purchase of fish through auction, the usual procedure. As only country boat fishermen were allowed, fish price increased with demand also going up. While one kg of barracuda (ooli), which was sold at ₹ 350 before the lockdown, was sold at ₹ 650 a kg and one kg of white snapper (velameen that was sold for ₹ 300) was sold at ₹ 600. Price of 'seela meen' (seer fish), the premium variety, crossed ₹ 1,000 a kg from ₹ 600 a kg. When fishermen from all 10 coastal hamlets in Tirunelveli district resumed operations, traders of Tirunelveli and Kanniyakumari, who had to go to Terespuram, Tharuvaikulam, Vembar and New Harbour Beach in Thoothukudi district for buying the fishes, rushed to these hamlets. So, even small catches fetched huge money for the fishermen.

“Our people enjoyed decent revenue after resuming operations, said Raymond of Uvari, the largest fishing hamlet of Tirunelveli. One sardine was sold for ₹ 13, which is an unprecedented price in the local market due to huge demand and low availability. Previously, even during the non-season, one could buy 3 to 5 sardines for ₹ 10 in the local market. There is no need for going into the prices of barracuda, white snapper, silver pomfret or seer fish, he added. “While barracuda is sold for ₹ 650 per kg, bigger size seer fish has crossed ₹ 1,000 a kg, says trader Antony Clyton of Kooduthaazhai, another coastal hamlet. Though demand for fishes is very high and fishermen are getting the best price for catches, country boat fishermen have decided to stop operations as they are worried that traders, coming to their villages from various parts, might bring infection to their hamlets. “We cannot regulate traders who compete with one another for buying our catches. Consumers from villages close to coastal hamlets too are coming to buy fishes. All coastal villages are thus crowded which cannot be controlled. So we've decided to suspend operations as of now, says fisherman Ramu of Idinthakarai. The fishermen look up to the Department of Fisheries and the police to regulate sale of fishes as the fishermen bring catches to the shore. “If officials design a system to buy fishes without crowd, it will be win-win situation for all. If such a system is put in place, all country boats in Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi will start fishing operations to bring down prices of fishes. Consumers too will continue to get fresh, delicious and nutritious seafood at right price, says Mr. Raymond.

**Tamil Nadu: Radio for fisherfolk spreads Covid word**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/radio-for-fisherfolk-spreads-covid-word/articleshow/75339562.cms>

"The fishermen in Pamban, a port town in Ramanathapuram district, believe that no 'virus' will enter their village from across the sea. Even if it crosses, they wouldn't get infected as they consume fish daily. With such misconceptions etched in the minds of people, Gayathri Usman, station head of the Kadal Osai, the exclusive channel for fisherfolk, had a tough task at hand to convince the community about the importance of social distancing in the initial days of the lockdown. A regular live session between 9am and 12pm on various topics related to Covid-19, however, opened people's minds. The Kadal Osai team is not new to calamities. It has helped fishermen during the time of cyclones and floods by providing information through its channel. However, if the concerns during those calamities was to save the antenna and transmitters, convincing fishermen about social distancing turned out to be a challenge now. Though the lockdown doesn't permit fishermen to venture into sea, some traditional fishermen were breaking the rule.

"Making the fishermen understand the seriousness of a new virus was difficult. Fishermen listen to their children. So we tried to convey the message through them to the elders in the family. And it worked out, said Gayathri, who is in constant touch with the police department and panchayat officials in updating health information she receives. Kadal Osai also keeps the younger generation engaged with quiz programmes. "We are happy that we get a lot of information about Covid-19 through Kadal Osai. They are useful for youngsters and elders alike, said S Meenakshi, a fisherwoman in Pamban. The team's first idea was to record episodes on various topics related to novel coronavirus and broadcast them. But a larger participation during live sessions made them opt for the second format. Once the radio station began broadcasting, it evoked tremendous response from people, particularly women and children of the fishing community.

From talking about fake news to daily inconveniences and use of social media, Gayathri and her colleague Lenin find a new topic to discuss everyday. "The ideas and opinions exchanged during the sessions helps us touch upon other social issues the community faces. Many women have come forward and spoken about the domestic difficulties that they deal with, she said. As Tasmac outlets are closed as part of lockdown, many fishermen have turned to gambling. "We had a session with a woman who approached us with a list of complaints about her husband. Since he was not getting liquor, he turned to gambling. Playing cards is becoming a serious issue among fishermen in Pamban today. We broadcast programmes with the consequences of gambling and hope that it will help, said Gayathri. Though she knows that Kadal Osai can cover only a radius of 10km, she sends out the audio clips through social networking sites as well to reach out to more people.

**Tamil Nadu: Why the lockdown exemption for fishing has brought little cheer to Chennai's fisherfolk**

<https://chennai.citizenmatters.in/covid-19-effect-on-chennai-fishermen-and-livelihoods-15612>

"April 15th is the day that marks the beginning of the annual 60-day trawling ban in Tamil Nadu. A ban that restricts fishermen with mechanised boats from venturing into the sea. A ban that sees fewer boats getting into the sea along the coastline of Chennai. Not this year. The Bay of Bengal was abuzz with activity on the 15th when scores of fishermen (mechanised boats are still banned) sailed into the sea after 21 days of the first phase of the nation-wide lockdown. While the lockdown was extended for another 18 days, the central government's move to exempt fishing and other marine activities from the lockdown brought a ray of hope for thousands of fishermen, who had become bankrupt over the three weeks of confinement. "Lockdown is worse than tsunami S Ethiraj, a 32-year-old fisherman, is among the few people who could get into the sea on Wednesday (April 15), maintaining strict protocols, of course. The fisheries department issued a token to 140 fishermen from the Madras Fishing Harbour at Royapuram.

"The catch was poor, says Ethiraj, adding that it was just enough for his family of seven. But he is happy that he could at least venture into the sea and the pent up anger at the government for not including fishing among essentials has subsided to a large extent. "These are the toughest times we have lived through ever. It feels like our hands are tied. The lockdown is worse than the tsunami, says Ethiraj, "We cannot even pledge our jewels as all the shops are closed. We had no choice but to borrow money to keep the family running. He spent more than Rs 8000 during the 21-day lockdown on mere essentials. A common question from all fishermen across the city during the 21 days till April 14th was this: If fruits and vegetables were essential commodities, why not fish? Their concerns were finally addressed when the central government announced a relaxation for fishing and marine aquaculture-related activities. Three departments Chennai Corporation, the Fisheries Department and the City Police now took a concerted decision to allow a specified number of boats into the sea twice a week.

"Fishermen in Chennai can venture into the sea on Wednesdays and Sundays. 50% of the boats in the fisheries villages under Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur districts can fish on alternate days. The village committee takes a decision regarding who can go when, explained K Bharathi, President of South Indian Fishermen Association. But where are the buyers? According to a press release from the fisheries department, auctioning of fish in fish landing centres and landing points shall not be allowed during the lockdown. "Village committee shall get quotes from buyers or agents for the various varieties of fish and the catch has to be handed over directly to them, said the release. This move was adopted to avoid crowding in retail spaces, says Assistant Director of Fisheries Department, G Velan. "As there has been an increase in coronavirus cases in Chennai, we cannot take the risk of opening up the fish markets to the public. The people are bent on buying fish from the nets, as they feel that's the only place they can get fresh fish, said Velan. But the government's strategy is not well thought out. Fishermen say that they do not

have the details of buyers or the varieties of fish they would be interested to buy. “We agreed to the rule even though selling fish in the wholesale market means a loss for us. But there has been no information from the fisheries department since then about buyers, said Manikandan S, a fisherman at Madras Fishing Harbour.

Women take the worst hit Women in these fishing villages are particularly badly hit and face irreparable financial loss. Traditionally, women from the community take over the responsibility of cleaning and selling the fish, after the fishermen come ashore with the catch. As the business has temporarily shifted from retail to wholesale, there is no space for these women. There are widowed women and others from troubled homes, which use this meagre income to run their household. One such woman is 46-year-old Parvathy Yesudas, the sole breadwinner of the family, earning about Rs 10,000 a month from the occupation. But not anymore. “When a woman earns, the money is spent wisely. My husband is an alcoholic, who earns only just enough for his liquor. With no income of my own now, I do not know how to get through this period, said Parvathy.

For many like Parvathy, rationed commodities from the state government are the only source of daily food. Some fisherwomen are now selling karuvadu (dry fish) from their homes, trying to make whatever measly amount they can from it and hoping that they will not get into trouble for that. They say that they are taking all possible precautions and maintaining social distancing norms. Lockdown, the annual fishing ban and no support from the government all these factors together have put the community in a tight spot. The fisherfolk demand that the government should either revoke the ban earlier than usual this year or provide them with livelihood support. However given that this is breeding season for many varieties of fish, lifting of the ban may not be an ecologically friendly move. The state government should instead take immediate steps to support the community and make the lockdown period easier for them by providing systematic and regular information about wholesale buyers.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen decide to resume fishing**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/fishermen-decide-to-resume-fishing/article31399082.ece>

"Fishermen in some of the hamlets in Nagapattinam who had earlier decided against venturing into the sea until the end of the lockdown period have now decided to resume fishing to cater to local requirements and self-consumption. The village committees have taken up the

responsibility of regulating the sale of fish to local traders in known circles. The fishermen are particular about not letting any outsider come to purchase the catches. Fishermen in Akkaraipettai and Keechankuppam have plans to set sail on Thursday night. As the annual fishing ban took effect on April 15, only motorised country boats have been permitted for fishing operations for the two-month period. The fishermen are expected to return to the shores before the specified time in the morning hours, and make sure that there was no crowding when the sale was effected. The fishermen were expected to take the catches to their hamlets, and avoid going to the fishing harbour for sale. "Fishermen, by and large, have been extending full cooperation to the government for containment of COVID-19 virus. Fishermen families have even given up eating fish during the containment period. We are very particular about making sure that there is no community transmission of the virus, Rajendran Nattar, a representative of the fishing community in Akkaraipettai said. "The government has already provided the Rs.1,000 relief per family for the lockdown period. But, the amount was hardly sufficient. Our only concern is whether the government will be transferring the fishing ban period allowance of Rs. 5,000 per fisherman in time, Mr. Rajendran said. Joint Director of Fisheries, Nagapattinam district, Amal Raj Xavier, said the department has already initiated the process of transferring the allowance to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.

#### **Tamil Nadu: 4.85L of fishing community get Rs 1K Covid aid**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/4-85l-of-fishing-community-get-rs-1k-covid-aid/articleshow/75260935.cms?>

"State fisheries department has disbursed a one-time financial aid of Rs 1,000 to members of the Fishermen Welfare Board, to help them tide over the Covid-19 lockdown period. Fisheries director G S Sameeran told TOI that 4.85 lakh members were registered with the board, including fish vendors and a Rs 48.5 crore has been allocated for the members. "The department has deposited Rs 1,000 to the bank account of 4.8 lakh members directly. The remaining 5,000 members will also receive the assistance in a couple of days, he said. A total of 14 such welfare boards function in the state and among them, fisheries sector has the maximum members. Fireworks industry workers come next with 1.20 lakh enrolled members, he said. Sameeran said the department is working on dispersing the fishing ban period allowance of Rs 5,000 per fishermen. A total of 1.75 lakh fishermen families will get the allowance in the state. This will also be credited to their bank accounts who have been enumerated. The beneficiaries have submitted their Aadhaar and bank account details with the department and verification of the details will begin soon, he added. The money will be credited after that.

#### **Tamil Nadu: How fisherfolk are bracing themselves to sail through COVID-19 storm**

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/how-fisherfolk-tamil-nadu-are-bracing-themselves-sail-through-covid-19-storm-122848>

"Prabha (28) of Sulerikadu, a coastal village in Kanchipuram district of Tamil Nadu, wakes up to the smell of the sea every day. Each morning, he spends two hours at the sea to get the day's catch before heading to his petty shop. Every day, Chitra (42) takes a share auto to the crowded Tiruporur market to sell the fish that her brother catches. She earns between Rs 200 and Rs 500 per day depending on the catch. Rekesh (38) of Nemmelikuppam was hoping to spend more time fishing this summer to save money for his children's school fees. None of them knew that their daily routine would come to a grinding halt as the alarming rise of COVID-19 cases led to India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi announcing a 21-day nationwide lockdown on March 25 this year.

**Implementing lockdown** In Sulerikadu, a small fishing village in the Bay of Bengal coast, the local administration used town criers to spread the message of lockdown and social distancing. Beating drums, the town criers made the announcements. "We have close to 250 fisher families here. We have ensured that no one from our village goes to the sea during the lockdown as fishing normally involves a group of more than five men, not to mention the crowded fishing market where our women sell the fish, Pazhani (50), village leader, told VillageSquare.in. "We have asked our men and women to stay put in their homes, hoping that the government would help us tide over the financial crisis this lockdown would bring on us, he said. He said that fishers normally make an average of Rs 500 per day and can get even Rs. 1,000 per day in the event of a good catch. "We step outside our village only to buy groceries, but some people do get together in the evenings within the village, Prabha told VillageSquare.in. He said that the coronavirus fear had gripped his small village and people were wary of anyone who coughed. **Need for screening** "It would be great if there's some medical camp to find out if there are any coronavirus cases in fishing communities like ours. Patients if any, should be identified and isolated, said Prabha.

This, he felt, would stop the spread of the disease even post-lockdown. "Yes, fishers work together and are a close-knit society; social distancing might be tough to implement here, social activist Dhivya Marunthiah told VillageSquare.in. "It would really help if we conduct screening camps in such densely populated regions. **Economic impact** Prabha fishes during season and runs a small ice-cream shop to supplement his meagre income. But the lockdown meant that he could do neither. "Fishers from Kovalam up to Mahabalipuram in this coastal stretch have completely stopped fishing, he said. Marunthiah said that only the dealers who can afford transit to bigger fish markets would survive such a scenario. "It is necessary that the government gets the local panchayat leaders to distribute groceries immediately and safely to people who depend on daily wages or on daily income like the small-scale fishermen and women, she said. Pazhani opined that the government's promised relief of Rs. 1,000 per family might help but said that aiding families with groceries during the lockdown might be more effective. "Even a storm would affect us merely for a few days but this lockdown effectively means we are out of business for three consecutive weeks.

We hope the government would help us to sail through this. Fishers' anxieties “We are not government or private employees to get salary even while on leave. Neither can we work from home. This has been the second worst thing that has happened to us after the tsunami, said Chitra. “We hope the government compensates us adequately. Rs 1,000 per family would hardly help. Rules or not, Chitra is too wary to go to the Tiruporur market to sell fish. “I have small children at home. We can't afford to fall sick or worse, infect our children, she told VillageSquare.in. She said that getting medical supplies for children has also been a challenge owing to the lockdown. Fisher Rekesh (33) is also worried for his children but for different reasons. “As it is, the school fees keep increasing every year and we struggle to keep the children at school. Come April, we have to save more to pay the annual fees and this lockdown has been such a blow to us. He said that previously in times of storms, they would fish for prawns and crabs in the Buckingham Canal. “Now, with industries using it as dumping yard for their waste, there is hardly any life in the water bodies near our village. The shutdown also means we cannot take even temporary jobs.

Social distancing Ariwarasan (35), social activist from Chennai, pointed out that though relief measures like providing grocery should be done on a war footing, he cautioned that social distancing should be exercised during these activities. Recently, ration shops in Madurai saw huge crowds jostling to get token for Public Distribution System (PDS) supplies, disregarding the whole purpose of a lockdown. The uncertain economic scenario has pushed some fishers to continue their fishing trips, defying the lockdown. Ariwarasan suggested that getting a popular fisherman to do an awareness video on the need for social distancing to protect the community from coronavirus might get the message across. Weathering the storm In fact, while fishers in these east coast villages refrained from fishing, last Sunday saw other fish markets across Tamil Nadu (in Salem, Coimbatore and in Chennai) flout social distancing norms, resulting in their complete shutdown till April 15. Till then, fishers like Chitra have it real tough as both men and women in the family are completely dependent on fishing for their livelihood. The villagers believe that the government aid might take a while to reach them. So they have begun borrowing money or pledging jewels to meet ends meet.

The fishers were uncertain of how long they would be able to sustain on their meagre savings and small loans. “We can't wait for this storm to cross over, Rekesh told VillageSquare.in, summing up the emotions of the fishing community.

### **Tamil Nadu: Coronavirus: Govt urges MEA to help stranded Indian fishermen in Iran**

<https://www.deccanherald.com/national/south/coronavirus-tamil-nadu-govt-urges-mea-to-help-stranded-indian-fishermen-in-iran-827680.html>

"The Tamil Nadu government on Monday urged the Centre to direct the Indian embassy in Iran to provide food and other basic necessities to around 1,000 fishermen, including 650 from

the state, stranded there in view of coronavirus threat and ensure their early return. Chief Minister K Palaniswami, in a letter to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, said the fishermen had been stranded in different parts of Iran since February and the state government had been receiving repeated requests from them and their families to provide them basic needs. Recalling that he had already taken up the matter with Jaishankar in February, he said around 1,000 fishermen from India, including 650 from Tamil Nadu, were stranded in Chiruyeh, Kish, Lavan, Bandar-eMogham, Asaluyeh and other places in Iran. Government of Tamil Nadu is receiving repeated requests from the stranded fishermen and their families to provide food, water and other basic needs and it is also reported to me that they are suffering in foreign soil without adequate food and other basic needs," he said in the letter. "Hence, I request your good office to direct the Embassy of India in Iran again to arrange food, water and other basic needs immediately to the stranded fishermen and also to arrange for their early return to India," the chief minister added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishing ban amid Corona lockdown dampens mood amongst Tamil Nadu fishermen**

<https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/india-news-fishing-ban-amid-coronavirus-lockdown-dampens-mood-amongst-tamil-nadu-fishermen/350855>

"The union government has declared fishing as one of the permitted activities following the graded relaxation of the lockdown from April 20. But Tamil Nadu's mechanised boat owners are not thrilled by the announcement. From April 14, the annual two-month ban on marine fishing along the east coast comes into effect to allow regeneration of marine life. The ban covers only the nearly 12,000 mechanised fishing boats that have motors above 10HP and not the smaller country boats most of which are powered by small outboard motors. The unpowered smaller boats are a vanishing species and account for less than 3,000 of the 60,000 licensed small boats in the state. To spur the fishing industry after 21 days of lockdown, the state government permitted the small boats to venture into the sea on a rotational basis from April 14, ensuring that only 50 per cent of the boats left from each village on alternate days. These boats are allowed to sail up to 12 nautical miles.

"This way every family with a boat gets their turn and there is also not much crowding in the berthing area. We have also asked the merchants who buy the marine catch to organise themselves in small batches to avoid a headlong rush towards the boats when they land, said an official of the fisheries department in Nagapattinam. But the plan lay in tatters on Wednesday when the first of the few boats returned to the shore with their catch as the merchants made a headlong rush towards the boats to buy the entire catch. "When fishermen and merchants have been idling for 20 days, naturally there will be a huge demand. We had been urging the small boat fishermen in Rameswaram to use masks and sanitizers, which we distributed free on

Monday. We would now try and educate the merchants as well, explained Armstrong Fernando, station director of Kadal Osai, an FM station devoted to fishermen. Even when the lockdown is relaxed, the 61-day ban on fishing by the mechanised boats from April 14 would render fishermen jobless till June 15.

Since these boats were anyway idling during the 21-day lockdown, their owners have now asked the government to include this period as part of the 61-day ban so they could venture out into the sea from May 23 rather than June 15. "It is a reasonable suggestion and we have referred it to the Centre recommending the same, said M Gopinath, assistant director of the state fisheries department. "Every mechanised fishing boat gives livelihood to 20 families and the compensation of Rs 5,000 per month for each boat during the ban period is hardly sufficient. They should increase it to Rs 10,000. Also, mechanised boats bring in the fish meant for the export markets. So the relaxation in the ban period after the 21-day lockdown would come help us get back on our feet, said N.J. Bose, secretary of the Tamil Nadu mechanised fishermen welfare association.

### **Tamil Nadu: Nagapattinam fishermen at sea due to uncertain market conditions**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/nagapattinam-fishermen-at-sea-due-to-uncertain-market-conditions/article31359756.ece>

"There has been a muted response on the part of fishermen to the permission granted by the Fisheries Department for entry of country crafts into the sea during the lockdown period in force for containment of novel coronavirus. The fishermen spend time in the sea only for a few hours and consciously restrict the quantum of catch as their requirement now is only for self-consumption. They are still not prepared to net bigger catch due to the uncertainties of the market conditions. The 'Mathi' variety fish that they net is sought after in Kerala. But, since the inter-State transport is restricted, coming back with large catches do not serve any purpose. There is still ambiguity over whether or not fish will be considered as an essential commodity for the purpose of hassle-free transport during the lockdown period, according to Kumaran, a fisherman belonging to Vedaranyam. The market for 'Mathi' variety fish is not encouraging in Tamil Nadu as the oil content is high. Traders from Kerala usually source the entire fish catches as the 'Mathi' variety fetches a good price in their State, Amal RaJ Xavier, Joint Director of Fisheries, Nagapattinam, said. ""Nevertheless, we expect the situation to improve gradually. As of now, the fishermen are entering into the sea to net catches for own consumption. There is, of course, a general perception among the fishermen that it would make sense to wait until the end of the lockdown period to enter into the sea for resumption of livelihood, he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fisherfolk could be in imminent danger of contracting COVID-19, say experts**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/apr/13/fisherfolk-could-be-in-imminent-danger-of-contracting-covid-19-say-experts-2129444.html>

"Fishers could be in imminent danger of contracting COVID-19 if they resume fishing. The Centre recently announced it is exempting fishing from lockdown restrictions. Irrespective of the possibility of extension of the lockdown, many experts states a return to fishing would be very risky, considering the number of surfaces fishers usually come in touch with. "Virus outbreaks are challenging to contain in places such as fishing hamlets. People need to be sensitised about social distancing and hand washing. Since they live in close proximity one another, it becomes more challenging. It is important to keep the virus out of fishing hamlets," said Dr K Gopala Rathinam, a retired public health officer. A study was conducted by The New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM), a weekly medical journal published by the Massachusetts Medical Society, on the surface lifespan of novel coronavirus, which has been recognised by WHO.

