Deep-Sea Fishing and Blue Economy Initiatives

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The Department of Fisheries, Government of India is implementing a flagship scheme Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) which aims to enhance the overall growth of the fisheries sector and wellbeing of the fishers and fish farmers. One of the key objectives of PMMSY is to empower the traditional and small-scale fishers to undertake deep-sea fishing. Under PMMSY, financial support is provided to traditional fishers for acquisition of deep-sea fishing vessels as well as upgradation of existing fishing vessels for export competency.

Adopting the "whole of government approach", the Ministry of Cooperation is collaborating with the Department of Fisheries, through a Joint Working Group (JWG), to promote small-scale fishermen's participation in deep-sea fishing, value-chain development, processing and exports.

The Ministry of Cooperation facilitates the programme by strengthening fishery cooperatives and Fish Farmer Producer Organisations (FFPOs) through access to institutional finance, cooperative-based asset creation and coordinated implementation through NCDC, while the Department of Fisheries provides the policy framework, technical guidance and scheme-based support for deep-sea fishing and allied fisheries activities. Both Ministries work in close coordination to promote collectivisation of fishers, deployment of deep-sea fishing vessels, development of processing and chilling infrastructure, and strengthening of the marine fisheries value chain through fishery cooperatives and FFPOs.

The Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) is being implemented with a highest ever investment of Rs. 20,050 crore with effect from Financial Year 2020-21 for holistic development of fisheries and wellbeing of fishermen and fish farmers. The Department of Fisheries is also implementing the Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF) with a total fund size of Rs 7522.48 crore since 2018-19. The Government of India has, *inter alia*, approved for providing credit guarantee facility under the FIDF.

Financial assistance has been provided through the NCDC under the PMMSY and FIDF for the development of marine fisheries infrastructure through cooperatives.

The PMMSY *inter-alia* envisages support towards livelihood strengthening activities such as providing boats and nets to traditional fishermen, support for communication and tracking devices, providing sea-safety kits, insurance cover to fishers, support for acquisition of deep-sea fishing vessels, alternative/additional livelihood activities like seaweed cultivation & bivalve culture, training & skill development, support towards cold-chain and marketing facilities, etc. Besides, the scheme also envisages construction of Fishing Harbours and Fish Landing Centres ensuring safe landing and berthing of fishing boats/vessels. Whereas, FIDF *inter-alia* provides concessional finance for development of various fisheries and aquaculture infrastructure facilities to the Eligible Entities (EEs), including State Governments/Union Territories and State entities for development of identified fisheries infrastructure facilities including construction of Fishing Harbours and Fish Landing Centres, Deep Sea Fishing Vessels, Cold chain facilities, Fish Markets and Mariculture Units and its allied activities for supporting coastal livelihood empowerment, fish export growth and sustainable resource management.

This information was given by Union Minister for Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah in a written reply in Rajya Sabha.

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