

Sixteenth Loksabha

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Title: Need to give emphasis on Marine research in the country.

SHRI RAM MOHAN NAIDU KINJARAPU (SRIKAKULAM): As a representative of a coastal constituency, it is imperative on me to highlight the plight of the fishing community in this august house. Despite being one of the largest fish producers in the world, the plight of fishermen in the coastal region of the country and especially in Andhra Pradesh is miserable. According to the 2010 national fisheries census conducted by Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), 60.57% of the fishermen families were under BPL category. The situation is even more alarming in the state of Andhra Pradesh where 97.3% of fishing families were below the poverty line. The average per capita yield is much lower than advanced fishing countries like Norway or Chile. According to World Fisheries Report of UN-Food and Agriculture Organisation, the per capita production in India is just 2 tonnes, while as in Norway it stands at 172 tonnes and in Chile the number is 72 tonnes.

While this Government under the guidance of the hon'ble Prime Minister has taken monumental steps in improving the condition of agriculture and dairy farming, focus also needs to be on investment for marine research. Report on marine R&D and aquaculture research from the Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education suggests that total investment in marine research in no way is about 258 crores, while as a whole Union fisheries budget in India amounts to Rs. 401 crores. Out of this, only Rs. 139 crores have been earmarked for research. The need is to shift focus on marine research so as to evolve enough technological advancement to improve the per capita yield of the

fishing community. An improvement in the average yield will in itself result in better income. The current state of poverty of the fishing community merits that investments in research also be undertaken to improve the quality of yield as well as weather information system. I am confident that this government will lay special emphasis on marine research in the next Union Budget to improve the economic condition of the fishermen and to fulfil the hon'ble PM's extraordinary vision of a 'blue revolution' in the country.