The journal states the virus can live on surfaces for a few minutes to four days. Surfaces like paper and tissue paper, copper, cardboard, wood, clothes, stainless steel, polypropylene plastic, glass and paper money are used in fishing. "The virus spreads through droplets from sneezing and coughing if an individual comes in contact with surfaces contaminated by another individual in places like boats and harbours in the case of fishers. It becomes dangerous and makes for circumstances for easy transmission of the virus," said Dr M Shalini, Consultant Epidemiologist, Meenakshi Multi Speciality Hospital, Thanjavur. Retired public health officer Dr S Balasubramanian said, "The virus spreads through contamination in aerosol, surfaces and direct contact. It is a seventh-generation mutated virus. The risk of the virus spreading in places like fishing villages is quite high once there is an outbreak." The annual fishing ban for states such as West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry is in effect from April 15 to June 14.

The ban differs for States like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala, who fish in the west in the Arabian Sea. Their ban starts on June 1 and ends on July. 31. This ban applies to mechanised boat fishers, while fibreglass boat fishers are exempted from the ban. Speaking to TNIE, R Amal Xavier, Joint Director, Fisheries department, said, "We are planning to block mechanised fishers from fishing as the annual ban is only a couple of days away. We have sought opinions from representatives of fibreglass boat fishers. Some of them, particularly in southern parts like Nagapattinam taluk, have said they would refrain from fishing. Representatives in villages in some of the north taluks like Sirkazhi and Tharangambadi have expressed their willingness to go to sea." Fishers have mixed opinions. S Karthikeyan, a fisher representative from Poompuhar, said, "We cannot maintain social distancing as there would be crowds in the harbour when we land with fish. We cannot focus on work if we have to focus on washing hands every half an hour after touching surfaces." District Collector Praveen P Nair

said, ""We would conduct a meeting with stakeholders and participants of the Crisis Management Committee and take a call on whether to allow fishers to resume or not.""

### **Tamil Nadu; Consider lockdown, end fishing ban by May 23: TN urges Centre**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/apr/15/consider-lockdown-end-fishing-ban-by-may-23-tn-urges-centre-2130254.html>

"To avoid a double whammy of lockdown and subsequent 61-day ban on fishing during breeding season, the State government has asked the Union Ministry of Fisheries to consider the ban enforcement this year in retrospect, from March 24. Usually, the ban begins on April 14. If realised, the move will help large and small fishermen, who have not been able to fish since the lockdown began, and would have to stay home until the ban ends mid-June. Fisheries director GS Sameeran said that Chief Secretary K Shanmugam has already written to the Centre in this regard. As per the letter, dated March 30, it is proposed that the ban on fishing along Tiruvallur and Kanniyakumari coast this year be considered between March 24 and May 23. Most coastal States have made a similar request, says Sameeran. Fishermen are relieved to find out about the development.

"This will give us a breather, says G Kattandi of Kasimedu Mechanised Boat Owners Association. For traditional and motor-boat fishers, government has given guidelines to be followed so that they can resume operations. There are over four lakh people who earn a livelihood through traditional and motor-boat fishing. All district collectors have been requested to allow fishing by these means, but with restrictions to ensure hygiene and social distancing. Officials have been asked to allow fishing with minimal crew, follow a rotational system in allowing fishing villages go to work, and not hold auctions. Instead, village committees can get the quotes from the buyers/agents for various varieties of fish and the catch has to be handed over to the buyers directly. Fish landing will be transported to the nearby markets, stalls, shops etc. through the vehicles for which necessary identification cards will be issued. The "Crisis Management Committees headed by district collectors will monitor the entire fishing activity and ensure compliance, a statement from fisheries department said.

### **Tamil Nadu: TN permits traditional, motorised boats to fish on a rotation basis**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/tn-permits-traditional-motorised-boats-to-fish-on-a-rotation-basis/articleshow/75149585.cms>

"The state government has permitted fishing in non-mechanised country and mechanised crafts in 13 coastal districts with stringent restrictions three weeks after banning it to prevent Covid-19 spread. This is only applicable for boats with less than 10hp. Mechanised boats engaged in trawling and deeps sea fishing will not be allowed as the annual 61-day ban on

fishing on the east coast has begun. According to a statement from the fisheries department, restoration of traditional fishing is aimed at ensuring the supply of the important source of nutritious protein rich food to the public during the lockdown period. “There are 40,000 mechanised and 8,000 non-mechanised crafts that will be allowed to fish during the remaining lockdown period. This will directly provide employment to two lakh fishermen and an equal number of persons in the indirectly dependent sectors, fisheries director G S Sameeran told TOI. Based on the orders of the ministry of home affairs and decision taken by the Tamil Nadu government, the respective district collectors have been requested to allow fishing with strict compliance to restrictions and regulations to ensure that social distancing and other hygienic practices are followed. One of the major restrictions to avoid crowds is banning the auctioning of fish and retail sales.

While fisherfolk and representatives said that this is completely against the norms, officials said that it is to reduce the number of people coming to the fishing harbours, landing centres and points. Instead, the respective village committees will fix the price. Other restrictions include allowing only minimum crew members on a boat and allowing villages to fish on a rotational basis. Only 50% of the fishing villages in a district and 50% of the operational motorised and traditional crafts in a village shall be allowed to fish in a day. A maximum of 300 boats will be allowed in a day in major fishing harbours and landing centres. Number of fishing boats which should go for fishing will be decided by the “Crisis Management Committees headed by the district collector. Vessel owners should ensure that protective gears are provided to the crew members. Meanwhile, traditional fishing resumed in a few districts including Tuticorin on Monday, but some villages in Kanyakumari have decided not to venture into the sea till the lockdown comes to an end.

### **Tamil Nadu: Govt. allows fishing, but not direct sale to consumers**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/govt-allows-fishing-but-not-direct-sale-to-consumers/article31342432.ece>

"Local vendors tying up with traders who will supply fish in different localities'. Though fishermen using traditional craft and motorised boats have been allowed to fish during the lockdown, selling directly to consumers has not been allowed. Issues pertaining to sale of fish have created problems in many villages, including in Kasimedu, from where fishers of 14 hamlets operate. M. D. Dayalan of Indian Fishermen Association said there were discrepancies in the information passed on to villages and the local officials, which led to villages deciding to

not go fishing. "The order by the Central government said that fishing activities could be resumed. If fishermen are to go for fishing just for self consumption, only one or two boats per day would do. They need cash in hand for which they have to sell their catch, he said. To avoid crowding an official of the Fisheries department clarified that the idea was not to allow consumers come to the fishing harbours or fish landing centres to avoid crowding. "Local vendors are tying up with traders who will supply fish in different localities. Wholesalers can also buy fish, those tie ups too are being made, he said. A total of two lakh fishermen are directly employed in traditional and motorised sector and another two lakh labourers indirectly depend on this sector. Minimum crew fishing is being permitted with minimum crew members on a rotational basis, without auctioning. In major fishing harbours and fish landing centres, where congregation of boats is higher, only a maximum of 300 motorised boats would be allowed and they could return only in a staggered manner.

**Tamil Nadu: Fisherfolk could be in imminent danger of contracting COVID-19, say experts**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/apr/13/fisherfolk-could-be-in-imminent-danger-of-contracting-covid-19-say-experts-2129444.html>

"Fishers could be in imminent danger of contracting COVID-19 if they resume fishing. The Centre recently announced it is exempting fishing from lockdown restrictions. Irrespective of the possibility of extension of the lockdown, many experts states a return to fishing would be very risky, considering the number of surfaces fishers usually come in touch with. ""Virus outbreaks are challenging to contain in places such as fishing hamlets. People need to be sensitised about social distancing and hand washing. Since they live in close proximity one another, it becomes more challenging. It is important to keep the virus out of fishing hamlets,"" said Dr K Gopala Rathinam, a retired public health officer. A study was conducted by The New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM), a weekly medical journal published by the Massachusetts Medical Society, on the surface lifespan of novel coronavirus, which has been recognised by WHO. The journal states the virus can live on surfaces for a few minutes to four days. Surfaces like paper and tissue paper, copper, cardboard, wood, clothes, stainless steel, polypropylene plastic, glass and paper money are used in fishing. ""The virus spreads through droplets from sneezing and coughing if an individual comes in contact with surfaces contaminated by another individual in places like boats and harbours in the case of fishers. It becomes dangerous and makes for circumstances for easy transmission of the virus,"" said Dr M Shalini, Consultant Epidemiologist, Meenakshi Multi Speciality Hospital, Thanjavur. Retired public health officer Dr S Balasubramanian said, ""The virus spreads through contamination in aerosol, surfaces and direct contact. It is a seventh-generation mutated virus. The risk of the virus spreading in places like fishing villages is quite high once there is an outbreak.""

The annual fishing ban for states such as West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry is in effect from April 15 to June 14. The ban differs for States like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala, who fish in the west in the Arabian Sea. Their ban starts on June 1 and ends on July. 31. This ban applies to mechanised boat fishers, while fibreglass boat fishers are exempted from the ban. Speaking to TNIE, R Amal Xavier, Joint Director, Fisheries department, said, ""We are planning to block mechanised fishers from fishing as the annual ban is only a couple of days away. We have sought opinions from representatives of fibreglass boat fishers. Some of them, particularly in southern parts like Nagapattinam taluk, have said they would refrain from fishing. Representatives in villages in some of the north taluks like Sirkazhi and Tharangambadi have expressed their willingness to go to sea."" Fishers have mixed opinions. S Karthikeyan, a fisher representative from Poompuhar, said, ""We cannot maintain social distancing as there would be crowds in the harbour when we land with fish. We cannot focus on work if we have to focus on washing hands every half an hour after touching surfaces."" District Collector Praveen P Nair said, ""We would conduct a meeting with stakeholders and participants of the Crisis Management Committee and take a call on whether to allow fishers to resume or not.""

### **Tamil Nadu Fishermen yearn for fish, seek permission to go fishing**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/fishermen-yearn-for-fish-seek-permission-to-go-fishing/article31296032.ece>

"Fishing hamlets are urging the government to at least allow country craft to go fishing. Fish being an important source of protein and since fishers are used to having fish everyday, fishing hamlets are urging the government to allow at least country craft to fish. "It is now the season for nandu, nethili, kaarapodi and kaanankeluthi. We have run out of stocks of dry fish. Now we are dependent on sambar or karakozhambu everyday, which is tiresome and the children are clamouring for some fish. Our families are used to having fish as part of the daily diet without which they are not eating well. They seem to have lost their appetite, said B. Anusya, a home-maker from Nochikuppam while narrating an incident on Saturday when the police allegedly took away three baskets of fish meant to be shared between a few families. At Nettukuppam, fishers said they have not been to the sea for over 15 days now. "It is indeed difficult for us. Homes did not have time to stock up on dry fish since the lockdown came very suddenly. We usually stock up during the fish ban and also around the monsoon. The government should permit the small boats at least to fish, said Joseph of Nettukuppam. An industry expert said that when agricultural activities had been allowed, fishing by country craft could also be allowed. "There will be a maximum of three men per boat. The government can regulate timings of their landings and not allow purchase by outsiders. This will prevent crowds from gathering, he said.

## **Tamil Nadu: Lockdown: Small fishermen urge government to let them fish**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/small-fishermen-urge-government-to-let-them-fish/article31280531.ece>

"Appealing to the government to allow small fishermen in the coastal region to go out fishing, CITU district secretary M. Karunamoorthy has said that it would bring in big relief as thousands of fisherfolk here experienced hardships due to COVID-19 lockdown. There were 130 fishing villages in the district spread across Thangachimadam, Pamban and other surrounding hamlets. Close to 50,000 men and women were directly dependent on the fishing industry. Another 50,000 people benefited through the industry indirectly such as selling the produce, transporting the fish from one end to another and so on. With the curfew in place, the fishermen have been remaining indoors since March 24, he said. Appreciating the governments and the civic authorities on the steps taken to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Karunamoorthy, however, pointed out a flaw pertaining to the bc fishing community.

When Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar had announced that like vegetables and milk, fish would also be permitted to be sold in markets, what prompted the officials from not giving permission, he asked and said that under the pretext of social distancing, the fisherfolk have been asked not to venture into the sea. The small and marginal fishermen ventured into the sea less than one nautical mile in their boats. The catch would be sold in local markets, which would help the fishermen community to remain independent economically. "We can strictly follow social distancing both in the sea and off the sea, he said. By forcibly making the fishermen stay indoors, the issues of running the family has become a big question mark and poverty was at its peak.

"Where the fishermen will go to buy essential commodities, he asked. The government, which gives a paltry sum of Rs.5000 to the fishermen during the annual ban period to allow production, should consider giving Rs.10, 000 now in the COVID-19 pandemic situation to every individual. He further said that the ban period to facilitate fish production starts during April and goes on till mid-May. With the situation is not very conducive now for the fishermen to venture out of their dwellings, it would be timely for the government to help by giving relief immediately, he suggested. P. Sesa Raja, a mechanised boat fishermen association leader, said that the government can consider reducing the 45-day ban period as fishermen had not ventured into the sea since March 24. Antony, a fisherman in Thangachimadam said that drinking water had become very scarce in the villages. "We have to pay Rs. 50 or Rs.60 per can of 25 litres as other sources are not good for health. With literally no cash in hand, the future remains bleak. The government should immediately look into our plight and help pull us out of the economic crisis, he urged. A senior official in the Fisheries Department in Chennai who spoke to The Hindu over telephone on Tuesday, conveyed that more than allowing the fishermen into the sea, saving their lives from the prevailing pandemic was being accorded top priority. The COVID-19 pandemic

was threatening the society in a big way that if fishermen were permitted to go in groups, it would defeat the objective of social distancing. The government would consider their plea to reduce the ban period and examine the modalities as to when to venture into the sea for fishing, he assured.

### **Tamil Nadu: Rs.70 crore-worth fish waiting to be offloaded**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/70-crore-worth-fish-waiting-to-be-offloaded/article31280984.ece>

"The COVID-19 scare, which has delayed the offloading of about Rs.70 crore-worth fish harvested in deep sea, may cause huge loss to fishermen of Kanniyakumari district. Around 700 mechanised boats from Thoothoor region in western part of the district ventured into the sea in February and March and have returned to their bases with decent harvest of fish, mainly tuna, a pricey and much sought-after variety in foreign countries. Each of the mechanised boats, carrying 12 crew members, spent between Rs.4 lakh to Rs.5 lakh towards fuel and grocery, ice bars etc. "In all, around Rs.70 crore-worth fish have been preserved in the mechanised boats now with the ice-bars they carried with them. Since the catches have already been preserved for more than 35 days, the boat owners should be allowed to sell the fish without any further delay by allowing the traders, mainly exporters from Kerala, to buy the premium marine products. If the district administration seeks help from Marine Products Exports Development Authority, it will in no time alert exporters registered with it to buy the fish, says Antony Pitchai, a fisherman of Poothurai.

Since Thengaaipattinam fishing harbour has been closed after a resident tested positive for COVID-19, the fishermen suggest that the boats, now anchored in various villages, should be allowed to offload the catch at Irayumanthurai fishing harbour. "If a disinfectant tunnel is created at Irayumanthurai, local sellers and others coming to the harbour to buy the fish may be asked to walk through it before entering the harbour, says Sunil Sabariar, a fisherman of Vallavilai. Although an ice-plant at Irayumanthurai has been allowed to function to supply ice bars to the waiting boats, the fishermen say it will not be effective. "Since 35 days have already lapsed, the fish should be sold immediately. Else, it will cause a huge loss to us, adds Shafi of Irayumanthurai. Fisheries officials say the 20 boats are being allowed to sell the fish daily to avert crowding and tokens have already been given to them. "This mechanism alone will save the fishermen and the visiting traders from getting infected. So, they should cooperate with us.

### **Tamil Nadu: Small fishermen urge government to let them fish**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/small-fishermen-urge-government-to-let-them-fish/article31280531.ece>

"Appealing to the government to allow small fishermen in the coastal region to go out fishing, CITU district secretary M. Karunamoorthy has said that it would bring in big relief as thousands of fisherfolk here experienced hardships due to COVID-19 lockdown. There were 130 fishing villages in the district spread across Thangachimadam, Pamban and other surrounding hamlets. Close to 50,000 men and women were directly dependent on the fishing industry. Another 50,000 people benefited through the industry indirectly such as selling the produce, transporting the fish from one end to another and so on. With the curfew in place, the fishermen have been remaining indoors since March 24, he said. Appreciating the governments and the civic authorities on the steps taken to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Karunamoorthy, however, pointed out a flaw pertaining to the bc fishing community. When Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar had announced that like vegetables and milk, fish would also be permitted to be sold in markets, what prompted the officials from not giving permission, he asked and said that under the pretext of social distancing, the fisherfolk have been asked not to venture into the sea. The small and marginal fishermen ventured into the sea less than one nautical mile in their boats. The catch would be sold in local markets, which would help the fishermen community to remain independent economically.

"We can strictly follow social distancing both in the sea and off the sea, he said. By forcibly making the fishermen stay indoors, the issues of running the family has become a big question mark and poverty was at its peak. "Where will the fishermen go to buy essential commodities, he asked. The government, which gives a paltry sum of ₹5000 to the fishermen during the annual ban period to allow production, should consider giving ₹10,000 now in the COVID-19 pandemic situation to every individual. He further said that the ban period to facilitate fish production starts during April and goes on till mid-May. With the situation is not very conducive now for the fishermen to venture out of their dwellings, it would be timely for the government to help by giving relief immediately, he suggested. P. Sesu Raja, a mechanised boat fishermen association leader, said that the government can consider reducing the 45-day ban period as fishermen had not ventured into the sea since March 24. Antony, a fisherman in Thangachimadam said that drinking water had become very scarce in the villages. "We have to pay ₹ 50 or ₹60 per can of 25 litres as other sources are not good for health. With literally no cash in hand, the future remains bleak. The government should immediately look into our plight and help pull us out of the economic crisis, he urged. A senior official in the Fisheries Department in Chennai who spoke to The Hindu over telephone on Tuesday, conveyed that more than allowing the fishermen into the sea, saving their lives from the prevailing pandemic was being accorded top priority. The COVID-19 pandemic was threatening the society in a big way that if fishermen were permitted to go in groups, it would defeat the objective of social distancing. The government would consider their plea to reduce the ban period and examine the modalities as to when to venture into the sea for fishing, he assured.

**Tamil Nadu: The troubled ascent of a marine ring seine fishery**

<https://www.epw.in/journal/2020/14/special-articles/troubled-ascent-marine-ring-seine-fishery-tamil.html>

"The transition to ring seine fishing in India is examined, paying special attention to the implications of legal pluralism. Ring seine fishing developed in niches and spread swiftly throughout the subcontinent, dividing the fisher population into fervent protagonists and antagonists. It is argued that sociotechnical innovations are often contested, and that rival parties apply alternative legal regimes to advance their rights. Fieldwork in Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu suggests that regimes function as arenas for deliberating and battling alternative futures in fishing and mask deep sociolegal divides. Full text is available at: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2020/14/special-articles/troubled-ascent-marine-ring-seine-fishery-tamil.html>

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishers oppose advancing of uniform fishing ban period**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/fishers-oppose-advancing-of-uniform-fishing-ban-period/articleshow/75000269.cms>

"The National Fish Workers' Federation has demanded the state fisheries to withdraw its plan to enforce the uniform fishing ban between March 23 and May 23, instead of April 15 to June 15. Fishers fear that the change would affect the livelihood of traditional fishers on a large scale. "Following the Covid-19 outbreak, the livelihood of marine fishers and their allied workers has been affected. The federation had already raised concerns on the Centre's Covid-19 relief package which should be revised. At this juncture, it came to light that chief secretaries of fisheries in different states had proposed the union government to advance the uniform fishing ban period between March 23 and May 23, vice-president of the association RV Kumaravelu said. "We are grateful to the state fisheries secretaries' for their concerns towards the welfare of fishers. However, their humanitarian concerns will dissolve our rights to well-being. If the ban is advanced, the rejuvenation of marine eco-system may not happen. Without announcing any relief package, they are trying to link this with the ban period relief. The disaster relief should be separate and should not be linked with any other existing relief packages, he added. "Our concerns towards mechanised boat owners is that Covid-19 lockdown scenario had inflated price hike even for basic essential commodities. Hence, mechanized boat owners will face difficulty in repairing their boats. This will also impact the fish workers and allied sectors, he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Covid-19 lockdown: Fish in stock, but fishermen at sea**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/covid-19-lockdown-fish-in-stock-but-fishermen-at-sea/articleshow/74915587.cms>

"In Thoothoor region of Kanyakumari, seer fish which usually costs Rs 700 is now available at Rs 200. It's a steal for fish lovers, but reflects the threat that deep sea fishermen are

facing. Stringent restrictions on transportation of fish from the harbour and drastic drop in exports, in view of the national lockdown to contain the Covid-19 crisis, is forcing fishermen to sell their catch for a third or fourth of their usual price. Fishermen as well as the traders say the losses could go up to a few crores as selling it is the only option to save their hard earned catch from rotting. More than a hundred deep sea fishing boats with their unsold catch are anchored at the Thengapattanam fishing harbour in Kanyakumari district. At least 200 more boats are expected to land with catch before April 5 (Palm Sunday). Prior to the lockdown, Cochin fishing harbour, being the hub of export, used to be the preferred destination for these boats. On February 27, P Dickson of Vallavilai village of coastal Kanyakumari set out to sea from Cochin equipped with material worth Rs 7.2 lakh for a month-long expedition. But a rude shock awaited him when he returned. The Cochin harbour was closed and he anchored at Thengapattanam. “The crisis had affected many countries when we went fishing, but we did not expect it to be so bad. My catch is worth Rs 17 lakh, but even if I can sell it for Rs 5 lakh, it will help, said the boat owner, for whom it would mean a loss of at least Rs 2 lakh in addition to the wages he has to pay his crew.

As ice in the cold storage facility inside the boat melts, the fishermen are forced to spend on fresh ice to preserve the fish at least for a few more days. Many fear that their entire stock will rot as the boats have to wait for their turn to sell the catch. “There are more than 100 boats before mine, said a boat owner. “At least 30 of the 110 boats have fish worth Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh and the rest have fish worth at least Rs 5 lakh, he said. While officials estimate the average stock per boat to be around 3.5 tonnes, fishermen say it would be nearly 6 tonnes. Though fisheries department officials admit the catch is being sold at throwaway prices, Kanyakumari district administration is against auctioning of fish at the harbour, the usual mode of business, as it would lead to crowding and flouting of social distancing orders. After talks with boat owners and traders, the authorities have allowed boats to land at the harbour and hand over fish to traders in the past three days. But the arrangement comes with strict restrictions not more than 20 boats can land a day. There is also a cap on traders and workers handling the fish and the number of trucks that can transport them. This too is allowed from 9pm to 5am. Supervisor of the Thengapattanam harbour T Regu Raj said there were more than 275 deep sea fishing boats in the harbour till Sunday night, including the ones that have unloaded. “Usually five to 10 boats come here every day. It is easy to accommodate them as most other boats go to Cochin. Due to Covid-19 crisis not less than 20 boats are coming here every day. This harbour does not have the capacity to hold the hundreds of big boats from the region. I am afraid at least 200 are expected before Palm Sunday, he said. Guest workers in troubled waters without wages, food Nearly 500 guest workers, employed in the boats at the Thengapattanam fishing harbour in Kanyakumari are seeking help from anywhere they can find.

