

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1566
ANSWERED ON:06.03.2006
SHIFTING OF MARINE RESEARCH CENTRE
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the objectives on the basis of which the Marine Research Centre (MRC) and Marine Aquarium were set up at Vizhinjam (Trivandrum);
- (b) whether the Government has decided to shift the MRC and the Marine Aquarium from Vizhinjam (Trivandrum); and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a) The Vizhinjam Research Centre of the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) at Vizhinjam (Trivandrum) was started as a Fisheries Resource Survey Centre in 1951 and it became a Research Centre of CMFRI in 1965. The major objectives the Centre were to assess the impact of marine capture fisheries exploitation on fish stock and resource potential in Southern Kerala and West Coast of Tamil Nadu and to develop, test and transfer mariculture technologies. The Centre has also set up a Marine Aquarium facility.

The Expenditure Finance Committee while considering the X Five Year Plan proposal of the Institute, in its meeting held on 20.6.2003 at ICAR Headquarters, New Delhi, decided to shift/merge the Vizhinjam Research Centre of CMFRI to Mandapam Regional Centre of CMFRI with a view to consolidate the on-going programmes more effectively, since Mandapam Regional Centre is proposed to be developed as a major Mariculture and Marine biodiversity Centre. The other reasons for such decision of shifting/merger of the Centre are present research relevance, proper utilization of scientists and associated manpower, avoidance of duplication of research efforts and strengthening of identified centers for strategic and applied research.

(b) & (c): While it is proposed to shift the Research Centre, the present Marine Aquarium facilities at Vizhinjam are being handed over to the Government of Kerala. While considering the X Five Year Plan proposal of the Plan scheme of the Central marine Fisheries Research Institute on 20th June, 2003, the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) decided to relocate/merge six Research Centres with other existing Regional/Research Centres under CMFRI, including the Research Centre at Vizhinjam to be merged with and shifted to Mandapam Regional Centre.

The reasons behind this decision were, inter-alia achievement of the research objectives of the Centre established in 1951 with regard to marine fish resources and stock assessment, molluscan and lobster culture and ornamental fish breeding; the present need for diversification of research activities needing upgraded facilities and critical scientific mass at Centres for achieving competitive edge at global level; proposal of establishing a national facility for upstream research in mariculture at Mandapam; constraints of operations with rented building and inadequate seawater pumping facilities at Vizhinjam; presence of the Headquarters of CMFRI at Kochi as well as the Research Centre of the Institute at Kozhikode in the State of Kerala, thus adequately addressing the research needs of marine fisheries in the State.