

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1201
TO BE ANSWERED ON 30TH JULY, 2024**

Challenges in Fishing

1201. SHRI VIJAYAKUMAR ALIAS VIJAY VASANTH:

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

- (a) the measures taken by the Government to ensure sustainable fishing practices in waters;
- (b) the manner in which fishing quotas are determined and enforced to prevent overfishing and protect fish stocks;
- (c) the initiatives that are in place to promote the livelihoods of coastal communities dependent on fishing;
- (d) the update on the effectiveness of marine protected areas in conserving fish populations;
- (e) the support being provided to fisheries-dependent industries to transition towards more sustainable practices;
- (f) the plans for international cooperation on fisheries management, especially in shared waters;
- (g) the manner in which the Government plan to balance conservation goals with the socio-economic needs of fishing communities; and
- (h) the steps taken by the Government taking to support and enhance the livelihoods of fishermen in Kanyakumari, particularly in light of recent challenges such as fluctuating fish stocks and economic pressures?

ANSWER

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

- (a) The Government of India has notified the 'National Policy on Marine Fisheries, 2017' (NPMF, 2017) to guide the responsible and sustainable fishing practices. Department of Fisheries, Government of India (DoF, GoI) is implementing a flagship scheme namely 'Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana' (PMMSY) with an investment of Rs. 20050 crore for a period of 5 years (2020-21 to 2024-25), which supports activities such as sea ranching and installation of artificial reefs across the coastline of country for enhancing the fish stocks. The Expert Committees constituted by the DoF, GoI from time to time are periodically revalidating the potential fishery resources in the Indian EEZ using the best scientific methods. The conservation and management measures implemented in the country to ensure sustainable fisheries such as ban on paired bottom trawling or bull trawling and use of artificial LED lights in fishing, uniform ban on fishing in the Indian EEZ for a period of 61 days during monsoon and fish breeding season, demarcation of fishing zones for different categories of fishing vessels, gear and mesh-size restrictions, minimum legal size (MLS) of fish, Marine Protected Areas

(MPAs) and Marine Reserves, use of turtle excluding devices (TED), protection of endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) species, awareness programs to sensitize the fisherfolks about the sustainable practices and importance of resource conservation etc. Besides, advisories are issued from time to time to coastal States/UTs for ensuring sustainable fishing practices.

- (b) In India, there is no provision of fishing quotas for the fishermen. However, sustainable fisheries in the maritime zones of India is ensured by way of implementation of laws, regulations and policies at national and state levels. As per the report of Marine Fish Stock Status of India 2022, published by ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), the marine fish stocks of the Indian waters are in good health and 91.1% of the 135 fish stocks evaluated in different regions during 2022 were found sustainable.
- (c) PMMSY provides financial assistance towards livelihood and nutritional support for socio-economically backward fishers during fishing ban/lean period. Besides, mariculture activities such as open-sea cage-culture, seaweed cultivation, bivalve or mussel farming are taken up to provide additional livelihood for fishers and coastal communities. Under the PMMSY, financial assistance is also provided for boats (as replacement) and nets for traditional fishermen, support for acquisition of deep-sea fishing vessels and up gradation of existing fishing vessels for export competency, communication and tracking devices, and safety kits to ensure safety of fishermen while at sea. To facilitate smooth fishing operations and improve the value realization to fishers, financial support is provided under PMMSY for development of fisheries infrastructure such as fishing harbours and fish landing centers, post-harvest and cold chain facilities, fish transport units, fish markets, processing and value added enterprise units etc.
- (d) In order to conserve marine species, Government of India has notified 130 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) across the Coastal States and Islands; in addition, 106 coastal and marine sites have been identified and prioritized as Important Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Areas (ICMBAs) for effective conservation of marine species including fish populations.
- (e) The PMMSY is being implemented in all states/UTs with a vision of ecologically healthy, economically viable and socially inclusive fisheries sector that contributes towards economic prosperity and well-being of fishers in a sustainable and responsible manner. The activities implemented under the PMMSY to support fishers and fisheries-dependent industries to transition towards more sustainable practices are furnished under parts (a) to (c) of this reply.
- (f) India actively participates in various International forums and conventions related to marine fisheries, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement), and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). India is a member of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and actively participate in sustainable management of regional fisheries. Besides, India is a founding member of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) with fisheries management as one of the priority area. India has been engaged in several bilateral and multilateral agreements to manage shared fisheries resources.

- (g) The overarching goal of the NPMF, 2017 is to ensure the health and ecological integrity of the marine living resources of India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) through sustainable harvests for the benefit of present and future generations of the nation.
- (h) Based on the project proposals received from State Government, the DoF, GoI has accorded administrative approvals under PMMSY for the projects of total cost of Rs. 934.23 crore with central share of Rs.376.91 crore to the Government of Tamil Nadu to enhance the livelihoods of fishermen in Tamil Nadu including in the Kanyakumari District. The steps taken by the Government to support and enhance the livelihoods of fishermen in Kanyakumari, *inter alia* include relief assistance during the lean period and fishing ban period, providing tax exemption on diesel and subsidized rate industrial kerosene to the fishing boats by the State Government, and assistance to procure FRP boats and deep-sea fishing boats, out board engines, fishing nets, Ice boxes etc. under PMMSY and state schemes.