On Sunday morning, this reporter was approached by Radha Das, 48, from a village near Kolkata and his brother Nandu Das, 40, with request of some food. Unable to communicate in the local

language they tried speaking in in Hindi. “Our employer is from Kollam, in Kerala. He dropped us here and left. For the past 10 days without money, we are surviving on leftovers of the crew on another boat, said Radha Das. They are among the workers from Odisha, West Bengal and Assam who are employed on deep sea fishing boats in Kanyakumari's Thoothoor region. With business at a standstill, the boats no longer have enough provision to sustain them. While groceries are running dry for some, others are running out of cooking gas, add to this the protocols of lockdown. “We don't have masks. I was chased by the police when I tried to leave the harbour to get masks. We are unable to leave the harbour. We need of help, said Lattan Das from Kolkata, who has been working as a fisherman for five years. Assistant director of fisheries for Colachel region said 525 workers from north India worked in the fishing harbours in Kanyakumari.

“The boat owners are responsible for providing them food and other basic amenities till the lockdown ends, he told TOI. With Goa jetty closed, trawlers dump fish at sea In Goa, the fisheries department gave fishermen only till March 31 to unload their catch at jetties, leaving boat owners worried about the fate of the vessels that are still at sea. Fishing activities will stop from April 2 onwards till further intimation as per the government order. “Unloading was done after all boats arrived and anchored. Any leftover vessels may arrive late in the night, but they will be stuck within the jetty since the gates are locked, said Francisco Fernandes a worried boat owner from Malim jetty. These are big boats that had left before the lockdown was announced and out at deep sea it is difficult to communicate with them even by wireless. “Some trawlers have therefore started throwing their fish out because fish like tuna, horse mackerel, catfish, etc, are not eaten by Goans and the fishmeal plant is closed, he added.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishing ban dates likely to be changed for this year**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishing-ban-dates-likely-to-be-changed-for-this-year/article31231059.ece>

"The annual fishing ban for mechanised boats in the State is likely to be advanced this year. It usually begins on April 14 and goes on for 61 days. However, since fishermen have already been asked to abstain from fishing, the government has written to the Central government, urging that the ban be considered from March 23 till May 23, instead of June 14. Fisheries Department director G.S. Sameeran said that the Chief Secretary had written the letter and several other States too had followed suit. “We are doing it in the interest of the fishers since otherwise the ban would begin one day ahead of the lifting of the lockdown and they would have to remain

without work for another two months. Now, they can save three weeks, he explained. If the suggested change is implemented, the fishing ban dole is likely to be paid in April itself. Fishers using mechanised boats on the eastern coast of the country usually abstain from fishing from April 14 so that marine resources can be replenished. Those on the western coast begin their ban as soon as this one is lifted. In Tamil Nadu, there are a total of 10.48 lakh marine fishers, 5,806 mechanised craft and 41,652 traditional boats. During the ban there is no restriction on fishing by traditional craft. Fishers said that though the idea was good, the condition of labourers in mechanised boats would be affected. They would have to pay school fees and have other expenses.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish market closed till April 14 in Coimbatore**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/coimbatore/fish-market-closed-till-april-14/articleshow/74902076.cms>

"After people thronged the fish market on Selvapuram Bypass, the city corporation has directed the shopkeepers to close the market from Tuesday. On Sunday, when the fish market and farmers' markets were reopened, people thronged the market throwing social distancing norms to the wind. The crowd was dispersed only with the help of police. "After seeing the crowd at the fish market, corporation officials held a meeting with the shopkeepers of the market. After officials pointed out the consequences of not following the social distancing at this time, the shopkeepers agreed to close the market from Tuesday, a corporation source said. The source said that the market would be reopened on April 15. Meanwhile, the corporation has given permission to set up markets on the premises of bus stands at Ukkadam and Mettupalayam. It has also requested the public to follow social distancing norms.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen attacked by 'another tsunami'**

<https://newstodaynet.com/index.php/2020/03/31/fishermen-attacked-by-another-tsunami/>

"It has been 11 days since Karunakaran, a fisherman from Nemili, ECR has taken his fiber boat into the sea for fishing. On his boat, he has employed five other fishermen who too have not ventured into sea. Fish has been mentioned as a essential in the government list for the Covid-19 lockdown period, but the fishermen from several hamlets around the city are being confined to their houses due to practical difficulties and restrictions. The situation is expected to get even more worse as the fishing ban period begins on 15 April, a day after government lockdown ends. Speaking to News Today, South India Fishing Welfare Association, president, K Bharathi says, "Since the lockdown was announced, fishermen are not going to the sea. Everyday, fishermen

are asking each other if the restrictions are lifted so they can go again. It is affecting their survival. Most families survive only on the fishing income. Only the big mechanised boat owners can survive this lockdown phase.

We feel that at least the fiber boats can be given permission to venture into the sea. In Puducherry and Kerala, fishing is allowed with restrictions, many say. The important fish markets in Chintadripet, Pattalam, Vanagaram, Kavangarai and Kasimedu will be affected by the lockdown. As of now, Chintadripet, Kasimedu and Pattalam have sales from boats which had returned on 23 March. Recently, 40 tonnes of prawns from farms in Andhra Pradesh were brought to Chintadripet. Bharathi says, fisher families in Nochukuppam in Marina Beach are badly affected. "The roads to Loop Road are barricaded. No one is allowed to enter or leave the fishermen village. When meat and groceries are sold, why is fish not allowed? We can fish and also sell by practicing social distancing. Karunakaran says that the families here are in dire condition. "They managed for the first five days. Now they are borrowing money. Since shops are closed, they cannot pledge jewels. Some families are provided with free ration, some are not. On 3 April, the government said they would give Rs 1,000 for ration card holders. Many are waiting for that. Government must allow at least the small Motor boats to go for fishing.

### **Tamil Nadu will take care of people from Jharkhand and AP fishermen'**

<https://www.daijiworld.com/news/newsDisplay.aspx?newsID=690415>

"Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K.Palaniswami on Monday assured his Jharkhand counterpart Hemant Soren that the state will take care of the people who are stuck in Vellore. ""We will provide them with food and will take care of them. I will inform our team in CMC (Christian Medical College) Vellore to act on it,"" Palaniswami tweeted replying to Soren's tweet earlier. Earlier Soren had sought Palaniswami's intervention pointing many people from Jharkhand who had gone to CMC Vellore for health treatment got stuck there due to nationwide lockdown and have little means to support themselves. Thirteen people from Jharkhand were stranded in Vellore. They had gone there for treatment at CMC and are living in a lodge at Rs 300/day, tweeted Right to Food Campaign. Palaniswami also assured Telugu actor-turned-politician Pawan Kalgan that the 99 fishermen stuck in Chennai will be taken care of and the concerned department has been informed to act immediately on it. The fisherman from a village in Srikakulam district had gone for fishing and got stuck in Chennai.

### **Coronavirus pandemic: Tamil Nadu's fishermen unable to sell their catch amid nationwide lockdown**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/videos/city/chennai/coronavirus-pandemic-fishermen-unable-to-sell-their-catch-amid-nationwide-lockdown/videshow/74875471.cms>

"Fishermen are struggling to sell their catch due to nationwide lockdown in the wake of pandemic coronavirus. The income of Rameswaram's fishermen has been badly affected as they are unable to sell their catch to sellers. The nationwide lockdown has put the livelihood of fishermen under worrying situations.

### **Tamil Nadu: Physical distancing goes for a toss at fish markets**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/physical-distancing-goes-for-a-toss-at-fish-markets/article31201270.ece>

"Due to non-availability of mutton, fish markets at Kasimedu, Chintadripet, Aminjikarai and Avadi witnessed large crowds on Sunday, despite the lockdown. Though people were seen wearing masks, they did not adhere to personal distancing and were seen jostling for space. "At Kasimedu, the crowds started as early as 7 a.m. and buyers were there till noon. People were buying directly from the boats. Though fishing is not allowed now, boats sold fish from their stocks. These were kept in deep freeze on ice. However, prices were quite high due to the demand, said a fish dealer. Sources said that sellers at markets in Pattalam, Vanagaram and Kavankarai were told not to sell fish. The Marina Loop Road, a popular space for many in the city to buy fish, was also closed on both sides to prevent people from entering. "This is not fair. When 40 tonnes of cultured prawns were sold at Chintadripet, our fishermen were not allowed to go to sea or sell fish. These were brought from far way and sold there.

When there are so many restrictions for movement of other trucks, we wonder how these reached the heart of the city, complained K. Bharathi of Nochikuppam. Price rise Redhills resident I. Murugappan said that he was able to make mutton biryani on Sunday since a vendor he knew had sold a goat to him and his friends. "And we got it at a reasonable price too. Chicken and egg prices have climbed up back to Rs. 190/kg and Rs.5/egg this weekend. No fish was sold in our area on Sunday, he said. Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar said that sale of fish inside Kasimedu would not be allowed near the wharf from Monday. "Fish sale is being allowed since we cannot deny it. The issue at Kasimedu was that people went there at the same time and they just bought fish off the boats. The government has instructed the police and Fisheries department officials to ensure that people adhere to strict norms while buying fish. Since fishing in the sea is not allowed now, we got fish from the Sathanur dam for the Sunday demand. We sold inland fish, including cutla, rohu and carp, he said. The fish market at Vellore too saw large crowds on Sunday. The police and the district administration have asked vendors, including those selling vegetables, to adhere to norms stipulated by the district administration. Commercial Taxes Minister K.C. Veeramani and Collector A. Shanmuga Sundaram visited both markets and gave instructions to officials on regulations.

### **No restriction on sale and transportation of fish in Tamil Nadu**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/covid-19-no-restriction-on-sale-and-transportation-of-fish-in-tamil-nadu/articleshow/74805741.cms>

"The Tamil Nadu government has exempted fish and fishery products from restrictions imposed on sale and transportation of products in the wake of Covid-19. It has also exempted agriculture, animal husbandry and dairy and dairy products from such restrictions. The exemption of fish and fish products was based on the recommendations of the director of fisheries. In a communication to all district collectors, principal secretary K Gopal stated, "Marketing and transportation of fish and fishery products are exempted from the restrictions, in force to control spread coronavirus.

### **Relocate desal plant project site away from Gulf of Mannar in Tamil Nadu: MoEF**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/relocate-desal-plant-project-site-away-from-gulf-of-mannar-moef/article31157553.ece>

"The Ministry of Environment and Forests' Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) has directed the Tamil Nadu Water and Drainage Board (TWAD) to shift its project site for setting up a 60 MLD Sea and Brackish Water Reverse Osmosis (SWRO) plant in Ramanathapuram district away from the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park. Alternatively, the EAC asked the Board to look at the possibility of 100% reuse of the brine water by giving it to authorised salt pan agencies, instead of discharging it into the sea, or set up a salt industry/allied facilities that could consume all the brine generated in case. The TWAD proposal was to set up the 60 MLD SWRO desalination plant at Kuthiraimozhi village in Kadaladi taluk in Ramanathapuram district at a cost of Rs. 670 crore. Once the project is up and running, it would generate 94.52 MLD of brine that would be let out into the sea. The Tamil Nadu Coastal Zone Management Authority had recommended the project for clearance in January, 2017. The EAC noted that the project site is within the eco-sensitive zone of the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park and approximately only about 25 metres from its boundary. "The Committee desired to understand the compelling reason for location of the site in such a sensitive area and decided that the location should be shifted elsewhere. The Committee noted that the justification cited by the project proponent is unacceptable. It was observed that fishermen are dependent on the Gulf of Mannar for their livelihood and the release of brine certainly will impact not only the fish catch but also reefs, seaweeds, seagrass and the overall ecosystem of the area, according to the minutes of the meeting that discussed the proposal. The EAC also found that no detailed marine environmental impact assessment had been carried out for the project and the EIA report that was submitted before it had no information on the impact of the proposed project on the marine ecosystem, including flora, fauna, coral reefs among others. The project did not also have the brine dispersion model results, which are important to understand the fate and dispersion of the brine discharge from the desalination plant. The EAC said the proposal was premature for

consideration in its present form. The committee deferred the proposal for reconsideration to a later stage once TWAD submitted information, documents, and actions directed by it to be taken **are submitted before it.**

### **Tamil Nadu: Steps being taken to rescue stranded fishers: Collector**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/mar/24/steps-being-taken-to-rescue-stranded-fishers-collector-2120736.html>

"Kanniyakumari collector has told the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court that steps are being taken to ensure the safety of nearly 860 Tamil Nadu fishermen stranded on islands in Iran owing to the COVID-19 outbreak. This the collector said in a status report submitted on a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), filed by one J Sahaya Satish from an NGO named Makkal Paathai in Kanniyakumari, seeking direction to rescue the fishermen. The collector said, "The State government, on February 28, 2020, wrote to the Union Ministry of External Affairs to request the Indian Embassy in Iran to arrange for the return of Tamil Nadu fishermen in Iran and for supply of essential commodities to the fishermen till they are able to return to India. He added that the Indian Embassy replied that the embassy at Tehran and Indian Consulate in Bandar Abbas was in constant touch with the fishermen stranded in Bushehr province and Hormozgan province. Quoting the embassy's reply, the collector said, "The fishermen are in good health and are not infected. They have also been advised to follow necessary precautions. He stated that the special secretary of public department in Tamil Nadu has also sent several representations to the High Commission of India in Iran. Recording these submissions, the bench closed the PIL

### **Coastal Regulation Zone nod for disabled-friendly walkways on Marina beach in Tamil Nadu**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/mar/23/coastal-regulation-zone-nod-for-disabled-friendly-walkways-on-marina-beach-2120301.html>

"Greater Chennai Corporation has been granted Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearance by Union Environment Ministry to build two temporary walkways at Marina beach for the benefit of the differently-abled at a cost of Rs 90 lakh. The walkways will be built using eco-friendly material till the High Tide Line and volunteers will help guide wheel chairs till the water. There will be a 380-metre long and three-metre wide walkway behind Labour Statue and the other behind Gandhi Statue, which will be 125-metre long. Since works are to be carried out in CRZ 1(A), an ecologically-sensitive area, the ministry, by a letter to the civic body, imposed

certain conditions, which include prohibiting concrete structures. A six month monitoring report should be submitted by the civic body to the ministry's regional office regarding implementation of clearance conditions. Jayanthi Murali, member-secretary, TN Coastal Zone Management Authority, which recommended the project to the environment ministry, said it is a people-friendly project. On the occasion of International Day of Disabled Persons on December 3, the civic body held 'Marina for all' event creating temporary pathways on Marina sands, which was well appreciated. A corporation official for parks and town planning said, "No concrete structures will be built. Only slip resistance and waterproof marine plywood will be used. **Wooden hand rails will be provided on the sides for safety and support.**

### **It is profitable to culture Asian seabass fish in Tamil Nadu**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/it-is-profitable-to-culture-asian-seabass-fish/article31110112.ece>

"The Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Aquaculture (RGCA) at Sirkazhi has demonstrated to fishermen that culturing of export quality Asian seabass (koduva) fish in fresh or brackish water for a year will yield better returns than shrimps. A collective yield of up to 15 tonnes is expected in the two one-hectare ponds at the Karaikal demonstration farm of RGCA, which is a society under Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. On an average, the money spent towards electricity, imported pellet food, labour and probiotics does not exceed Rs. 250 per fish that weighs up to one kg when fully grown. The fish that fetches a farm rate up to Rs. 440 per kg is sold upwards of Rs.650 at the retail points, according to RGCA officials. Accompanied by the District Collector of Karaikal, Arjun Sharma, the Chairman of MPEDA, K.S. Srinivas, who is the president of RGCA, took stock of the robust growth of the fish variety over a 11-month duration.

The complete harvest of the fish, which weighed just 1.2 grams at the time of release in the ponds, is expected to be carried out after a month. The visiting team that also included Project Director of RGCA, Sirkazhi, S. Kandan; MPEDA Director M. Karthikeyan; and Marketing Director Dola Shankar determined the successful culturing of as many as 8,500 fish seedlings in one of the two one-hectare ponds. The RGCA has been prompting farmers involved in shrimp culture to diversify into culturing of Asian seabass, mudcrab and other species. Though the shrimps are harvested once in 120 days, the farm owners face tough times as it is prone to white-spot disease. It is for this reason that they had to switch over to culturing 'L.vannamei' shrimp from the native monodon variety. Yet, the yield diminishes in the subsequent cycles resulting in a substantial drop in revenue generation, Assistant Project Manager of RGCA, Karaikal, G.K. Dinakaran, said. There has been expectations from the farming community involved in inland fishing that the Tamil Nadu Government must start hatcheries for ensuring adequate availability of Asian seabass fish seedlings, in consonance with the rising demand. At present, the fish

seedlings are available only at the RGCA's seabass hatchery at Thoduvai, located about 14 km away from Sirkazhi.

### **Tamil Nadu: Strife, strike render fisherfolk in Nagai unable to encash demand**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/mar/16/strife-strike-render-fisherfolk-in-nagai-unable-to-encash-demand-2117333.html>

"Fish merchants in Nagapattinam have been unable to ride the wave of demand for seafood due to strikes by fishers over the purse seine fishing issue. Sales of chicken and other poultry have gone down drastically everywhere in Tamil Nadu due to rumours they carry viruses, including coronavirus. Seafood prices and demand have risen concurrently, benefitting traders and vendors. However, Nagapattinam is the one district unable to cater to demand because of protests and an ongoing strike over banned fishing nets across the district. J Senthil Kumar, a merchant from Pompuhar, said, "My business is in places like Chennai and Kerala. While merchants in other places have benefitted from the current demand, I could not procure fish here due to the strike. The conflict among villages has widened after a mid-sea clash between Keechankuppam mechanised boat fishers and Vellapallam fibreglass boat fishers after the latter objected to the former's use of banned nets. Vedaranyam taluk fishers have called a strike against the use of such nets by Nagapattinam taluk fishers. Fishers from taluks like Sirkazhi and Tharangambadi have also announced strikes against the use of nets by mechanised boat fishers.

The demand for fish has not only increased due to the coronavirus scare but also to a shortage of supplies from Nagapattinam district. "My business is mainly for Kerala. I export squid, sardines and mackerel. Those who buy fish from me are opting to buy from other districts after learning about the strikes in Nagapattinam. We, too, have been affected by the conflict, said S Nagarathinam, a marketing agent from Vellapallam. Price of chicken and other poultry have tumbled to half their usual rates. In the case of fish, expensive varieties like seers and pomfret, moderately priced varieties such as trevally, red snapper and barracuda and cheaper varieties such as anchovies have seen their prices rise by 25 per cent at the same time. The demand for crab, squid and prawn has also increased. Fish merchants are bewailing their misfortune of not being able to capitalise on it. The public is eventually feeling the pinch by getting caught up in a dilemma when it comes to buying food items. A Appar Sundaram, a social activist from Mayiladuthurai, said, "Sensitisation should be at all levels - the public, consumers, merchants, traders and even fishers - about avoiding capitalising on an emergency. The government must dispel rumours to control the prices of food items in the market. Fishers must try to follow self-discipline in their ways and resolve their conflicts.

### **Tamil Nadu's fishers seek not to use banned seine nets**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/fishers-seek-nod-to-use-banned-seine-nets/articleshow/74681762.cms>

"Hundreds of fishermen and women from the coastal hamlets of Nagapattinam district besieged the collector's office demanding permission for using the banned purse seine fishing nets. The government had banned purse seine nets stating that they seriously harm marine species and adversely impact marine life. The government also conducts checks to prevent the use of such of nets in 13 coastal districts, including Nagapattinam. The fisherfolk from Poompuhar and surrounding areas in Sirkazhi taluk gathered in front of the collector's office on Monday and staged a demonstration. Police allowed representatives to meet district revenue officer (DRO) Inthumathi and submit a memorandum seeking government's nod to use the nets. In their memorandum, they said that around five lakh fishermen hailing from Nagapattinam, Cuddalore, Villupuram, Kancheepuram and Thiruvallur districts are engaged in fishing activities. Without using seine nets, fishermen are not able to get enough catch.

#### **Retrieval of Katchatheevu only solution for Tamil Nadu's fishermen issue, says Minister**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/retrieval-of-katchatheevu-only-solution-for-fishermen-issue-says-minister/article31090938.ece>

"Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar informed the State Legislative Assembly that the Tamil Nadu government was taking legal steps towards this solution. The retrieval of Katchatheevu was the "only solution to the fishermen issue and the Tamil Nadu government was taking legal steps towards the solution, Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar informed the State Legislative Assembly on Tuesday. Tamil Nadu government has been taking steps in phases to prevent disputes pertaining to fishermen drifting into Sri Lankan waters. When Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) legislator K.A.M. Muhammed Abubacker (Kadayanallur) raised the issue in the House, Mr. Jayakumar said the State government has been implementing the scheme to roll out tuna long liners cum gillnetter fishing vessels. Contending that fishermen from Tamil Nadu were "not deliberately crossing the international maritime border, Mr. Jayakumar said the boats with fishermen on board were drifting into Lankan waters due to wind currents. To Mr. Abubacker's suggestion for strengthening fishermen-to-fishermen contacts in Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu through a cooperative society, Mr. Jayakumar said a total of three meetings were organised over reducing tensions. The scheme would be implemented over five years, he said. Though Tamil Nadu accepted the Sri Lankan authorities' demand for discontinuing usage of certain type of nets for fishing, the Lankan authorities were not for giving time for Tamil Nadu to implement the decision. The Minister indicated any decision could not be implemented within a day. The Minister also said that fishermen in the State were benefiting from the Prime Minister Blue Revolution Scheme. Due to the efforts taken by the AIADMK government, the attacks and shoot-outs on Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan authorities have drastically reduced over the past

nine years, he underlined. During another debate, intervening DMK MLA Anitha R. Radhakrishnan (Tiruchendur), Textiles Minister O.S. Manian said attacks on Indian fishermen by Lankan authorities have come down.

