

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1317
TO BE ANSWERED ON 3RD DECEMBER, 2024

Fishing Ban Period

1317. Dr. D Ravi Kumar:

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

- (a) the details of the current financial conditions, is the Ministry considering an increase in the compensation amount for the 61-day fishing ban period to at least Rs.18,000, aligning it with the minimum wage fixed under MGNREGA;
- (b) the details of reinstate or expand subsidies for essential fishing equipment, such as nets, to help and reduce the financial burden on fishermen during the ban period;
- (c) the details of explored alternative credit options with lower interest rates through public sector banks (PSBs) to reduce fishermen's reliance on high-interest microfinance lenders;
- (d) the plan to merge the fishing ban period with the lean period to extend the active fishing season, thereby preventing Tamil Nadu fishermen from being without work for approximately four months; and
- (e) the details of conduct a scientific study to assess the effectiveness and necessity of the fishing ban, rather than imposing it unilaterally?

ANSWER

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

(a): The uniform fishing ban of 61 days in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is implemented based on the scientific advice for conservation and effective management of fishery resources, which is essential to allow regeneration of fish stocks, ensure sustainability and livelihood protection of small-scale and traditional fishermen. To provide livelihood and nutritional support for socio-economically backward active traditional fisher's families during the fishing ban/lean period, financial assistance is provided under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) implemented by the Department of Fisheries, Government of India. Under this scheme, the Governmental financial assistance of Rs.3000/- per annum is provided to each enrolled beneficiary and the beneficiary's contribution is Rs.1500/- annually. To supplement the amount provided by Government of India, the State Governments are also providing additional amount to the marine fishermen during ban/lean period, as per the state scheme.

(b): In addition to financial support during annual fish ban/lean period, the PMMSY scheme has several activities to provide additional or alternative livelihood opportunities to supplement the incomes of marine fishermen, *viz.* seaweed cultivation, marine cage cultivation, fish marketing outlets like fish kiosks, mobile vending outlets and support to take up brackish water aquaculture. The activities supported under PMMSY, *inter alia* include provision of deep sea fishing vessels, replacement of fishing boats, engine and nets to traditional fishermen, for which financial assistance is provided to fishers based on the proposals received from the State Governments and UTs.

(c): The facility of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) has been extended to the fishermen and fish-farmers to meet their working capital requirements. The credit support with lower interest rates and prompt repayment incentive under KCC is provided to the fishermen through public sector banks (PSBs), thereby reducing the fishermen's reliance on high-interest microfinance lenders. Besides, the concessional finance and benefits of interest subvention is also provided for fisheries and aquaculture activities under the dedicated fund namely Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF) with a corpus of Rs 7522.48 crore since 2018-19.

(d) and (e): The uniform ban on fishing for 61 days is implemented by the Department of Fisheries, Government of India (DoF, GoI) in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of India on both the coasts (*i.e.*, 15th April to 14th June in the East Coast, and 1st June to 31st July in the West Coast) based on the recommendations of the Technical Committee and in consultation with the coastal States/Union Territories (UTs). Similarly, the coastal States/UTs are also implementing the fishing ban within their territorial waters in line with the uniform ban implemented in the EEZ. The fishing ban period is periodically reviewed by a Technical Committee constituted by the DoF, GoI, to review the duration of fishing ban period in the Indian EEZ. The Committee examines the representations received from the stakeholders regarding request for change in the fishing ban period and assess the effectiveness of uniform fishing ban being implemented during the monsoon period on fish stocks. The traditional non-motorized fishing boats are exempted from this uniform fishing ban imposed in the Indian EEZ beyond territorial waters.