### **Tamil Nadu fishers stuck in Iran running out of food; embassy unhelpful**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/mar/17/tamil-nadu-fishers-stuck-in-iran-running-out-of-food-embassy-unhelpful-2117934.html>

"Fishers from Nagapattinam and other parts of Tamil Nadu in India stranded in Iran complain that they are struggling for food as they await repatriation. Iran is one of the countries worst affected by coronavirus. It has been close to three weeks since fishers in Iran stopped fishing after coronavirus reached epidemic proportions in that country. While they are yet to receive help, they have now complained about the shortage of food. ""The number of times a day we eat has been reduced to just once over the past few days. Employers have not paying or feeding us. We have conveyed our problems to the Indian embassy, but they are not of much help,"" said M Praveen (25) from Vizhunthamavadi, who works in Kish Island and spoke to TNIE via WhatsApp. Over 14,000 people in Iran have been infected with coronavirus in the past two months and more than 850 have died, according to reports.

The Centre has started sending flights to bring back Indians stuck in the country. But fishers, who are mostly fishing in islands around the Persian Gulf, say that they have not received any proper communication from the embassy. ""We cannot find ingredients to cook and eateries are hard to find nearby. It is not possible for us to travel long distances to buy essentials. We are forced to buy snacks from shops and eat. We are forced to live in primitive lives,"" said S Bharathi (20) from Vizhunthamavadi, who works in Mugam. Along with those from Nagapattinam, there are fishers from Kannyakumari, Ramanathapuram, Cuddalore and Tuticorin stuck in their respective places. Most of them use fibreglass boats to fish in Gulf waters. ""We tried communicating with the embassy but they keep postponing everything by citing reasons which are hard to believe. We are losing hope. We may starve to death before we get repatriated,"" said C John Paul (31), a fisher from Kurumpanai in Kanyakumari district. Meanwhile, family members of two fishers from Keechankuppam have petitioned the District Collector to take steps to bring the fishers back from Iran.

### **Firing incidents involving Tamil Nadu fishermen have reduced drastically, government tells court**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/firing-incidents-involving-fishermen-have-reduced-dramatically-govt-tells-court/article31085993.ece>

"The State government on Monday told the Madras High Court that incidents of alleged firing and attack on Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy had reduced drastically since the

end of the civil war in the island nation in 2009. It expressed its resoluteness to retrieve Katchatheevu and restore the right to fish in traditional waters. In a counter affidavit filed before the second Division Bench of Justices Vineet Kothari and R. Suresh Kumar, Director of Fisheries G.S. Sameeran said 67 incidents of shooting and attack by the SL Navy were reported in the last two decades, leading to the death of 26 Indian fishermen. “Due to steps taken by the State and Central governments, the incidents of shooting and attack have considerably reduced in the last decade. Only five such incidents have been reported, in which two fishermen died and four were injured, the counter filed in response to a PIL petition filed by Fishermen Care, an NGO, read.

The petitioner organisation had filed the case in 2018, seeking financial and other forms of assistance to the fishermen who had suffered due to arrests and seizure of their boats by the SL Navy on charges of having intentionally crossed the International Maritime Boundary Line. The counter affidavit, served on petitioner's counsel L.P. Maurya, said around 6,000 mechanised fishing boats and 9,000 traditional craft were engaged in fishing in the Palk Bay area. Over 60,000 members of fishermen families were directly dependent on these boats for eking out a living and many others indirectly. Claiming that a permanent solution to the problem of cross-border fishing could be found if Katchatheevu, ceded to Sri Lanka by the Centre, is retrieved and included in the confines of Indian waters, the Director of Fisheries said a case filed in this regard by the State government in 2008 was pending in Supreme Court.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish vendors fear loss of space in Kulumani market**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/mar/16/fish-vendors-fear-loss-of-space-in-kulumani-market-2117336.html>

"With the Corporation planning to relocate Puthur fish market to Kulumani Road, retail vendors and workers are worried the civic body would not give them space. “We heard they are planning to give space only for wholesale merchants. This would affect our, livelihoods, said John Peter, a fish merchant who has been doing business in Puthur for the last 20 years. Those employed in cleaning fish are worried about their future. “We hope the Corporation would give sufficient space for merchants and workers in the new market. Otherwise, many of us would lose our jobs. We now make at least `300 a day. The Corporation should ensure there is sufficient space for all of us in the new location, said Parvathy, who works in the Puthur market. Corporation officials confirmed the shifting of the market would not affect workers and retail fish sellers. “They recently raised the issue with our officials. We told them these are rumours

and there would be sufficient space for all existing merchants in the new market, a senior Corporation official said. Meanwhile, people staying near Puthur market suggested the Corporation should speed up the shifting process. “The merchants were running this market in a careless manner. They often dump meat and fish waste on nearby streets. This has increased the stray dog menace in our area and also affected hygiene. The Corporation should shift this market at the earliest, said S Ramanathan, a resident.

### **Tamil Nadu’s state urged to drop Marina-Besant Nagar linking plan**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/state-urged-to-drop-marina-besant-nagar-linking-plan/article31077554.ece>

"Residents of five fishing hamlets, residents of Besant Nagar and environmental activists on Saturday urged the State government to drop the idea of laying a road connecting the Marina Loop Road with Besant Nagar, as mooted. 'Project is unviable' Addressing a press meet, the representatives said it was legally and environmentally unviable, and pointed out that it was the AIADMK government that had dropped the proposal in 2011, after a series of protests by fishermen and residents. R. Sundaramoorthy of Urur Olcott Kuppam, said that around 75% of the houses in five coastal villages would be lost if the government goes ahead with the project. “We will not have space for landing or drying fish and we will completely lose our livelihood, he said. Thiruvanmiyur Kuppam's Chandrasekhar said the government should choose some other route for the road. Otherwise fishermen from Pulicat to Puducherry will hold a massive protest, he added. Livelihood concerns Valarmathi, of the Urur Olcott Kuppam's Women's Sangam, said they had not slept in peace for over 15 days now. “Our lives depend on the sea. We cannot move to places like Kannagi Nagar or Semmenchery, she said. Krithika Vishwanathan of the Kalakshetra Colony Welfare Association said the plan would only create traffic bottlenecks in places like Besant Nagar. Yuvan of the Chennai Climate Action Group said that the Adyar estuary and its neighbouring beaches were nesting grounds for olive ridley turtles. “The road will disturb the habitat of birds and aquatic animals, apart from causing pollution and irreparable environmental damage, he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Lack of testing kits delays inspection of fish for formalin use**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/mar/11/lack-of-testing-kits-delays-inspection-of-fish-for-formalin-use-2115250.html>

"Inspection of fish for the presence of formalin content is yet to start in Nagapattinam district due to lack of testing kits. Despite major crackdowns in two Tamil Nadu cities in the past 12 days and an advisory from the government, officials are yet to start inspections for export and sale of formalin-laced fish in a coastal district like Nagapattinam. Officials cited low stocks of testing kits for the delay. The longer tests are delayed, the better the opportunity for offenders to

get away scot-free. A senior Food Safety department official said, “We do not have the required number of kits to test for formalin lacing. We will start inspections in markets, distribution and exporting points within a week as soon as we get the kits. Around two tonnes of rotten and formalin-laced fish were seized from Madurai's renowned Karimedu Market on the night of February 28.

The Food Safety and Fisheries departments were instructed to conduct Statewide inspections for the use of formalin. Not long after, around 500 kg of rotten and formalin-laced fish were seized from Ukkadam Market in Coimbatore on March 5. Formaldehyde, also known as formalin, is used as a preservative to slow the decay of fish but can cause adverse effects on health after such fish are consumed. The presence of formalin can be detected either through lab or spot tests. A spot test is possible with availability of a rapid detection kit containing a chemical reagent, a set of testing strips and colour charts. “The Food Safety department should have had the kits in hand, but they do not. So, we ordered for the kits from Bengaluru a few days ago. We can start as soon as they arrive. Ten such kits are sufficient for the moment, said a senior Fisheries department official. The drive is yet to kick off in coastal districts like Nagapattinam, which supplies seafood to other delta districts like Thanjavur and Tiruvarur and central districts such as Tiruchy, Perambalur, Ariyalur, Pudukkottai and Karur. Squid, mackerel, rays and tuna are exported. “Ensuring food safety should not be ignored or delayed in a coastal district like Nagapattinam. Consumers deserve to know their food is safe, said G Aravind Kumar, secretary, Tamil Nadu Nugarvor Paathukaapu Kuzhu.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fisheries Department conducts first crackdown on banned nets**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/fisheries-department-conducts-first-crackdown-on-banned-nets/article31034212.ece>

"In the first operation carried out at Poompuhar coast on Tuesday after deployment of Marine Enforcement Wing (MEW) personnel, officials of the Fisheries Department detained two vehicles transporting fish caught with banned purse seine nets and auctioned the catch. About 3,700 kg of sardine fish that was confiscated at 2 p.m. was transported in a vehicle provided to the MEW team and auctioned at Nagapattinam within two hours of the operation, Amal Raj Xavier, Joint Director of Fisheries, said. The mandate of the Marine Enforcement Wing was to curb banned fishing practices such as use of purse seine, pair trawling, and use of higher than permitted power of motors in mechanised boats. “It is due to the presence of the MEW team that we can move out of the location immediately. Hitherto, the delay in operation due to dependency on local police used to lead to commotion caused by a belligerent section of fishers, the senior

official said. The confiscated fish was auctioned for Rs.70,300. The catch would have fetched much more had it been auctioned early morning hours when there would be Kerala-based buyers. The amount would be deposited in the government account, Mr. Amal Raj Xavier said.

### **Tamil Nadu's fishermen stuck in Iran hopeful of returning home**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2020/mar/10/fishermen-stuck-in-iran-hopeful-of-returning-home-2114631.html>

"The Indian fishermen stranded in Iran after the country declared health emergency due to coronavirus outbreak last week are hopeful of being airlifted and brought home soon. Their hopes were raised after India on Monday decided to send its largest transport flight to airlift stranded Indians. Apart from fishermen, several students and pilgrims on Qom visit are also stranded in Iran, which is one of worst COVID 19-affected countries "We are yet to get any assurance from the embassy. But we are hopeful of going home soon, said Jagajeevan Netto, one of the fishermen from Thiruvananthapuram, in a voice message to his father James Netto. Jagajeevan is among the 60 fishermen from Kerala stranded in various coastal areas of Iran. There are hundreds of others from Tamil Nadu and Gujarat as well. They went to Iran on fishermen visa four months ago. The fishermen had complained that the Indian embassy in Bandar Abbas did not enquire about their well being. "We are running short of food. We do not know how we are going to survive, said Jagajeevan. According to James, the fishermen made an attempt to go out, but the police arrested their captain. "They were threatened that their phones would be confiscated if they go out, said James. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar tweeted the embassy continued to maintain close contact with fishermen. "No case of corona reported among them. Will continue to monitor their welfare, tweeted the minister.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish traders to get lessons on ill-effects of formalin**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/mar/09/fish-traders-to-get-lessons-on-ill-effects-of-formalin-2114424.html>

"The recent discovery of several kilograms of formalin-laced and spoiled fishes at Ukkadam Fish Market has put the spotlight on the hygienic standards practised by the fish traders. While the traders rule out possibilities of handling chemicals to preserve fishes for longer hours, the officials of the Food Safety Department stated that consuming formalin-laced fish might lead to allergies. Based on the directions of the Collector K Rajamani, the officials of the Food Safety and Fisheries Department conducted raids at various places to prevent the usages of chemicals. On Sunday, the food safety department seized 20 kg of spoiled fishes from four traders in Pollachi. The designated officer (food safety department) K Tamil Selvan said that the fish could stay fresh just for three to four days. However, the freshness would stay longer if formalin is used. He said, ""The formalin is mixed with ice cubes to preserve the fishes. One

could experience a pungent odour from the chemical-laced fishes and if cooked, the gravy emanates chlorine smell." The department could find the chemical-laced fishes with a rapid detection kit. "A fresh fish will rebound if we press it. We are planning for an awareness meeting to educate the fish traders on health complications when consuming formalin-laced fishes," Tamil Selvan added.

Frequent consumption of chemical-laced fishes could finally lead to cancer, he stated. Recently, the officials seized nearly 70 kg of formalin-laced fish and around 430 kg of spoiled fish from the Ukkadam Fish Market. On the other hand, the fish traders said that they are concerned about the health conscience of the consumers and claimed they are not using the formalin as a preservative. President of Coimbatore District Fish Merchants Association H S Bawa said, "We are purchasing fish from various places including Odisha, Calicut, Mangalore, Ramanathapuram, Andhra Pradesh. None of the ice cube factories from the Coimbatore region is using formalin." He said that they would be taking part in a meeting with the Food Safety and Fisher Department soon. "We are planning to request the officials to provide us with a rapid detection kit to identify the formalin content in the fish or ice cube," Bawa added. Precautions to be taken before cooking fish - Wash your fish thoroughly before cooking and discard the water. - Cook fish thoroughly to 75°C as heat from cooking can also aid the removal of formaldehyde because it is volatile. - After repeated washing also, if there is any kind of obnoxious smell or texture, report to concerned food safety authorities.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen demand protection of Kunthukal fishing harbour in Rameswaram**

<https://www.aninews.in/news/national/general-news/fishermen-demand-protection-of-kunthukal-fishing-harbour-in-rameswaram20200309162823/>

"Fishermen affiliated to the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) staged a protest on Monday demanding protection of the Kunthukal fishing harbour of Rameswaram island from coastal erosion. Fishermen have demanded that the Centre and state governments take appropriate action to prevent the coastal erosion of the Kunthukal fishing harbour.

### **Tamil Nadu: The removal and rehabilitation of fishermen at the estuary holds back the completion of Adyar Poonga eco-restoration project**

<http://www.asianage.com/india/all-india/050320/for-the-adyar-poonga-to-bloom.html>

"The failure of the authorities including the Chennai River Restoration Trust (CRRT) to address the concerns of the fishermen community living on the Adayar estuary is holding back the completion of the second phase of the ambitious Adayar Poonga river restoration project in Chennai. The project that covers 358 acres involves dredging the Adayar Creek and estuary that fall under CRZ III category was kicked off in 2011 after the inauguration of the phase I for which the state government had allotted Rs 24.93 crore. The project involves removing the debris, plastic and sludge from the creek, and planting mangroves and trees of native species. Officials of Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) say that the slums need to be cleared for the completion of the project. CRRT, the implementing agency, has proposed an integrated development plan of the land south of the Marina in 74.04 acres for the rehabilitation of the 8166 project affected families (PAF) from Navalur, Gundapakkom, Perumbakkam and AIR Land. The highways department and the Tamil Nadu Housing Board have also introduced projects for the comprehensive development of the Adayar neighbourhood. While Housing Board has proposed an integrated housing complex in Foreshore estate area, the CRRT had a project to develop the Adayar creek adjacent to the project area.

The slum dwellers, most of them belong to the fishermen community, however, have opposed the idea to relocate them to faraway places. Sources point out that the opposition stems from the fact that the houses fishermen built on the estuary and rented out have offered them a steady source of income, though they are on the ecologically sensitive area. "However, CRRT has no plan to restrict fishermen access to the river area since they are the direct stakeholders of the river system, they said. Criticising the intent of TNSCB, K. Saravanan, a fisherman-turned coastal protection activist, pointed out that the officials did not want to focus on big building complexes on the river bank that pollute the river.

"They want to conserve the river and water bodies at the cost of fishermen community who are cohabitants of nature, he alleged. The officials classify the area as slums though fishermen have been living there for decades, he said. "They extend their settlement as their families expands. It's quiet natural. So the CRRT authorities have to take the fishermen community into confidence before pushing its agenda. He also pointed out that the recent order of Madras High Court directing Chennai Corporation to consider the possibility of rebuilding the Broken Bridge and extending the Marina Loop Road to Besant Nagar was a bolt from the blue for the fisherfolks. 'Fishing communities are among the first residents of Chennai. The villages of Urur Olcott Kuppam, Nochikuppam, Mullikuppam and Dumminkuppam are ancient hamlets that have existed for centuries, he pointed out. Meanwhile, a professor with department of ocean engineering of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras, said the people residing around river mouth should be relocated since the area is ecologically sensitive.

"The Tsunami lesson in 2004 has taught us how vulnerable the lives in coastal lines are, he said. "It's scary to see a lot of people occupy Adayar estuary which is a dynamic place with shifting

sands and water lines. The slum dwellers can also be seen in the Buckingham canal area. Nityanand Jayaraman, an environmentalist, restoration of the creek would mean bringing it back to its natural condition. "I would like to call this a transformational project where an existing natural ecosystem is being engineered into a tourist spot, he said. "The marshland of Adyar creek under the river restoration project is being turned into an artificial freshwater ecosystem in the process.

### **Tamil Nadu: ake territorial sea part of protected agri zone: Fishers**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/make-territorial-sea-part-of-protected-agri-zone-fishers/articleshow/74448716.cms>

"The National Fishworkers' Forum (NFF) has demanded that the state government include territorial sea waters under the protected agriculture zone as it would prevent oil companies from drilling and carrying out hydrocarbon extraction within 13 nautical miles, where fishing has already been banned. Since fisheries is also a kind of agriculture, 13 nautical miles of territorial waters from the shore which comes under the control of the Tamil Nadu government should also be announced as protected zone and the rights of fishing folk protected, NFF vice-chairman R V Kumaravelu told ToI. "Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami should announce that our territorial waters within 13 nautical miles will come under protected agriculture zone when he visits Tiruvarur on March 7 to participate in a felicitation for announcing delta as protected agriculture zone, he added. The chief minister should come forward to clarify the issues pertaining to the announced offshore projects. Will these projects be cancelled just as the government scrapped the order on petro investment region in Cuddalore, he asked. He said the Marine Fisheries (Regulation and Management) Bill 2019 would be a curse to the fishing community as their livelihood would be devastated. The bill would pave the way for corporates to commence floating tourism, mines, oil exploration and natural mariculture beyond 13 nautical miles which comes under the control of the Union government, Kumaravelu said. "There is already restriction within 13 nautical miles, beyond that fishermen will have to get permission from the Union government for fishing. So the life of fishermen will become miserable, he added.

### **How AI is helping 4200+ fish and shrimp farmers in Andhra, Tamil Nadu & Gujarat**

<https://www.expresscomputer.in/startup/how-ai-is-helping-4200-fish-and-shrimp-farmers-in-andhra-tamil-nadu-gujarat/49914/>

"Aqua connect promotes sustainable aquaculture (growing fish and shrimp) through technology intervention. The Chennai based startup is focused on using of artificial intelligence, IoT and satellite remote sensing to improve Indian aquaculture productivity and make India the world's aquaculture hub. The startup was started in 2017 by IITK alumnus Rajamanohar

Somasundaram, who is the Co-Founder & CEO, with Shanmuga Sudararaj and Sanjai Kumar, to become a global full-stack aquaculture technology venture to offer data-driven farm advisory solutions and market place solutions to shrimp and fish farmers. In India, shrimp and fish farming is the popular livelihood activities for millions of farmers in the coastal and rural regions, where traditional farming practices prevent them in achieving production efficiency and diseases prediction. “We sensed a need for automating farm management, disease prediction through data sciences. Aquaconnect improves the aquaculture industry through an ecosystem-based approach by first digitalising data produced and consumed along the entire value chain throughout the lifecycle of the aquatic animals for analytics-driven data-informed decisions. Secondly, improving farmers' livelihoods through enhanced access to knowledge, input, finance, and market leveraging players on the value chain, says Somasundaram. The startup set out to disrupt and simplify this process.

“We built FarmMOJO, an AI-driven advisory solution that helps farmers improve productivity, predict disease and ultimately achieve higher farm income (up to 5-10 per cent). Our AI advisor records production data such as water quality parameters, feed inputs, health status, and biomass conversion, states Somasundaram. “Our AI-driven approach continuously monitors the farm operations and favours real-time analysis of culture. It helps farmers in the daily management of culture growth, such as optimise feeding, disease prediction and management, and advice farmers from time to time. FarmMOJO helps rural farmers and coastal communities by reducing the dependency on technicians in daily culture operations, he informs. The target customers are aquaculture farmers in India and SEA countries. The startup has a network has about 4200+ farmers in Andhra, Tamil Nadu, and Gujarat.

“Now, 1350+ farms have been made smart farms with the Farm MOJO implementation. FarmMOJO offers complete AI assistance to farmers throughout the culture, from stocking to harvest, remarks Somasundaram. Pointing out that it lowers the cost of production by efficient feed usage, he explains, “The growth of the animal depends on the right feed usage. Optimising the usage of feed and other farm inputs bring the efficiency in farming and help farmers to have better returns from the farms. FarmMOJO's AI models “Opti-Febicon, and “Morby-Mass helps farmers to reduce 20-30 per cent feed cost through its feed efficiency model. “Through our data intelligence, we connected farmers directly to the market place and helped them sell 1000MT+ of shrimp to importers. The traceability data of the shrimp has improved their commodity value up to 5 per cent in the processors, he adds. FarmMOJO facilitates traceability from point of production to point of consumption. Adding that, FarmMOJO is location-aware, context-aware, it can offer relevant products at the right time and right intervention, Somasundaram remarks, “FarmMOJO also effectively connects farmers with upstreams (hatcheries, feed and healthcare producers) and downstream (processors, certifying bodies, BFSI – Banking, Financial Services, and Insurers) of the aquaculture supply chain.

Aquaculture in India has evolved as a viable commercial farming practice and has been showing an impressive annual growth rate of 10-15 per cent every year. “India's seafood exports are valued at around US\$ 7 billion in 2018. India stands top on shrimp production and it contributes 70 per cent of Indian aquaculture export value. India ranks second in aquaculture production and third in marine fisheries, mentions Somasundaram, reminding that though it is a multibillion-dollar industry, it still lacks the technology adoption and efficiency it is expected to have. With FarmMOJO data, the company connects farmers with formal financial institutions to offer financial assistance and crop insurance. Processors and certifying bodies could leverage this data for sustainable procurement and certification. The introduction of AI brings increase predictability and efficiency in the production of fish and shrimp. Stakeholders like banks, financial services and insurance providers can use the data intelligence to create risk management strategies/risk assessment to facilitate loans and insurance products to the farmers.

For Aquaconnect, plans for the future in terms of new technologies and strategic expansion, include the following:

- Remote sensing technology for risk management: Partnering with satellite firms for biomass evaluation and credit risk assessment. Satellite enabled remote sensing solutions to complement the FarmMOJO data intelligence. “Remote sensing shall help us scale rapidly into new markets in South East Asia such as Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand. We are looking at exploring blockchain technologies to enable complete traceability support and increase transparency into the aquaculture value chain, says Somasundaram.
- Disease prediction: AquaConnect is working with IDH – the Sustainable Trade Initiative and Prof. Kenton Morgan, University of Liverpool to improve the accuracy of its disease prediction model “Morby-Mass to predict diseases well in advance.
- Creation of risk assessment models: To evaluate the creditworthiness of farmers based on the historical data to enable access to financial institutions for crop loans and insurance.
- FarmMOJO for other species: Extending FarmMOJO capabilities to cater various aquatic species to increase the customer base progressively.

Speaking about revolution 2.0, Somasundaram says, “The Government of India is ramping up support for the aquaculture sector, carving out a separate Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying as well as launching the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY). Also, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given its approval for 500 fisheries FPOs to be formed in five years period from 2019-20 to 2023-24 to ensure economies of scale for fish farmers. “We are actively discussing with National Fisheries Development Board and state agencies to promote FarmMOJO as a software platform for the FPOs to adopt data drive farming, affirms Somasundaram.

**Kerala and Tamil Nadu: Fishermen stranded in coronavirus-hit Iran facing eviction threat from employer**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/kerala/2020/mar/03/fishermen-stranded-in-coronavirus-hit-iran-facing-eviction-threat-from-employer-2111295.html>

"The fishermen stranded in Iran in the wake of the COVID-19 virus scare are facing threat of eviction from their accommodation from their employer. Among those facing eviction are fishermen from Pozhiyoor, a coastal village in Thiruvananthapuram. Their families back home were informed that water connection to their buildings have been discontinued. "The sponsor is demanding back the money spent on their visas to return the passports. They have food for just two more days, said James Netto, father of Jagajeevan, one of the fishermen stranded in Iran. Arul Das, another fisherman in the group, sent a video message complaining that the sponsor threatened to confiscate their mobile phones provided to them by the employer. He said the embassy officers contacted them, however they made no promises from their part. The fishermen community in Pozhiyoor approached Shashi Tharoor, MP, to demand his intervention. "The MP's office said a clear picture regarding evacuation can only be ascertained by Wednesday, said James.

The group comprised 23 fishermen, of which 17 belong to the fishing villages of Thiruvananthapuram. They are lodged in a coastal area of Asaluyeh at Bushehr province in Iran. According to official estimates, there are many such groups, including over 60 fishermen from the state, hundreds from Tamil Nadu and Gujarat, who have been affected. They had gone to Iran on fishermen visa four months ago. The fishermen were asked to remain indoor as part of Iran's effort to curb the spread of the virus, which claimed over 200 lives. Iran is the worst-affected by the global pandemic after China. The chief ministers of Kerala and Tamil Nadu had written to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar demanding his intervention. The minister had tweeted that the External Affairs Ministry was collaborating with Iran to set up a screening process for the safe return of Indians. Dhamu Gaddam, Indian Ambassador to Iran, tweeted that the officials of the Indian consulate in Bandar Abbas were meeting the stranded fishermen on Tuesday. More groups affected According to official estimates, there are many such groups, including over 60 fishermen from the state, hundreds from Tamil Nadu and Gujarat, who have been affected. They had gone to Iran on fishermen visa four months ago.

### **Boats supplied under 'Blue Revolution' scheme are inferior in Tamil Nadu**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/fishers-boats-supplied-under-blue-revolution-scheme-are-inferior/articleshow/74466433.cms>

"Fishermen from Rameswaram have petitioned the director of fisheries, G S Sameeran, about the inferior quality boats that were supplied to them under the visionary 'Blue Revolution' scheme of the central government. The scheme, under the department of animal husbandry and dairying, aims at increasing fisheries production and productivity from aquaculture and fisheries resources. General secretary of the Tamil Nadu - Pondicherry Fishermen's Federation, N J Bose

said the scheme was an outstanding one which aimed at promoting and encouraging deep sea fishing. Fishermen are given a subsidy of Rs 40 lakh by the central government, Rs 16 lakh by the state government, while they had to contribute Rs 24 lakh to purchase a mechanised boat. However, apart from the Rs 80 lakh for each boat, fishermen have to spend another Rs 50 lakh for infrastructure, nets, manpower etc. "Thus, this is a scheme from which only rich fishermen can benefit, and the subsidy should be increased if all are to benefit, he said. So far, the fishermen from Rameswaram have been supplied with 22 boats, of which 16 are from the Cochin Shipping Yard. Five of these boats had been fitted with inferior engines of 140 HP when a mechanised boat would require a 200 HP motor for smooth operations. Those whose boats were fitted with the inferior motors were spending much on repair. John Keter, a fisherman who possessed one of these boats, got stranded 170 nautical miles away from the shore and it took him six days to reach the shore, with mechanics guiding him with the help of satellite phones. These engines were also consuming more fuel and emitting black smoke that engulfed the entire boat. Bose himself had got a boat with an inferior motor and asked the manufacturers to replace it, but it was still to be attended after two months. "They delay the process, but I have to repay the interest for the loan I obtained for the boat, and this is an additional cost for me, he said.

### **Tamil Nadu: New job avenues for fishing community**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/new-job-avenues-for-fishing-community/articleshow/74448504.cms>

"A Jeyasudha has been selling fish for more than a decade but she hardly makes enough to run her household of four. Looking for an alternate livelihood, the 34-year-old woman is among the five fisherwomen who are learning to drive under the 'Skill and livelihood training' (Salt) initiative by the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC). The Salt initiative that conducts training in driving, tailoring and electrical mechanic work has added flavour to the life of fisherfolk in coastal hamlets in Villupuram district. ""All that we know is to sell fish. Through the training more opportunities are opening up for us. In fact, my children are so proud of me. It has instilled confidence in me,"" said Jeyasudha, whose husband sustained an injury in a boat accident a few years ago and now runs a petty shop. At present, the training is on at six places in Villupuram and will soon be expanded to other districts.

The programme, a brainchild of assistant collector (trainee) of Villupuram V Sivakrishnamurthy, is aimed at bridging the gap between the market and skill sets of the fishing community members to provide them with sustainable employment. The unused multi-purpose evacuation shelters (MPES), constructed for use during natural calamities are being used to train the men and women. ""We interacted with members of the community to know their interests and educate them about market-driven employment opportunities,"" said an official. Within a week more than 1,300 enrolled for training. Former panchayat president of Konimedu Kuppam M Ramesh

said the fishing community welcomes the officials' efforts. "Youngsters are learning different skills for free and receiving a government certificate" he said. Officials also plan convergence of various departments to extend financial aid to youngsters to form self-help groups to start businesses. "From the next phase of the programme we will diversify and offer new courses. Youngsters will be encouraged to start food processing units, come up with their own brand of ready to cook sea-food products and set up boat repair workshops," said the official. Similar programmes will be launched in a phased manner in other MPES. "We are planning to replicate the model in other coastal districts," said managing director of TNSDC V Vishnu.

### **Establishing an inland fish landing centres at Thirumoorthy and Amaravathi reservoirs in Tamil Nadu**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/coimbatore/administrative-sanction-for-fish-landing-centres/articleshow/74408813.cms>

"Administrative sanction for a sum of Rs 8 lakh has been granted for establishing an inland fish landing centres at Thirumoorthy and Amaravathi reservoirs. The centres will be established under a centrally-sponsored scheme titled 'Blue Revolution: Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries'. A detailed project report was submitted by the fisheries department, which was forwarded to the national fisheries development board to get centre's approval. The board forwarded the proposal to the joint secretary(fisheries), government of India for sanction.

### **Centre says it has released Rs 300 cr to Tamil Nadu for fishermen**

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/centre-says-it-has-released-rs-300-cr-to-tn-for-fishermen/1749757>

"The Centre on Monday informed the Madras High Court it has released Rs 300 crore to the Tamil Nadu government for providing relief to fishermen affected in mid-sea "attacks" by Sri Lankan Navy. The submission was made by counsel for the Centre before a bench comprising Justices Vineet Kothari and R Suresh Kumar, hearing a petition seeking implementation of rehabilitation schemes for the affected fishermen as directed by the court. The bench after perusing a counter affidavit filed by the Union Department of Fisheries directed the Director of the state Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries department to be present in the court on March 16 and submit details of amounts received from the Centre so far and its utilisation. Prima facie it appeared that the Centre under the "Blue Revolution" scheme - Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries - had provided a financial assistance of Rs.300 crores to the state for providing relief to the adversely affected fishermen, who were attacked by the Sri Lankan Navy after they happened to cross the maritime boundaries, it said.

Referring to the order of earlier bench which directed the authorities to ensure welfare schemes and development programmes to be implemented in letter and spirit, the bench noted the state government had not filed its counter though the PIL petition was pending for the last two years. Petitioner Fishermen Care, an organisation working for the cause of fishermen, has moved the court seeking a direction to the state government and the Centre to implement the high court order on rehabilitation schemes for those affected by the Sri Lankan Navy.

### **Tamil Nadu's activists, fisherfolk oppose Marina-Besant Nagar link plan**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/activists-fisherfolk-oppose-marina-besant-nagar-link-plan/article30936950.ece>

"The direction of the Madras High Court to the State government and Greater Chennai Corporation to study the feasibility of extending the Marina Loop Road beyond Pattinappakkam and linking Besant Nagar through an elevated corridor has come as a shock to environment activists and fishermen. The activists, on a tour organised to the broken bridge near the Adyar estuary on Thursday, said that the proposed elevated corridor would be an environmental disaster and would also disrupt the livelihood of fisherfolk. The activists, through the Save Chennai Beaches campaign, and the fisherfolk of Urur Olcott Kuppam pointed out that the Marina-Besant Nagar Link Road proposal would lead to eviction of fisherfolk, disruption of the livelihood of thousands of fishermen, rise in sea levels, damage to the Olive Ridley turtle nesting habitat and the Adyar estuary, which supports several marine life forms and migratory birds, and ruin the beauty of Chennai's beaches. S. Pallayam, a member of the Urur Olcott Kuppam administration committee, said thousands of fishermen who have been living in the locality for several generations would be evicted. Also, the proposed link road would put a big question mark on their livelihood, as they would not have space to dry their nets and their catch. Environment activist Nityanand Jayaraman said the proposed Marina-Besant Nagar Link Road would not solve the traffic problem and would end up creating new bottlenecks on interior roads of Besant Nagar. Mr. Jayaraman also questioned how the High Court instead of being a protector of the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) was viewing the CRZ as a hurdle.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fisherfolk oppose draft fisheries bill**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/fisherfolk-oppose-draft-fisheries-bill/articleshowprint/74326369.cms>

"Fisherfolk of Kanyakumari district unanimously showed a strong opposition to the draft National Marine Fisheries (Regulation and Management) Bill, 2019 at a public meeting organised by the district administration and fisheries department at the Kanyakumari district collectorate on Wednesday. Tense moments prevailed as the participants, including women, resorted to sloganeering to drop the bill as it will affect their livelihood. The participants

engaged in a heated argument with the officials and the situation was brought under control after district collector Prashant M Wadnere gave the participants an option to peacefully raise their issues of concern so that it can be forwarded to the ministry concerned. Fisherfolk and the representatives of fishermen bodies such as South Asian Fishermen Fraternity (SAFF), International Fishermen Development Trust (INFIDET), mechanised boats and country craft fishermen unions and Neithal Makkal Iyakkam have highlighted various aspects of the draft that will affect the livelihood of the coastal people. INFIDET president Justin Antony said that it has sent shock waves among the fishermen as they will have to obtain permission from regulatory officials on a daily-basis even for fishing within a miniscule range of 12 nautical miles from the shore. "For deep sea fishermen from this region it takes 20 to 45 days for a fishing expedition. How can they get daily permits? he questioned. Calling the act practically impossible, he said that the existing practices are already stringent enough to monitor the fishermen.

### **Tamil Nadu: The sound waves of change**

<https://www.livemint.com/mint-lounge/features/the-sound-waves-of-change-11582277398040.html>

"Community radios such as Kadal Osai, Sangham Radio and Radio Brahmaputra are focusing on pressing issues such as climate change, marginalization and gender. For 26-year-old Jeenath Rabiya single mother of two the day starts early. She sends her children to school, finishes the daily chores and then heads to a modest white building on Pamban island, Rameswaram. A simple board on the facade displays the words Namathu Munnetrathukkana Vaanoli (A Radio for Our Development). This space is home to Kadal Osai, a community radio for and by fisherfolk. In a small room with a computer, an audio console and a microphone, Rabiya transforms into an RJ, hosting a 2-hour programme titled Samuthiram Pazhagu (Getting Used to the Sea). She focuses on the many aspects of marine conservation and climate change. "I was working as a teacher prior to this, and was an avid listener of Kodaikanal FM. I would often tell my father that I wanted to be an RJ," she says. Rabiya's father, who ran a country boat and would regularly head out to sea, had listened to Kadal Osai and encouraged her to find work there. What excites her most is interviewing fishermen and sharing their life stories. In the process, Rabiya has also been documenting how climate change is impacting them. With rising temperatures in Pamban and the increasing mood swings of the sea, life has become unpredictable for the fisherfolk.

The usual wind and weather calculations don't hold true any more. In such a scenario, it becomes even more critical to talk about practices that affect the health of the sea. "We talk about how microplastics, eaten by the fish, make their way into our bodies. Sea pollution affects us all, particularly the fishermen community who depend on the fish for food and livelihood," she adds. All over the country, you will come across many community radio services which focus

on niche content targeted at a particular community. These are firmly by, and for, the locals. Thousands of miles away from Pamban, in Maijan Borsaikia village of Dibrugarh district, on the banks of the Brahmaputra in upper Assam, yet another young woman 24-year-old Rumi Naik prepares for a broadcast. She is a community producer for Radio Brahmaputra, which focuses on health, nutrition and disaster-related information for the tea plantation and riverine communities in Dibrugarh and Dhemaji. Naik, who comes from the tea plantation community of Maijan Tea Estate, joined the community radio 10 years ago. She stopped studying after class IX but would often participate in Unicef awareness programmes. It was then that two members of Radio Brahmaputra visited her house, while looking for field coordinators from within the community. After a lengthy discussion, Naik's mother agreed to send her for training. At the radio station, she started with the basics working on the computer, scriptwriting, conducting interviews. Over the past 10 years, she has travelled to the interiors of the district to bring out stories of malnutrition and the need for immunization. Naik started a live programme in January, inviting people to the studio to sing their favourite tunes. "People have been coming in from other districts as well. Five people who didn't know our address hired a car, came searching for the station, and recorded their songs," she says.

At a time when the Union ministry of information and broadcasting has announced plans to set up 118 new community radio stations (according to a Press Information Bureau note of 13 September), it serves well to look at case studies such as Kadal Osai and Radio Brahmaputra, which have not just become part of the daily lives of locals but have also got the communities involved. They are also moving with the times to talk about pressing issues such as climate change, marginalization and gender equality. So, what is community radio? According to the ministry, it is a small, low power FM radio station, with a coverage area of around 10-15km radius. Its primary role is to disseminate information related to agriculture and welfare schemes, and to provide a voice to the marginalized. A community radio is required to produce at least 50% of its programmes locally. In a country where not all have access to the internet, radio serves as a great tool for entertainment and communication. This nascent community radio movement has been fraught with challenges.

According to a May 2015 article published on Scroll, it took three years of petitioning by activists before not-for-profit organizations were included, along with educational institutions, in the policy guidelines framed by the Union government in 2002 and allowed to set up such radio services. "...a non-profit organization that wishes to apply for a community radio licence has to have a track record of existence and service to the community for at least three years to even be eligible for consideration," the article stated. A licence essentially entails official allocation of frequency. Radio stations such as Kadal Osai, Radio Brahmaputra and Sangham Radio in Telangana have managed to sustain themselves because of the support of people. Take Sangham Radio, one of the oldest community radio services in the country. It started 22 years ago, without a licence, as narrowcasting facility transmitting content to a very localized audience. This meant

that the team would record programmes in a studio, carry a tape to the villages and play it there on a recorder. "One-way communication has always bothered me," says P.V. Satheesh, co-founder of Deccan Development Society, which hosted Sangham Radio. When he started the service, he had already spent a decade in development activism, and was looking at demystifying communication. He wanted to create a set-up which could be handled at the village level. Today, the radio has a target area of 15-20km and reaches out to 30-40 villages in Sangareddy district....

### **Fishermen returning from sea with sizeable catch alleging use of banned fishnets in Tamil Nadu**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/fishermen-stay-away-from-sea/article30924942.ece>

"Fishermen of Sethubavachatram continued to stay away from the sea for the second day on Wednesday in protest against what they described as 'pro-traders attitude' of Fisheries Department officials. State general secretary of Tamil Nadu Fishermen Federation A.Thajudheen said the Fisheries Department officials were initiating legal action against the fishermen returning from sea with sizeable catch alleging use of banned fishnets. But, in reality, fishermen sometimes get good catch by using permitted fish nets. There was an apprehension among fishermen that the officials were indirectly forcing them to use banned nets to harvest 'mathi' variety fish at the behest of Cuddalore-based traders, he said. "Officials know fully well that good catches are possible with permitted nets. Further, the practice of officials to intercept fishermen returning from sea and subjecting them to harassment even without bothering to take a look at nets in their possession strengthens the suspicion, he said.

### **Fishers in Tamil Nadu demand subsidy hike for deep-sea vessels**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/feb/21/fishers-in-nagapattinam-demand-subsidy-hike-for-deep-sea-vessels-2106532.html>

"Fishers in Nagapattinam have demanded subsidy to be increased on par with three other districts to encourage deep-sea fishing. Thirty-six Nagapattinam fishers, whose trawlers were seized by Sri Lankan navy, have been selected for 70 per cent subsidy with an upper limit of `56 lakh to build deep-sea fishing boats (DSFBs). They have been selected for the first time under a scheme which had been confined to Thanjavur, Pudukkottai and Ramanathapuram districts till now. Nagapattinam fishers have demanded that the scheme be extended to all in the district. "Deep-sea fishing is still a dream for a lot of Nagapattinam fishers. Subsidy for DSFBs should not be restricted to those whose boats are impounded. They should get the amount on par with the other three districts to enable deep-sea fishing, said RV Kumaravelu of National Fishworkers Forum. Of the 46 people who had applied for subsidy, 36 were deemed eligible. Thirteen of them are now ready to get DSFBs built. The fishers also want the money to be given to the

builders they choose. “The notified builders do not do a proper job and we are forced to spend more. We want the subsidy amount to be directed to those we choose, said S Mohandas, a fisher from Akkaraipettai. R Amal Xavier, Joint Director, Fisheries department, said, “We have forwarded the request of Nagapattinam fishers to be considered on par with Thanjavur, Pudukkottai and Ramanathapuram. The State government is considering it. Deep-sea fishing boats These boats can travel over 100 nautical miles and designed to catch large fish like tuna using longline fishing ropes stretching over five to 10 km, fitted with specialised hooks and pulled using winches. Subsidy for DSFB Subsidy is given in phases to build DSFBs as 70 per cent (50 per cent Central contribution + 20 per cent State contribution) with an upper limit of Rs 56 lakh to all fishers in Thanjavur, Pudukkottai and Ramanathapuram. It is to discourage them from venturing into Sri Lanka waters. Fishers from other districts get subsidy of 50 per cent with an upper limit of Rs 30 lakh. Nagapattinam district fishers avail the scheme only if their boats are seized by Sri Lankan forces.

### **Fishers in Tamil Nadu demand primary cooperative bank**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/fishers-in-tamil-nadu-demand-primary-cooperative-bank/article30910889.ece>

"Fishers have been demanding a primary cooperative bank for themselves -- on the lines of the primary agricultural banks used by farmers. “Though the Central government has agreed to give us Kisan Credit Cards, no bank is agreeing to provide us with loans. They are all asking us for collateral, or details of previous loans taken and repaid. Fishers live in coastal promoboke lands and do not have pattas: what property can we pledge, asks Nanjil Ravi of the Akhila India Meenavar Sangam. M.D. Dayalan of the Indian Fishermen Association said the Reserve Bank of India's norms stipulate that banks should not ask for surety or property collateral for loans of up to ?10 lakh. But every bank in the coastal areas in the State ask for these things. “The children of fishers don't even get educational loans.

Only managers who understand the situation and personally know the fisher agree to provide loans. And these are very few and far between, he said. Joyce Victoria, the association's secretary, explained that in neighbouring Kerala, village-level banks provide loans to fishers based on the recommendation of associations that are recognised by the State government. “Members of an association can avail of loans. Say, for instance, if the member owns a boat and is in need of a loan, the association would recommend it and the bank gives the loan. The repayment happens through the sale of fish. The bank becomes the owner of the fish, it pays the salaries of labourers, the owner and even transfers payments to the ice factory and diesel pump, she said. A retired official of the Fisheries department said that the bank had been a long-pending demand of fishers. “There is a lot of money belonging to fishers in primary agricultural banks, if that is moved to fishermen's cooperative banks, it would help. The Kisan credit cards meant for

fishers could be routed through these banks. In Colachel, the local fishermen's cooperative society gives jewel loans, he pointed out.

### **Celebrating the Ennore-Pulicat wetland system in Tamil Nadu**

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/in-the-ennore-pulicat-wetlands-livelihoods-depend-heavily-on-the-areas-biodiversity/article30851988.ece>

"Before stepping out for birding, I always utter a silent prayer that snakes don't cross my path. So, last Sunday, while heading out with a group to explore the biodiversity of the Ennore-Kattupalli-Pulicat region, I make the usual supplication. Per contra, those with me pray for the opposite and that is squirmingly disconcerting. The denouement of the sixth-edition of the Chennai Kalai Theru Vizha, an annual cultural-socio-environmental experiment, includes a nature trail and that has brought me to these parts on a muggy day. At Kadalkanniyur, Nityanand Jayaraman, social activist and volunteer-organiser of the Vizha, asks the group to break into three, spread across two sections that present wildly contrasting features, and return with a bio check-list. On one side, within sniffing distance of the sea, the land undulates like a roller-coaster ride. Wind and allied forces have crowned it with sand dunes. Further away, where the undulations are a little less pronounced, there is a scatter of scrub vegetation, and naturalist T Murugavel, a volunteer-guide on the trail, fervently hopes a snake will slither out of any of the burrows hidden by thorny bushes.

I realise he means business when he points to a spot in his hand that had been kissed by a rescued saw-scaled viper while he was releasing it in the wild. Celebrating the Ennore-Pulicat wetland system Back to the sand dunes, naturalist M Yuvan, also a volunteer-guide, demystifies aspects of this natural-miracle. "Various types of grass and other vegetation trap the sand and also stabilise the dunes. The troughs of water between the dunes are actually natural springs. Dunes serve as a natural filter, preventing sea-water intrusion and protecting aquifers, and as a bulwark against flooding and storm surges. Sand dunes are often loosely labelled as barren land, but when we factor in their uses, we are forced to revisit the definition of barrenness, explains Yuvan. Usually, bio-diversity is concentrated in and around these springs. The check-list from the sand-dunes with its springs, at Kadalkanniyur, prepared in just 20 minutes, includes skittering frog, whipped scorpion, fan-throated lizard, common toad, common ghost crab, social spider, scat of black-naped hare, a shell of a mole crab and a dead female Olive Ridley.

"The carcass of the female Olive Ridley suggests nesting activity in these parts, says Yuvan. Through the rest of the tour, we hear from the guides, which also includes botanist Devanathan Krishnamoorthy, how the defining feature of the region is that it defies quick and pat definitions, being a meeting point of a variety of natural systems that differ widely, yet make a fascinating and functional whole. Land of synergy Going inland, away from the sand-dunes, there is what

our guides call inter-tidal zone, where the topography is marked by a form of flatness. Regulated by tidal action, the waters often recede sufficiently enough to expose soil that teems with creatures, which are meal for a diversity of birds. This zone is pockmarked with mudflats, which during winter, draw birds like Eurasian curlews that probe for crabs by half-burying their beaks in this slightly gooey soil. “The Ennore-Pulicat wetland system can't be slotted into our usual divisional categories of ecosystems. There are coastal dunes, backwaters, salt pans, mudflats, mangrove forests, tropical dry evergreen forest and scrub jungle. The salinity in the Pulicat lagoon created by barrier islands is known to hit an incredibly low number during the monsoon due to freshwater inflows. And the diverse elements come together in a rare mix of land, water and vegetation, says Yuvan. He adds, “Kosasthalaiyar river breaks into various distributory streams, meeting the backwaters, and the gradient from freshwater to brackish water is gradual. Therefore, there is a continuum of ecologies and livelihoods based on them. Fishing is a broad term encompassing many local economies.

“Beyond the fishing in the Pulicat lagoon or in the sea, there are many others to be considered. There are people who catch only lugworms in mudflats. These are bought by fishermen to be used as bait. During low tide, there are ‘fishermen’ who walk under the tide line, and catch mole crabs, feeling their stir under their feet. In the backwaters and shallow tidal flats, some groups catch only oysters and clams, he continues. While heading to the Fish Auction house in Lighthouse-Pulicat, the focal point of the fishing trade, small mounds of shells gathered together heave into view now and then. Yuvan explains that they are meant for lime-making, and signify another local economy. - The setting for the finale of the sixth edition of Chennai Kalai Theru Vizha couldn't have been chosen better – the Lighthouse and placid waters of Pulicat Lagoon formed the backdrop, with the open premises of the Fish Auction house as the venue. - Performances, by groups drawn from hamlets in the Ennore-Kattupalli-Pulicat region, were related to their land, lagoon and livelihood.

A leitmotif ran through the soiree with performances that included kumi pattu by women and villu pattu by children, drawing attention to the threat of losing their land. There were references to the Kattupalli port expansion plan with its proposal of a more-than-ten-fold increase of its current capacity. - T.M. Krishna, Carnatic vocalist and volunteer-organiser of the Vizha, says that though there are different dynamics at play in the villages they are all united in the pride they share about their land, and how they want to see it protected. Naturalist Vikas Madhav, another volunteer-guide, states that this would be the first time he would assess the region extensively. “I am impressed with the diversity of avian life. that is Vikas' report card. The check-list of birds spotted here includes Oriental skylark, common snipe, pintail snipe, common redshank, common greenshank, marsh sandpiper, wood sandpiper, common sandpiper, little ringed plover, Caspian tern, lesser sand plover, Pacific golden plover, whimbrel, Eurasian curlew, Caspian tern, little stint, temminck's stint, rosy starling, common kestrel, Brahminy kite and brown-headed gull. The final bird species count is much larger. Lists have also been made

for butterflies, dragon-flies and other insects. "The Pulicat lagoon is protected and it forms the heart of the eco-system, but to protect it more meaningfully is to also protect what lies before it, as it forms a buffer between the industrial section and the lagoon, says Vikas. Our trail ends at the Fish Auction house, with gaggles of air-borne brown-headed gulls in their non-breeding plumage, their 'brown skullcap' is reduced to an ear spot drawn to shoals of fish. Though it is around noon, trading hasn't slackened. And one can't help thinking how this land has been feeding all creatures, big and small.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish market ruining lives of locals**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/feb/19/fish-market-ruining-lives-of-locals-2105422.html>

"Murthy, a senior-citizen in Vyasarpadi's Shastri Nagar, remains locked in his house for most part of the day. 'The windows and doors remain shut mostly. It gets very hard to breathe when we open it,' he says. Suffering from breathing issues among others, this is the best he can do to prevent odour from the fish market nearby entering his house. It has now been almost two decades since the residents, mostly repatriates from Burma (Myanmar), have been fighting to remove the fish market encroached upon the lane connecting 18th and 19th street. The Corporation acknowledged health hazards in 2008 and promised to remove the encroached fish market. In 2011, it received a sum of `89 lakh from the MLA funds of S K Mahendran (Perambur Constituency, 2006-11) to construct a fish market complex nearby. Though the civic body identified a 12,000 sq ft land in block number 41, survey number 779/23 in the 16th street, as the land was under the PWD, the Corporation could not get an NOC immediately.

After the then Councillor Bhaskaran briefed about the issue in the Tondiarpet Corporation Zonal office in 2012, a board was placed in the vacant land, saying a fish market complex would soon be constructed. The then MLA between 2011-16, A Soundararajan, too promised the same. The encroachers allegedly took down the board and threatened locals using thugs, forcing them to remain quiet. Thus, in fear, residents too have given up the fight. Kumar\*, another resident said, the fish vendors pour waste water outside their houses and the stench is unbearable. "As the carcasses are not removed, it invites greater bandicoot rats, dogs, and cats," added Kumar. "They carried the dead body of a woman recently in the shoulders as the mortuary van couldn't come inside," said Kumar. Corporation officials said as issue involved interference of local rowdy elements, the project to build the fish market complex could not go at all. "The vendors protested when we requested them to leave in 2014. We will review this issue soon," said the official.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fishermen for a better safety net**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/fishermen-for-a-better-safety-net/articleshow/74107597.cms>

"For a long time, the fishing community in Tamil Nadu has nursed the grouse that apart from news of a mid-sea attack or a cyclone governments have hardly spared a thought about it. But this year's budget could be a turning point, with bureaucrats hinting at a thrust on tech support, financial assistance and infra development for marine as well as inland fishery. Fisherfolk hope the upcoming Budget will have some surprises. The government is expected to give a major push by equipping 5,000-odd mechanised boats with transponders in the coming year. Developed by Isro as a means of tracking and communication system for deep sea fishermen, the transponders were fitted in 500 vessels on a pilot basis. ""The Centre has sanctioned the proposal to expand it to all mechanised boats in TN,"" said G S Sameeran, director of fisheries. Recalling the devastation by Cyclone Ockhi, Justin Antony, president of International Fishermen Development Trust, said there was a need to upgrade warning systems and improve rescue apparatus.

""National Disaster Management Centre and Branch of National Meteorological Centre should be set up at Kanyakumari. Helicopters and speed boats for rescue operations should be provided in coastal districts,"" he said. The needs of the fishermen, however, are not restricted to safety and technology, but range from financial assistance to welfare schemes for better livelihood. Rather than big-ticket projects, the demand is for additional subsidies that could make daily catch more lucrative. For instance, waiver of value added tax for diesel, brings down cost of diesel by about `30 per litre. ""The government should remove VAT for diesel that cuts down overall operational cost,"" said N J Bose, secretary of Tamil Nadu Mechanised Boat Fishermen Welfare Association. S Xavier Vas, president of Tuticorin Mechanised Boat Owners Association, says the state should fix a minimum sale price for fish to put an end to traders' syndicate that fixes low prices. He also pointed out a mechanised boat requires `1.7 lakh a day to sail. ""A boat might take nearly nine days to return. We borrow money for a steep interest of up to `3 lakh. After repayment we are left with a pittance. The government should provide short terms loans at low interest,"" he said. There is also a need for increasing subsidy for deep sea fishing boats, say fishermen. Bose said despite the present subsidy of `56 lakh for a craft, fishermen have to bear `24 lakh. ""We also have to spend around `50 lakh on fishing gear. That makes it unaffordable for most,"" he said.

### **Tamil Nadu and Kerala: IIT-Madras develops eco-friendly alternative to seawalls**

<https://www.asianage.com/india/all-india/110220/iit-madras-develops-eco-friendly-alternative-to-seawalls.html>

"After successfully testing the efficacy of the technology of groyne fields since 2007 along the Kerala and North Chennai coastline to fight sea erosion, Indian Institute of

Technology, Madras (IIT-M) has developed an eco-friendly system using geotextiles to save seashore. The system, geotextile-wrapped over geo cell, developed with the fund offered by the Kerala government, has reached the final stage, Dr. V. Sundar, professor, department of ocean engineering, IIT-M told this newspaper. “We hope we would be able to introduce it on the ground in a year. “The system works with a dual structure: one is the geotube that will be laid on the updrift side and the second, a geo textile structure that replaces the conventional seawall in the down drift side, Dr Sundar said. “The geotube will act as a shock absorber by reducing the power of the waves. Ultimately, the system brings down the power of the high waves during the monsoon season that would cause sever damages to the life and property of coastal people. He said the IIT team pursued the project after Kerala government accepted its proposal a couple of years ago and the allocated the fund for the same.

“We are is waiting for the release of the final installment of the fund from the Kerala government to test the technology on the ground. The system is eco-friendly and cost effective compared to conventional rocky seawalls, he said. “The sizable boulders are unavailable and that was why we thought about the geo textiles, he said. “Geotextiles are strong enough to withstand the pressure of waves. It's the real alternate for the rocky seawalls. It may be recalled that the IITM team, under Dr. Sundar, has successfully tested groyne field technology laying down as many as 25 structures in as many as 20 shorelines in Kerala since 2007. “We are satisfied with the performance and it helped save many villages in Kerala. The unavailability of boulders is the major challenge in going ahead with that technology. Therefore we were forced to look for the alternative, he said. According to Dr Sundar, IITM has done a review study on the implemented groyne fields in the coast of Kerala in around 20 locations. “Based on a detailed review, it is found that groyne fields in 12 out of the 20 locations are in good state and functioning very effectively and have recovered lot of beaches. Though the remaining fields are comparatively less effective in recovering beach, they have controlled erosion to an acceptable limit, he pointed out.

### **Tamil Nadu: Artificial reefs breathe new life for Tamil Nadu’s fishing communities**

<https://india.mongabay.com/2020/02/artificial-reefs-breathe-new-life-for-tamil-nadus-fishing-communities/>

"Reefs do not come to mind when one thinks of India's coastline as coral reef establishments are limited to the waters around the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Palk Bay and the Gulf of Mannar. However, when fishermen from Poompuhar, Tamil Nadu, reported that their fish catch was declining, the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) and the Tamil Nadu Fisheries Development Corporation (TNFDC) stepped in with the

solution of deploying artificial reefs. Artificial reefs (AR) are man-made structures deployed on generally featureless seabed to create a substratum to support a variety of marine life or where existing natural reefs have been destroyed. An AR can serve several purposes – recreational activities (surfing, scuba diving, snorkelling, tourism), disaster management, coastal protection, managing and promoting marine biodiversity, increasing fish catch, and preventing trawling. “It is important to identify the needs of the area and the community before installing an AR, as the models can vary with the purpose, explained S. Velvizhi, principal scientist at MSSRF's Fish for All centre. “The AR project here aims to improve fish stocks by creating a sustainable marine ecosystem, thus providing a secure source of livelihood for local, traditional fisherfolk.

The demand for such intervention came after villagers from Poompuhar heard of the success of the year-old AR project from the neighbouring coastal villages in Karaikal, Puducherry. Shaktivel, 35, a fisherman from Tirumalairayan Pattinam, Karaikal, said that for some time now even as fish stocks were declining due to various reasons and operational costs of fishing were increasing. Thus the ARs deployed last year by the MSSRF were a ray of hope. “It has been there for just one year but I have already got four or five large catches, Shaktivel said. “I was lucky to benefit from a bumper catch near the reef just last month. It was worth nearly Rs 30,000. Many a times traditional fishermen like Shaktivel return without a substantial catch, barely covering their expenses, and such bumper catches around the ARs, which support a thriving marine habitat, can save the day. Different structures for different species In its Poompuhar project, MSSRF has laid nearly 60 concrete structures – weighing 800 kg to one tonne – in the compound of the Fish for All centre in Poompuhar.

These structures are of three makes and each supports a different species, explained E.Thamizhazhagan, development associate at MSSRF. Some of the 60 will attract lobsters, others small fish (mackerel, small fin fishes, carangid), and some will be home to groupers and bream fish. The structures, costing Rs 18,000 to Rs 20,000 a piece, are sunk at preselected spots within 15 nautical miles of the coast. Scientists at MSSRF explained that some basic criteria for site selection include a depth of 10 metre to 50 m on sandy sea bed, and assessing other factors such as tidal action, type of soil, temperature, water quality, water current, dissolved oxygen, other species in the area, nutrients, benthos and plankton. The sites should not be on clayey sea beds, trawling zones, existing coral area and fish migration routes. Once deployed, fishing around newly sunk “reefs is banned for at least six months to a year.

Over time the ARs develop a healthy marine habitat attracting shoals and other marine flora and fauna, after which fishing can be resumed. Long-lasting habitats “Corals grow at just 1 cm a year, so it will take nearly 5-7 years for it to look like a proper reef, explained Velvizhi. ARs, however, are different from traditional fish aggregating devices (FADs) used by fishermen. While an ARs can be deployed as FADs, traditional FADs built using certain trees, barks, coir or coconut fronds – and more recently tyres, metal structures and other solid waste – are temporary

and may pollute the marine environment. “ARs, if done properly, are long-lasting habitat which includes seabed, sea grass, other smaller fishes, nutrients, and so on, explained Hussain Mohamad Kasim, a retired scientist, formerly with the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI). Kasim has advised government departments on AR projects in the past, and has extensively recorded various benefits of reefs. “It is particularly useful for artisanal fishermen who are marginalised by those operating mechanised boats, and can significantly improve their income.

The situation in Shaktivel's village, dominated by artisanal fishermen operating smaller craft, is a case in point. “Unlike larger motorised boats and trawlers, we cannot venture more than 15-17 nautical km away from the coast, he said. “Trawling really impacts our catch also. “Around 10-15 nautical miles is also the ideal zone for AR, thereby protecting the livelihood of artisanal fishermen using hook and line, gill netting and phased fishing on smaller crafts, said E.Thamizhazhagan. Apart from a better catch, other benefits include reduced journey time to and from fishing grounds, hence lesser expenditure on fuel. According to Velvizhi's calculations ARs can boost fishermen's income by 100 percent in the next three to seven years. Previous research by Kasim and others show that in some instances ARs can increase fish catch and income by anything between 20 and 4000 percent. Multiple impacts ARs aren't new to India. Some of the earliest recorded externally fabricated and traditional ARs in India were created by local fishermen in Kerala in the 1950s, according to this CMFRI bulletin. Interventions by organisations and scientists from Ford Foundation, CMFRI, NABARD, UNDP, fisheries departments of Kerala, Odisha, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu picked up in the 1980s and 1990s. An area of at least 1,97,750 sq km was covered by artificial reef until 2012, according to Kasim's research.

AR has also been used to reclaim islands and prevent coral bleaching. The combined effects of ocean warming and acidification may have negative impacts on coral reef cover and marine fisheries, and exacerbate “global inequities, reducing resilience and thereby likely worsening outcomes under all climate change scenarios, the December 2019 report by the High Level Panel on Sustainable Ocean Economy had noted. Such impacts are evident in Thoothukudi where the destruction of marine life due to warming ocean and coral bleaching threatens the livelihood of over 10,000 fishermen, according to the project report published in 2015 by the NABARD Consultancy Services for the Department of Environment, Government of Tamil Nadu. The AR project off the coast of Thoothukudi district, in the Gulf of Mannar, was started in 2007 with multiple aims of reviving corals and coastal habitats, preventing 21 islands from sinking, reducing trawling as well as protecting the livelihood of traditional fishermen. Not every artificial reef is a success “Not everyone can deploy AR it is a technology and it impacts coastal communities. You can't use the ocean as a dumping ground and call it an AR, warned Kasim. “Several ARs projects in the past have missed two crucial aspects assessing the suitability of the areas and doing it in coordination with the local community, explained Thamizhazhagan.

In Nagapattinam and Karaikal, fishermen said that their fishing nets were often damaged due to ARs which were haphazardly deployed some years ago. Such projects eventually did not support any habitats. The success of the reef also depends on socio-economic factors. ARs are a fishing village's common property resource, and can benefit the community as a whole. Both Velvizhi and Kasim emphasised the importance of empowering local communities in the process of laying, monitoring, management and effective implementation of AR projects. In order to ensure community participation, MSSRF formed village monitoring committees and a project monitoring committee. They held several public meetings with panchayat leaders and fishermen for the selection of the site, models, and so on. "Since the area where the AR is deployed needs to be undisturbed, involving fishermen makes the monitoring of the sites easy. They collectively manage the resource over time, Velvizhi explained.

Shaktivel from Karaikal was part of MSSRF's village monitoring committee last year. He worked with MSSRF and the local panchayat to identify the points suitable for the reef, provide inputs about their needs, and share traditional knowledge about their practices and the region. "The local fishermen said they would prefer the reef to be on the traditional fishing ground, so that the future resources will be bountiful, Shaktivel explained. Today, nearly 48 concrete structures at Tirumalairayan Pattinam's common fishing along the Coromandel coast are now turning into reefs attracting a diverse range of species day in and day out. Recalling his recent catch he added, "It seems to be working already.

### **Tamil Nadu: Plea to protect the livelihood of local fishermen**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/plea-to-protect-the-livelihood-of-local-fishermen/article30783794.ece>

"The Thanjavur District Mechanised Vessel Fishermen Association has called upon the Fisheries Department to ensure that the livelihood of local fishermen were not affected by the activities of fishermen of neighbouring coastal districts. At a meeting held at Mallipattinam on Sunday, the association claimed that the livelihood of Thanjavur district fishermen was affected since the fishermen from neighbouring Nagapattinam and Karaikal areas used to catch fish in the sea off Thanjavur district coast using their speed vessels. As they used to anchor in the area where the Thanjavur district fishermen used to catch fish for more than 24 hours, the local fishermen were not able to get sufficient catch and most of the time they used to return with a low catch or empty-handed. Hence, the association urged the Fisheries Department to direct the neighbouring district fishermen to look for fish in their own area and not to trespass into neighbouring areas. Stating that the country boat and mechanised vessel fishermen in Thanjavur district has entered into an agreement that the former would venture into the sea for four days in a week and the latter three days so that both of them could get a good catch, the association

claimed that intrusion of neighbouring district fishermen into Thanjavur district sea had badly affected the catch.

### **Tamil Nadu: Evict fish sellers from Loop Road, says HC**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/evict-fish-sellers-from-loop-road-says-hc/article30756511.ece>

"The Madras High Court on Thursday directed Chennai Corporation Commissioner, as well as the Commissioner of Police to crack down on fishermen families that sell seafood by squatting on the pavement on the landside of the 2.5-km Loop Road along Marina beach, that runs from the Light House to the Foreshore Estate bus stand. Justices Vineet Kothari and R. Suresh Kumar directed the officials to ensure that "the entire Loop Road is kept free from encroachments and a 24x7 vigil is maintained to ensure that nobody is allowed to sit or squat on the loop road or the landside footpath of the said Loop Road for selling fish, etc., so as to allow free flow of traffic. The judges also went on to state: "We have indicated to the learned Additional Advocate General (S.R. Rajagopal) that the Loop Road on the Marina beach is now becoming increasingly non-motorable and no free flow of traffic is allowed, particularly after 3 p.m., and till late evening, every day, due to fishermen selling fish there.

"There are also reports of people encroaching on the landside of the footpath on the Loop Road by raising constructions, while the seaside footpath is yet to be created, for which necessary approvals are in the process of being taken by the Corporation... All encroachments on the Loop Road should be identified and removed immediately, they added. Report sought "The said officials should furnish a report, along with site photographs, on the next date of hearing, and they shall also remain present in the court on the next date of hearing, the judges ordered, and adjourned the hearing on a public interest litigation petition, in which they have been issuing a series of orders for cleansing the beach, to February 21. They also called for a report from the Director of the Fisheries Department and wanted to know from the official as to whether any enumeration exercise had been carried out so far to identify the exact number of fishermen families that were using the Loop Road to sell their catch on a daily basis. The AAG was further directed to file a status report with respect to the new fish market to be constructed on two acres of land on the landside of the Loop Road. He was asked to apprise the court of the progress made so far regarding the construction and a timeframe within which it shall be completed by the Corporation.

### **Tamil Nadu: Government to carry out census on marine fishermen**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/tamil-nadu-government-to-carry-out-census-on-marine-fishermen/articleshow/73924047.cms>

"The Tamil Nadu government will start the decennial census on the fishermen community in March. It will also undertake a first of its kind study on the socio-economic status of marine fisherfolk in the state. The census will go on for six months. Alongside, a study will be carried out to identify the marine fishing villages, population dependent on marine fisheries resources and their occupational structure. The population of the fishermen community as per the 2010 census was 7.87 lakh and the conventional estimate is that it would have grown to 10.25 lakh by now. ""The fisheries department has begun the administrative process to launch the census. The six-month long statistical exercise will cover details like age, literacy, occupation, fishing craft (mechanised fishing boat/non-motorised/motorised vessels) and fishing gears. The census will help the government evolve schemes benefitting the community,"" fisheries director G S Sameeran told TOI. The state ranks fourth in total marine fish production in the country. About 6.75 lakh tonnes of fish was caught in the last fiscal and it generated foreign exchange revenue of 5,500 crore.

The state offers financial aid of 5,000 to each family during the fishing ban period. The government has rolled out its plan to identify a consultant for doing a study on the socio-economic status of fishermen. The objective is to identify the latest status, impact of various government schemes and key areas of interventions for improvement of their living standards. The study will focus on the schemes implemented in the last 15 years and measure the improvement achieved through the schemes. Infrastructure facilities developed over the past ten years all along Tamil Nadu coast, handling of catch, marketing of fish and the benefits enjoyed by the fishermen through these infrastructure facilities will be studied. ""The study will help identify areas that require more attention to improve their livelihood,"" fisheries minister D Jayakumar said. Besides collection of demographic data, the study will look into ownership and possession of fishing assets and implements, nature of fishing, disposal of catch, income and indebtedness. With 1076-km long coastline covering 13 coastal districts, Tamil Nadu has the second longest coastline in the country.

Tamil Nadu Mechanised Boat Fishermen Welfare Association state general secretary N J Bose said the governments at the state and Centre should intervene in upgrading the livelihood of fishermen which had been hit badly over the years. ""If depleting marine resources is one reason, we are not allowed to even enter our traditional fishing waters with Sri Lankan Navy seizing our boats and arresting our fishermen. There are more than 200 boats in Lanka and 14 fishermen languishing in jails,"" Bose said. Rameswaram fishermen held protests on Monday demanding 5 lakh compensation for damaged boats. The common refrain is that the subsidy extended for deep sea fishing under the Centre's Blue Revolution scheme is inadequate.

### **Tamil Nadu: Fish vendors seek alternative site**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/fish-vendors-seek-alternative-site/article30730589.ece>

"Members of All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) submitted a petition to Collector T.G. Vinay here on Monday, seeking an alternative spot for 30 fish vendors who carry out their business near Kadachanendal. At the weekly grievance redressal meeting on Monday, AITUC's district president N. Kumaresan said that Corporation officials had evicted the vendors so as to lay roads in the area. "We do not object to road laying but merely seek an alternative space for the fish sellers to carry out their business, he said. The 30 vendors, who buy fish from Karimedu market every morning, were solely dependent on this vocation for sustenance and for paying for their children's education and taking care of their day-to-day expenses. There is a vacant space lying near Mangalakudi tank and that the vendors will be happy to set up shop there until Kadachanenthal junction is free again. He added that all of them possessed street vendor identity cards. The Collector said that the petition would be forwarded to Corporation Commissioner S. Visakan and a decision would be taken soon.

### **Tamil Nadu: Disappearing Vaan Island puts India's biodiversity at risk, hits local tourism**

<https://www.wionews.com/india-news-update-disappearing-vaan-island-puts-Indias-biodiversity-at%20risk-hits-local-tourism>

"According to a report, the Vaan Island, a small strip of land between India and Sri Lanka, has been fast disappearing putting the India's biodiversity at risk. The island which forms part of the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve has a fledgeling marine life with several thousand fish and crab species. The Vaan Island was declared a marine biodiversity park in 1986. It is one of the twenty-one islands which is part of the Gulf of Mannar reserve. The Gulf of Mannar extends from Rameswaram to Kanyakumari. A report earlier had stated the area of the island has reduced from 16 hectares in 1986 to two hectares in 2014. The Tamil Nadu government a few years ago had resorted to building an artificial reef to protect the island. The area of the island has been consistently submerging since 1973, a study has stated. A report says only just 19 islands remain. UNESCO describes the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve as one of the world's richest region in marine biodiversity. It has 4,223 species of plants and animals making it "one of the richest coastal regions in India." According to UNESCO, the reserve has a "specialized ecosystem" with a unique "large marine ecosystem". The island is also widely used by Indian fishermen whose livelihood will be at risk if the island disappears. At least eight-four per cent of the island was submerged due to sea-level rise hitting the local tourism and fishing activities. In a book named Shrinking of Vann Island, researchers had predicted that by 2022 the islands will be completely submerged into the sea. Large scale fishing, including rising sea levels have been blamed for the current state of the Vaan islands. Mining of corals has also degraded the island, according to a study by researchers which was finally stopped in 2005. Indian authorities have in

the past several years have been trying to rehabilitate the coral vegetation in phases. Erosion has also seriously affected the islands with the area shrinking rapidly with global climate change also leading to rising sea levels, according to analysts.

### **Tamil Nadu: Marina revamp won't hit fishermen's livelihood: Madras high court**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/marina-revamp-wont-hit-fishermens-livelihood-madras-hc/articleshow/73745390.cms>

"Responding to a not-so-light nudge by the Madras high court, the city corporation has unveiled a six-week timeframe to retrieve the Marina Loop Road from the clutches of encroachers, and to construct a footpath along it. Recording the submission on Wednesday, a division bench of Justice Vineet Kothari and Justice R Suresh Kumar reiterated that its goal is to make the Marina a beach of international standard, and added that it would achieve it without interfering in the livelihood of fishermen. Noting that the fishermen community should cooperate with the high court to achieve the objective, the bench directed that no subordinate court shall entertain any kind of application or suit or petition on matters relating to the Marina beach and the Loop Road development, which are being monitored by the court.

On its part, the corporation explained the reason for seeking six weeks to commence the Loop Road work. "We would require an outer time limit of six weeks, so that requisite formalities may be completed by the corporation within two weeks and thereafter, in one-week time to forward the report from the state coastal zone management authority to the central environment ministry, and then in next three weeks, necessary approvals would be received from the ministry, additional advocate general S R Rajagopal said. On the purchase of smart carts to be distributed to licensed vendors on Marina and fixing fair rent for the carts, Rajagopal sought a week to file a report. As to the relief sought by the PIL-petitioner, Fishermen Care, to increase the allowance provided to families of fishermen during the fishing ban period, Madanagopal Rao, senior standing counsel for the central government, sought more time to get instructions from the authorities concerned. Recording the same, the bench said, "If any petition is directly filed in this court, the registry is directed to attach such petitions with relation to aforesaid matters, with the present pleas and with the approval of the Chief Justice, those matters may also be placed before this bench. The court posted the pleas to February 4.

### **Tamil Nadu: Risky work, no govt support: The seaweed divers**

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/risky-work-no-govt-support-seaweed-divers-tamil-nadu-s-threspuram-116985>

"Sayagraj, 57, was inspired by a video on seaweed harvesting done in Indonesia 12 years ago. He tried to replicate the procedure as a business venture along the Threspuram coast in Tamil Nadu's Thoothukkudi by designing plots in the sea. It paid off. Sayagraj, who began as an

amateur some years ago, is now well-versed in the technical knowhow and machinery provided by companies that have tapped into the profitable export business. Seaweed harvesting, a traditional occupation for many in Tamil Nadu, sustains a Rs 28,445 crore global market, as per 2017 estimates. Seaweed is used in the food and cosmetics industries. Particularly, the extract from red seaweed in Tamil Nadu is utilised in the manufacture of agar, a gelatinous thickener used in beverages and ice cream. Seaweed, collected in bottles tied along a 15-metre rope, has to be harvested for 40 days. It is of value only in its spongy form and not after it becomes brittle. However, the job, done in 21 villages along the Tamil Nadu coast, is laborious and risky, calling for tact, skill and observation.

“We have to constantly guard the seaweed from shoals of fish which can pass by at any given time. This requires monitoring and repeated diving into the ocean waters, Sayagraj says, explaining the process of harvesting. Before diving 18 feet into the ocean, ropes have to be anchored properly to ensure they are not loose. Sayagraj's son, Paulraj, 34, talks about the injuries he has suffered during harvesting. “The wounds on my feet sting in the salty water. There are times when sharp and poisonous weeds get in the way of harvesting. We rub seaweed extracts, which have antiseptic properties, on our feet, he says. Leave alone physical injuries, it is a thankless job, say seaweed harvesters. While major industries rely on seaweed, the labour and skill of the harvesters often goes unrecognised. Harvesters do not have a legitimate identity. As per government norms, they are neither fishermen nor farmers.

“Fishermen get compensation through their associations during off-season or bad weather. But we get no such benefits. Late rains in November and December last year affected harvesting but we had to live with it, Paulraj adds. Among the other problems are rising sea temperatures, falling seaweed yield and labour shortage. “Many fishermen don't want to get involved as it is tedious work. Younger people are now migrating from the village in search of better job opportunities, leaving only a few of us behind, says Sayagraj, who was formerly a farmer. In another disheartening development for the divers, harvesting is no longer a Tamil Nadu monopoly. Seaweed is now being exported from states such as Gujarat too. This means tough competition. Export companies have begun to mushroom in Ramanathapuram and Madurai. “The demand for seaweed is rising but the odds are mostly against us, Paulraj says.

### **Tamil Nadu: NGT slams Kamarajar Port, North Chennai Thermal Power Station for polluting Ennore Creek**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/ngt-slams-kamarajar-port-north-chennai-thermal-power-station-for-polluting-ennore-creek/article30657087.ece>

"The Southern Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has slammed the Kamarajar Port Ltd (KPL) and the North Chennai Thermal Power Station (NCTPS) for failing to clear the pollution caused by them in the Ennore Creek. The Bench in particular came down heavily on

the NCTPS, observing if State-owned industries themselves don't comply with norms, it will send a wrong message to other industries. The Bench also imposed an interim penalty of ₹8.34 crore on KPL as environmental compensation and ordered the port to deposit the amount with the Central Pollution Control Board within two months. Based on a report submitted by a joint committee, the bench observed that “the violation still continues. Till the entire dump has been removed and damage caused to the environment is restored to its original position, M/s. Kamarajar Port Ltd., is liable to pay compensation. The Bench of Justice K. Ramakrishnan and expert member Saibal Dasgupta also directed the committee to look at measures to remediate the Creek and the cost required for it.

The Central Pollution Control Board which submitted its findings before the Tribunal found through satellite images, and site visits in late 2019 that the dredged material dumped in the nine dumping sites falling under CRZ notified area have not yet been fully removed. “The mangroves in the area may be lost due to dumping in the nine sites. Currently, the mangroves in the area are very thin. The port authority has not adopted any scientific methods to remediate the soil or to restore the soil / mangroves to regional conditions. Though efforts were made to remove the dump falling with CRZ area, it is observed that it is not fully removed and dredged material is still lying in the CRZ area, the report said. The report also found high concentration levels of elements such as magnesium, aluminium, iron, potassium, chromium, lead and calcium in the soil in all the dumpsites used by KPL. The committee found that the high concentrations were found at a depth of 100 cm below the ground “indicating that the metals have leached from the dredged material dump sites.

While the Committee pointed to improper handling of raw material, coal, iron ore, and other products by KPL and fly ash handling by NCTPS as primary reasons, it also held that the Ennore Creek is a recipient of domestic waste water from small scale industries, garages from Chennai city and marine outfall from industries are located in the Manali Industrial Estate near the port. “Due to these reasons the soil near to the shore may be contaminated with chemical elements and heavy metals.” With regard to the NCTPS, the Bench criticised the Committee for not making any attempt to consider the remediation measure to be undertaken and for relying only on the timeline provided by NCTPS to remove the fly ash. Buckingham Canal It was submitted before the Tribunal that the PWD had already commenced dredging of the Buckingham Canal and deposited the dredged ash and silt on the banks of the Canal.

A timeline extending till 2022 was submitted to clear the Creek and the Canal of fly ash. “As per the Fly Ash Disposal Notification 2017, the time line provided for 100% disposal is already over and no further extension has been given by the MoEF in this regard. So non-disposal of fly ash within the stipulated time will amount to serious violation, the Bench said and slammed the CPCB for not even mentioning whether the direction issued by the Principal Bench over compensation has been complied with or not by the NCTPS. The Bench held that the CPCB will

have to fix the timeline for remediation than relying on the timeline provided by the NCTPS. “If the State owned industries itself are not complying with the directions and if they are violating the norms under the hope that they will not be proceeded against and only directions will be issued to rectify the deficiencies then it will give a wrong message to other industries as well who may be tempted to violate the norms, the Bench said.

### **Tamil Nadu: Sri Lanka Navy detains 11 Indian fishermen for cross border fishing**

<http://www.uniindia.com/sri-lanka-navy-detains-11-indian-fishermen-for-cross-border-fishing/south/news/1867978.html>

"The Sri Lanka Navy detained 11 Indian fishermen and confiscated their mechanized fishing trawler for allegedly straying into the exclusive economic zone of the Island nation and indulged in unlawful fishing activities on Monday night. Fisheries officials said the incarcerated fishermen hailed from Rameswaram in Ramanathapuram district and were detained by the Sri Lanka Navy when they were fishing in the high seas near the Katchatheevu Island tonight. About 3,000 fishermen had ventured into sea for fishing from Rameswaram fishing jetty this morning.

### **Tamil Nadu: Prawn proud in Pulicat**

<https://www.thehindu.com/society/prawn-proud-in-pulicat/article30665700.ece>

"Thirty-nine years ago, K Basheera's family served guests mutton biryani for her wedding. Mutton is the ultimate feast meat; but if you visited her in Pulicat, she would cook you a dish that is several notches more special: prawn biryani. “I make it every time I have visitors. How else will they get to enjoy what is locally available in our home turf? She asks, adding with a laugh: “I am sort of boasting our great prawns this way. Muslim homes in Pulicat hold prawn biryani close to their heart, and last week, Basheera and six other women from her neighbourhood shared her family's recipe and even cooked the dish for a team from Chennai. This was part of a documentation in the presence of volunteers from Chennai Kalai Theru Vizha, InSeason Fish, and chefs from city-based restaurant Sea Salt. “They loved it, adds the 53-year-old. The team was in Pulicat to learn traditional recipes from women there: fifteen of them gave a live cooking demonstration of 12 dishes that will be replicated at the Pulicat Seafood Festival to be held as part of the Vizha.

A large portion of prawns Chennai consumes, comes from Pulicat. And people there get to eat the freshest of catch. As G Rajalakshmi, who participated in the cook-fest puts it, “If I want to cook fish, my fisherman husband simply grabs the net to bring me some. Over the years, families in the seaside town have perfected recipes that they tailor to the kind of fish available and its fat content. “If the fish is nice and fat, I add lots of garlic to the kozhambu, says Rajalakshmi, adding that the base for her meen kozhambu is made of tamarind, onions, tomatoes, green

chillies, and a spice mix that she grinds with cumin, dried chillies, coriander seeds, among other ingredients. “Garlic aids in digestion, she points out. “If the fish is lean, I make the kozhambu with just the masala powder and tamarind base. The 36-year-old has been cooking with her hands ever since she got married 21 years ago; but she has been cooking with her eyes ever since she can remember. “People would get the sweet smell of my mother's nethili (anchovi) kozhambu from streets away, she remembers. “She cooked it with sour mango. Rajalakshmi watched her mother cook, taking in all the nuances. The cook-fest featured such dishes, all of them handed down generations.

Chaitanya Krishna, co-founder of InSeason Fish that is collaborating for the food festival, recalls the warmth and pride with which the women served the food. Among his biggest takeaways, he points out, is the fish puttu. “I thought puttu can only be made with shark, he says. But Rajalakshmi and her team showed that the dish can also be made with kaana keluthi (mackerel). “We make puttu with a variety of fish such as soora (tuna), and small thirukka (stingray), she explains. The women also made some fragrant crab soup, prawn vadais, and an interesting dish called era karukkudhal. This was a big hit. “It's simple add prawns with the skin intact into a pan, break four dried chillies into it, some salt to taste, sprinkle some water, cover and cook, says Rajalakshmi. Harish Rao, brand chef of Sea Salt, who was there with his team of three, is all praise for this dish. “It was delicious; the dehydrated prawns had a nice crunch to them, he says. The menu for the food festival, explains Harish, will feature all the recipes the women demonstrated.

“We plan to replicate the dishes in their entirety, he adds. For us in the city, what is going to be a chance to try dishes that originated several decades ago in a small seaside town, is an everyday affair for people there. Households in the region, especially those with senior members, cook fish every day. Rajalakshmi says that if an old woman walked by during mealtime and saw that there was no fish on her plate, she would scoff. She laughs saying, “For us, a meal without fish is not a meal. Pulicat Seafood Festival is being held to coincide with World Wetlands Day that falls on February 2. It is on from January 31 to February 2, at Sea Salt, Nungambakkam. The thali, that is available for lunch (12.30 pm to 3.30 pm) and dinner (7 pm to 11 pm) is priced at Rs.595 plus taxes. For reservations, call 48682323.

### **Tamil Nadu: Efforts on to save Pulicat ecosystem**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/good-news/2020/jan/24/eat-for-a-cause-efforts-on-to-save-pulicat-ecosystem-2093652.html>

"Thousands of fisherfolk from 65 coastal villages have joined hands to form a coordination committee to save the Ennore-Pulicat ecosystem from rapid industrialisation. These villages are home to about 30,000 families from both Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. As a first step, the newly elected gram panchayat councilors in Pulicat will meet on January 26 to chalk

out a strategy and kick-start a movement. Adding a new dimension to the fight is Chennai Kalai Theru Vizha, chipping-in with a unique concept to help the city realise the importance of Pulicat wetlands. A three-day seafood festival is being organised, starting January 31, in collaboration with Sea Salt restaurant in Nungambakkam. The restaurant's chefs will dish out traditional Pulicat local cuisines. On Thursday, the fisherwomen cooked and shared recipes of an array of dishes with the chefs, which will form a part of a showpiece thali during the festival. Environmentalist Nityanand Jayaraman told Express that Pulicat is under a serious threat with the proposed Adani Port and Kamarajar Port's Coastal Employment Unit, both of which would inflict irreversible damage to an already fragile ecosystem.

“So far, protection of these wetlands were left to the fate of fishermen. Through this festival, we want everyone to taste the local cuisine and commit themselves to protect their traditional fishing grounds, Jayaraman said. Uma, a fisherwoman from Goonangkuppam, said, “For generations, we have depended on the brackish waters for livelihood. We don't know anything but fishing. Now, people say the proposed port would erode the sand barrier island and the sea would join the lake. This cannot happen. Several representations were made to the Union Environment Ministry about the proposed port, and as a result, a sub-committee was formed to inspect the site. In its report, it was noted that Pulicat system, Ennore creek and Buckingham canal are designated as ecologically sensitive areas and placed under CRZ-1 (critical for maintaining ecosystem of coast) of the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notification, 2011. “Extensive shallows (Ennore shoals) are formed at this place and they extend up to Pulicat. The coastal area nearby is very flat and has vast expanse of backwater. It has been hypothesized that shoals might have formed due to the interaction of northerly coastal currents and sediment supply through the Ennore creek when it was active, the committee said. It has also recommended a detailed study on the impact of the port expansion on the shoals.

### **Tamil Nadu: ‘Polluter’ Kamarajar Port asked to pay Rs 8 crore for violating norms**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/jan/21/polluter-kamarajar-port-asked-to-pay-rs-8-crore-for-violating-norms-2092226.html>

"The southern bench of National Green Tribunal on Monday has lashed out at government-owned Kamajar Port Limited and North Chennai Thermal Power Station (NCTPS) for continuously violating environmental norms, thereby degrading Ennore ecosystem which is a critical habitat in terms of flood mitigation for North Chennai. Invoking ‘Polluter Pays’ principle, the green bench has directed the Kamarajar Port to deposit Rs 8.35 crore with the Central Pollution Control Board within two months. The move comes after the NGT-appointed panel found damning evidence in the report it submitted to the tribunal on Monday. The report talked about destruction of mangroves and heavy metals contaminating the soil due to illegal dumping

of dredged soil in Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) area in Ennore Creek. The committee, comprising officials from CPCB, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) and IIT Madras, collected soil samples at all nine dredged material dumpsites. Satellite images reveal that dredged material has not been completely removed.

“The mangroves in the area may be lost due to dumping. Currently, the mangroves in the area are very thin. The port authority has not adopted any scientific methods to remediate the soil or to restore the soil/mangroves to regional conditions, the report, accessed by Express, reads. The report also says elements such as magnesium, aluminium, iron, potassium, chromium, lead and calcium are present in soil at high concentration. “The elements are found in high concentrations at a depth of 100cm below the ground, indicating that the metals have leached from the dredged material dumpsite. Since such high concentrations are present in the soil, there is a possibility of groundwater contamination and also surrounding surface water bodies, says the report. The port authorities claimed that a total of 83,533 Cum of dredged material has been removed following NGT order as compared 73,113 Cum to material dumped in the CRZ notified area for the development of additional coal berths during 2015.

Sunil Paliwal, Chairman cum Managing Director of Kamarajar Port, told Express, “We have removed the dumped material to best of our capability. Since NGT has directed us not to use heavy machinery, we had to do it manually. I am yet to see what committee has said in the report. Whatever the technical recommendations made by the committee and directions given by the tribunal will be examined and followed. NGT rejects NCTPS action plan North Chennai Thermal Power Station (NCTPS), which is another major polluter, has submitted an action plan which was incorporated by the joint committee in its report. However, NGT bench has rejected the action plan where the timeline of remedial works extended up to 2023. The green bench said such a long rope cannot be granted and directed the committee to come-up with shorter timeline.

### **Tamil Nadu: Southern India’s fishing fleets tell a tale of ‘staggering’ tsunami aid money**

<https://www.devex.com/news/southern-india-s-fishing-fleets-tell-a-tale-of-staggering-tsunami-aid-money-96274>

"E. Rajesh Kumar, a fisherman from Chandrapadi a village of 375 houses in Tamil Nadu state, on the eastern coast of southern India was eager to show off all the new tech that he and his fellow fishermen have at their disposal. From echo-location systems to locate large schools of fish, to high-grade GPS devices and walkie-talkies, every aspect of their boat is equipped to maximize their catch. The ring seine nets they use weigh at least 3 tonnes and can be 3 km long, reaching depths of up to 800 m. “These [ring seine] nets were an indirect result of foreign aid disbursing boats without any regulations. V. Vivekanandan, former FAO consultant to the Tamil Nadu government, all the new equipment came after the deadly Boxing Day tsunami in 2004.

“I lost my boat during the tsunami. I got a fiber boat in compensation, which I used for a while before selling it off, he said. The tsunami, which killed some 230,000 people across 14 countries, also saw a big outpouring of donations. Relief measures from the tsunami triggered investments in boats and nets all across the state, leading to overcapacity in fishing. But in the state of Tamil Nadu, the unregulated distribution of boats changed the coastal ecology and economy forever. Funds pour in Across the world, almost \$6.25 billion was donated to a central United Nations relief fund to aid victims of the tsunami, with India getting the third biggest share, at \$150.6 million. Flush with money from hundreds of NGOs and international aid, the number of boats increased dramatically along with their catch. According to government data, in the 10 years between 2004-2013, the fish catch in Tamil Nadu increased by nearly 75%.

“Fiber boats replaced catamarans post-tsunami, said Annie George, CEO at erstwhile NGO Coordination and Resource Center, which was working with the local administration to ensure operations didn't overlap. Livelihood rehabilitation began almost simultaneously with relief and rescue operations. Within a week of the disaster, the number of fiber boats in Nagapattinam increased by 60%, George said. The state government, in its 2005 report “Tiding Over Tsunami, estimated that more than 26,000 catamarans and 3,400 fiber boats were damaged across the state. Catamarans are simple boats made by stringing logs of wood together with ropes. While some are motorized, they cannot venture out into the deep sea. Fiber boats, on the other hand, are sturdier, have bigger engines, and can go into deeper waters. E. Rajesh Kumar, who lost his catamaran, was a beneficiary. “The money and the boats we got from the tsunami enabled us to get these boats with ring seine nets, he said, with his fellow fishermen nodding in agreement.

“On a good day, we can catch fish worth up to 10 lakh rupees [\$14,000], he added. Lack of regulation on the number of boats being donated by domestic and international NGOs has increased competition and triggered a scramble for bigger boats, longer nets, and more powerful engines to catch more fish over the last 15 years, experts say. Once a fishing hamlet, Nagapattinam now catches 900 tonnes of fish daily. The majority of this catch comes from 1,000 mechanised trawlers, 5,500 fiber boats, and around 50 mechanized ring seine boats, said sources in the state's fisheries department. A Food and Agriculture Organization report described the response of both national and international NGOs as “staggering, leading to a huge collection of funds for relief and rehabilitation. This, in turn, caused competition among NGOs to spend the funds “as quickly as possible. “More than 400 NGOs were working to provide compensation for the loss of livelihoods for fishermen in Nagapattinam, NCRC's George said. Some of the big names that donated fiber boats to Nagapattinam are Salvation Army International and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The FAO report acknowledged that the number of fiber boats “proliferated to well beyond pre-tsunami numbers and it was difficult to ascertain the number of boats that were given out by NGOs. The report indicated that everyone in Nagapattinam became a boat owner post-tsunami.

“Ideally, four people to a boat are what is acceptable, said V. Vivekanandan, a former FAO consultant to the Tamil Nadu government, and former CEO at the South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies. In the second part of the “Tiding over Tsunami report, in 2008, the state government said: “The number of fishing crafts has increased and the Department of Fisheries has registered 53,684 boats in various categories. Warnings ignored several multilateral agencies warned of overcapacity in fishing caused by the distribution of free boats as compensation. Months after the tsunami, more than 120 ministers, including those from tsunami-affected countries, released a joint statement at a high-level meeting.

They not only called for the responsible reconstruction of fisheries, but also pledged to combat illegal fishing. Ministers said that “improving the efficiency, sustainability, and governance of fisheries is also a priority, and agreed “to cooperate to ensure that reconstruction does not produce a level of fishing capacity that exceeds what fishery resources can sustainably support, according to an update from the FAO after the high-level meeting. With increased competition, investments in boats and nets also grew. Initially, this meant spreading to wider areas, using bigger and deeper nets, and smaller mesh sizes. These methods soon became ineffective, and by 2007, ring seine nets appeared on Tamil Nadu's shores, despite being banned by the state government, Vivekanandan explained.

“We learnt about these nets and newer technologies from our counterparts in Kerala, said fisherman E. Rajesh Kumar. These nets, along with trawl nets, virtually wiped out all other competition, as trawl nets scrape up everything on the sea bed. Ring seine nets can catch fish worth hundreds of thousands rupees in a single trip. “When the competition reached saturation, the fishermen sold off their fiber boats they got as compensation and pooled together to buy ring seine nets. These nets were an indirect result of foreign aid disbursing boats without any regulations, Vivekanandan said. While the state government signed a memorandum of understanding with multilateral agencies such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank for housing, there were no official policies to regulate the number of boats that were being donated by NGOs to replace damaged boats.

Policy changes ensured that the state government made it easier for NGOs to receive foreign funding, but it did not get into how it was used, Vivekanandan said. “When tonnes of sardines are caught in one day and brought to the market, the price for everyone crashes. Divya Karnad, marine researcher and assistant professor, Ashoka University. However, a 2019 report by the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute stated that the number of mechanized ring seine nets available was 117% more than the maximum sustainable fleet size. A depleted ocean Marine experts say that ring seine nets have both ecological as well as social impacts. “When tonnes of sardines are caught in one day and brought to the market, the price for everyone crashes. There will also be a vacuum for the next two days because of the sheer size of their catch, said Divya

Karnad, a marine researcher and an assistant professor at Ashoka University. “In the long run, there is a risk of losing ... genetic materials as these nets deplete fish populations at a rapid rate.

**Tamil Nadu: Boat sinks off Tuticorin coast, 6 fishermen battling for life in open sea rescued**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/tamil-nadu-boat-sinks-off-tuticorin-coast-6-fishermen-battling-for-life-in-open-sea-rescued/articleshow/73168731.cms>

"Six fishermen who were battling for life in the sea for more than 12 hours off the shore in Tuticorin district were rescued by another fishing boat close to midnight on Wednesday. They were brought to the shore in the wee hours of Thursday and admitted in the Punnaikayal government hospital in Tuticorin district. The rescued fishermen were identified as S Dominic, 55, P Isakki Raja, K Raj, X Soosai, S Raj, A Ilango of Kulasekarapattinam coastal village in Tuticorin district. It is learnt that they went fishing in Dominic's boat bearing registration number IND-TN-12-MO-5342 around 5 am on Wednesday. Preliminary inquiry revealed that they were fishing at a distance of nearly 12 nautical miles (22 km) off Kulasekarapattinam when water started seeping into the vessel, due to reasons that are under investigation. By around 11 am on Wednesday the boat sank, leaving the men battling for their lives in the open sea.

They could not get immediate help as there were no boats nearby till late at night. Around 11.30 pm they were lucky to be spotted by a fishing boat of J Edison from Punnaikayal coastal village in Tuticorin district when his team ventured into the sea from Punnaikayal for fishing. By then the rescued men were tired, thirsty and hungry and also started falling ill after spending a whole day under the scorching sun in the sea. Early on Thursday morning they were brought to the Punnaikayal government hospital. Fisheries department officials said that the men are out of danger. Fisheries department officials and the marine police said that they will conduct inquiry on the reason for their boat sinking when the men recover from the shock and are comfortable to talk.

**Tamil Nadu: Fishers working in Iran say they are safe**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/tn-fishers-working-in-iran-say-they-are-safe/articleshow/73180017.cms>

"The tensions between the US and Iran has left families of Indians working in Iran worried. Among those working there are around 3,000 Tamil Nadu fishermen on a tourist visa. While their families here are worried about their safety, the fishermen say they are safe and far away from the conflict zone. Sukumaran, 34, of Colachel (name and place changed on request) in Kanyakumari district, has worked in many countries in the middle-east as a fisherman over the last 14 years. Over the last four years he has been working in Iran. Currently home for his annual vacation, the father of two is determined to go back to Iran next month. “Iran is the best place for fishermen to work. Unlike other middle-east countries where they pay our wages once in six to

eight weeks, in Iran they pay us once we are back from every seven to ten day long fishing expedition. The owners also treat us very well, he said. Wage of captains (boat drivers) like him is much more than the other fishermen.

“If other men make Rs 40,000 to Rs 50,000 a month, captains easily earn more than Rs 1 lakh a month, he said. “I spoke to my employer and fellow fishermen working there. They said that a senior Iran officer was killed by the US, due to which there is some trouble in Tehran and northern Iran. It has not affected our places that are about 1,000km away, he adds. The fisherman has been giving assurance to the families of fellow fishermen working with him in Iran. The family of another fisherman who is currently working in Iran is also convinced that their kin is safe. “We spoke to him by WhatsApp. He said there is no problem in their place, his brother said. Churchil, general secretary of South Asian Fishermen Fraternity (SAFF), said that fishermen from Tamil Nadu are working in 350 mechanised boats in Iran. “Seven to eight men go fishing in each of those boats.

More than 70% of them are from Kanyakumari and the rest from other coastal districts like Nagapattinam and Cuddalore, he said. The activist added that these men are primarily working in places like Zero (1,050 fishermen) and Kish Island (700) and in smaller numbers in Asaluyeh (350), Lava Island (120), Kamku (105) and Staraq (70) in the southern and eastern parts of Iran. “They are safe now, but will be in trouble if the war is by sea, he said. But these fishermen have not gone to Iran on record due to difficulties in getting a Visa. “They go to Dubai on a tourist visa, from where they get a tourist visa with which they work in Iran. SAFF made an appeal to the Government of India to identify the men and repatriate them through the neighbouring countries if the situation worsens.

### **Tamil Nadu: Chennai oil spill: Panel to evaluate remedial measures undertaken**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/jan/09/chennai-oil-spill-panel-to-evaluate-remedial-measures-undertaken-2087121.html>

"Nearly three years after the devastating Chennai oil spill, southern bench of National Green Tribunal (NGT) has constituted a joint expert committee to assess the remedial measures by the State government to restore the coast and submit a report in three months. This follows complaints of government's inaction in taking up full-scale restoration works. Now, the panel, comprising expert members from Union Environment Ministry, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) and State fisheries department, has been mandated to check the quality of aquatic life, look for residual remains of oil spill in seabed and river mouths. After the oil spill off Ennore coast on January 28, 2017, the coast has been cleaned, but sufficient efforts were not made to assess the extent of environment damage caused by the spill, it is pointed out. A detailed long-term monitoring programme on health of larvae, benthic organisms, turtles and birds during the post-spill period is what is needed to understand the extent of recovery of

biological system and the likely period that would take for complete recovery of the ecosystem in the oil spill affected Ennore and Marina coasts.

Committee on Assessment of Environmental Impact of Oil spill, constituted by State Department of Environment three months after the incident submitted its report, which gathered dust even as Central and State research institutes awaited funds for long to commence the studies on various aspects, including fisheries. Integrated Coastal and Marine Area Management Project Directorate (ICMAM) carried out analysis of Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (TPH) in edible fish caught using trawl nets operated by fishing trawlers at depths of about 10m. The analysis showed 21 species were contaminated by TPH measuring 4.51 µg/g. No data on safe limits for TPH in fish is available, which makes it difficult to interpret whether the observed value of 4.51 µg/g in fish is within safe limit. Experts are concerned about the probable environmental impacts. Experts concerned Considering the high viscosity of bunker oil, low reactivity and persistency in environment, it is certain that the oil will continue to be present in sediments and organisms at least for a period of five-eight years, experts say.

### **Tamil Nadu and Odisha: A tale of two states: Why disaster recovery in India needs to go beyond housing**

<https://scroll.in/article/949088/a-tale-of-two-states-why-disaster-recovery-in-india-needs-to-go-beyond-housing>

"A year after cyclone Gaja made landfall in November 2018 with severe impacts in southern Tamil Nadu, coastal communities in Nagapattinam are still recovering from the widespread devastation. Official figures say that at least 57 people were killed but this number belies Gaja's impact on the ground, as thousands lost their homes and livelihoods. For many residents, this storm was a horrific reminder of another catastrophe they had faced – the 2004 tsunami. Over 10,000 lives were lost in that event and 154,000 houses were damaged in Tamil Nadu alone. Further up the coast, the state of Odisha has also been vulnerable to frequent hazards such as cyclones and floods. For many, the worst disaster in living memory occurred in 1999, when the Super Cyclone claimed over 10,000 lives and destroyed the homes of 19 lakh families. Both Tamil Nadu and Odisha responded by embarking on programmes to protect vulnerable communities from future catastrophes. This has largely taken the form of the large-scale construction of homes.

On the face of it, this seems impressive. But as we discovered through our two-year Recovery with Dignity research project at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements, these housing projects have not helped survivors build new lives. Building homes In Tamil Nadu, after the tsunami, the Emergency Tsunami Reconstruction Project, funded by the World Bank, with assistance from the UN Development Project and the Asian Development Bank, planned to reconstruct over 140,000 houses in the state. NGOs and other public and private organisations

were given the task of managing and executing the construction of these houses. In Odisha, the widespread destruction left by the Super Cyclone compelled the state government to adopt a “zero casualty approach that would minimise casualties in case of a future storm. This resulted in investments pouring into constructing cyclone shelters and sanctioning pucca houses. Reconstruction projects in Odisha have been directed through several existing housing schemes of the central and state governments such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana, and also specific programmes such as the Odisha Disaster Recovery Project.

However, a look at cyclone-affected villages in both states tell a different story. In Ersama, Odisha, a block that was severely affected by the 1999 Super Cyclone, a large number of households are steeped in poverty and continue to live in kutcha houses that are not cyclone resistant. A revenue official at the Ersama Block Development Office said that the funds the authorities receive from central and state governments to construct houses are often returned unspent as they are unable to find eligible households. For instance, people pucca houses built under previous schemes but were destroyed by subsequent cyclones are considered ineligible. This is because the money is available only to those who don't have a pucca house and have not previously been the beneficiaries of any scheme. For the state government, building a pucca house was the ultimate sign of recovery. But for the affected communities, it featured lower on their list of long-term priorities.

“Having a job and a steady source of income is our major concern, said Bhakta, a resident of Ersama block which was severely affected by the 1999 Super Cyclone. “If we have that, eventually, we can take care of our housing needs. What is the point of having a house but no job?’ Even after two decades, affected communities are struggling to get their lives back on track. With limited livelihood opportunities, many are forced to migrate to southern states in search of jobs. Lack of amenities In Kameshwaram village, Tamil Nadu, which was affected by the tsunami and Gaja, beneficiaries were identified for various housing schemes implemented after the disaster. The village, populated mostly by fisherfolk and farm labourers, is dotted with groups of identical houses. What is stark about the village, however, is the lack of amenities. “Yes, some of us now have concrete houses, but the landscape of the village has not changed since the tsunami, said Ramesh, a fisherman and resident of the village. “We still have the same problems, we need better roads, schools, hospitals and our children need more job opportunities. The fish stock is depleting, groundwater is saline, and our crops are withering away. It doesn't seem enough to merely increase the housing stock; the type, quality and location of housing are important.

A standard one-size-fits-all approach is inadequate. A common complaint among fisherpeople in Tamil Nadu is that two-storey housing is not practical, as it is cumbersome for families on the top floor to store their fishing equipment. People also frequently complain of houses being too small and insufficient as families expand. Beyond housing Post-disaster housing reconstruction

has largely been a top-down process removed from other aspects of recovery and larger development goals. Quantitative measures such as the number of units built, the cost of construction, and the number of beneficiaries determine the official narrative around success of post-disaster housing programmes, overlooking settlement-wide concerns pertaining to livelihoods, education, water, sanitation and health and the ecology of the region. This narrow approach to recovery, wherein post-disaster measures are viewed in isolation of development efforts, often worsens existing vulnerabilities such as social inequality, the lack of job opportunities and the lack of access to basic services among the disaster-affected population, in turn affecting overall recovery.

These housing schemes have been launched with much fanfare as targets such as “converting all kutchha houses to pucca houses by 2019 or “housing for all by 2020 make for good news headlines. This rush to simply build without taking into consideration less visible aspects of recovery becomes a factor driving this total focus on housing as the means and end to recovery. The authorities must realise that vulnerability to disaster, and hence recovery, cannot be understood only in terms of physical factors such as hazardous events and geographical location, which can be corrected with infrastructure solutions such as pucca houses, cyclone shelters and sea walls. With extreme weather events predicted to get more frequent in a warming world, there is a need for disaster management policies to go over and beyond reconstruction aid to include livelihood concerns and other settlement-wide issues in order to ensure a holistic recovery of disaster-affected people.

### **Tamil Nadu: River reality: Health a concern for Ennore fishermen**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2020/jan/05/river-reality-health-a-concern-for-ennore-fishermen-2085249.html>

"Standing chest-deep in the polluted Kosasthalaiyar River near Ennore, S Kumaresan (43), plucks out a handful of blood-red Polychaete worms and puts them in a mud bowl placed on a wooden plank which floats on the river. He coughs, scratches his itching skin and rubs his eyes, but all that does not stop him from going inside the water again to catch the worms, colloquially called 'Poochi', a bristle-bearing segmented worm present in the sludge at the bottom of a water body. After staying inside the water briefly for a minute, he comes up to take a breather, to go back inside water again. "It takes 20-30 minutes to dig the sludge to remove the worms," says Kumaresan. As he finally comes out, about 10 worms are in his hand but his whole body is sullied by reeking sewage and effluent which has engulfed the river, ever since industries started coming up in Ennore decades ago.

Due to excessive water pollution, most fish in the river has disappeared, and the remaining fish too are highly filled with chemical content. This also pushed many fishermen to catch these worms, which they later export as prawn feed to Odisha and Andhra. This type of fishing has come with myriad health issues, mainly skin related problems like rashes, lesions typically psoriasis and hives. "To catch these worms, we stay in chest-deep water for almost eight hours daily and earn about 500 or 600 a day," tells Kumaresan, to this reporter sitting on a boat opposite to him. Narrating his sorrow tale, he said, out of his three sons, one died allegedly of cancer three months ago while the other son faces severe rain-related problems. He puts all the blame on the contaminated water and fish caught in the river. According to the Journal of Toxicology and Health published in 2017, the Kosasthalaiyar River is "awash with toxic chemicals like paraffin, aromatics, copper and nickel" which may cause "permanent disturbances to the marine ecosystem, leading to ecological degradation, by not just affecting the flora and fauna but also humans through the food chain."

"All of us in the Kattukuppam village eat the contaminated fish. This doesn't sell in the market as it tastes sour," adds Kumaresan. The story is the same for hundreds of other fishermen, who are seen standing chest-deep in the River to catch 'Poochi', which is illegal as it disturbs the food chain. G Dhanaraj, (39), a fisherman comes out of the water and shows his face to click a photograph. There's a black patch just above his cheeks. In his leg, the patches are bigger. He then says it is some type of a skin-disease for which he's getting treated. "It has developed over the years getting inside the water. No amount of skin creams were helpful and I have only wasted thousands of rupees in medicine," says Dhanaraj. Since there are no government hospitals in nearby except for few Public Health Centres, Ennore fishermen need to travel ten kilometers to go to Stanley or RSRM hospital in Royapuram. The travel expenditure adds to their medical costs putting them further in poverty. "We don't get to save anything from the Rs 600 we earn daily as medicine costs reach Rs 5000 a week," adds Dhanaraj. Unable to pay fees for their children, the kids mostly end up dropping out, leading to them also entering into fishing at a young age. Facing health hazards and livelihood crisis, many fishermen have left their traditional livelihood and started seeking employment in the nearby industries. But only a few have had the luck. "All the industries are in north Chennai but they rope in labourers from North India for work," says M Raja (43), a fisherman. However, he is not very keen on leaving fishing but wants his river and livelihood back. Traditional fishes don't come here anymore, say fishermen. Kanakalatha (Indian Mackerel), Vaval Meen (Pomfret), Mathimeen (Sardine), and Era (prawns), says Raja, were the traditional fish which came to the river. Now they don't come anymore. "So much restoration plans have been made for Adyar and Cooum, why Kosasthalaiyar is left out," asks Raja.

TNIE had reported numerous times in 2019 about oily effluents being let into the river. Officials of Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board were quick in only inspecting the spot but has not ensured if the pollution stopped. "Pipes from many industries are interlinked and finally, it

comes out from one pipe ending in the river. Hence, it is tricky to find the offender," said a TNPCB official. The official added that the Engineers had enquired the nearby industries along the river and it was found that none of them polluted and that the chemicals were coming from elsewhere through these pipes. Meanwhile, oil, sewage, and fly-ash pollution have not stopped polluting the river. As this reporter returns back to the shore in Kattukuppam, apparently a thick layer of a substance suspected to be oil floats on the river moving towards the Ennore Estuary. "Don't come in contact with it while getting down. It can cause severe irritation," tells Raja. As the dusk was about to fall, he immediately returned to the river, as he can't miss out on his day's catch of Poochies.

### **Tamil Nadu: Seawater intrusion seen north of Chennai**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/seawater-intrusion-seen-north-of-city/article30437575.ece>

"The coastline north of Chennai is the worst affected along the country's east coast, with a stretch of nearly 14 km experiencing seawater intrusion. Owing to seawater incursion, groundwater quality between Ennore and Ponneri has deteriorated, according to a recent study by Anna University. The study, 'Seawater intrusion and submarine groundwater discharge along the Indian coast', by L. Elango and V. Manivannan, noted that a nearly 300-km stretch of the Indian coastline had been affected by seawater incursion. Extent of the problem Seawater has entered several locations along the coastline in Tamil Nadu Cuddalore (9,620 uS/cm), Chennai (25,000 uS/cm), Kanniyakumari (14,650 uS/cm), Cauvery delta region (7,850 uS/cm) and Nagapattinam (12,430 uS/cm). It has also affected Puducherry (3,310 uS/cm). uS/cm or microseimens per centimetre is a unit of measurement of electrical conductivity. Normally, if electrical conductivity in coastal groundwater is more than 3,000 uS/cm, it indicates that groundwater near the coast is affected by seawater incursion. Prof. Elango, professor, Department of Geology, Anna University, said the study attempted to estimate the extent and depth of penetration of seawater into land. "As seawater is denser, it is natural for it to intrude into coastal aquifer by a few metres. But overexploitation of groundwater resources has led to intrusion to a greater distance, particularly north of Chennai, he said.

The study also found that seawater had intruded to a depth of 10 m, up to an extent of 2 km, between Thiruvanmiyur and Injambakkam, south of Chennai. Mitigation measures The study, published in the Environmental Science and Pollution Research journal, suggested that seawater intrusion could be mitigated by rearranging pumping wells, like closing of Minjur wellfields, reducing the pumping of groundwater and increasing groundwater recharge by constructing check dams on Araniar and Kosasthalaiyar rivers. "The rivers have more check dams lined up now. We estimate that seawater intrusion, in a distance of 5 km north of Chennai, can be reversed by 2030, with better recharge measures, Prof. Elango emphasised. "We also assessed

the status of seawater intrusion based on the groundwater table observed over 991 wells between 2007 and 2017. We observed that nearly 1,900 sq. km of the coast had groundwater levels at 0 m to -2 m below mean sea level in 2007 and this increased to 2,600 sq. km by 2017. The decrease in recharge had led to a dip in water table in many areas of Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and AP, he said.