

ON THE THIRD DAY OF THE SAGAR PARIKRAMA PHASE VIII, MINISTER OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY & DAIRYING, SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA LAYS THE FOUNDATION STONE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MULTI-PURPOSE SEAWEED PARK IN TAMIL NADU TODAY

Relevant for: null | Topic: Important Schemes & Programmes of the Government

On the third day of the Sagar Parikrama Phase VIII, Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Shri Parshottam Rupala laid the Foundation Stone for the establishment of Multi-Purpose Seaweed Park today in Tamil Nadu. Minister of State, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Dr. L. Murugan, former Minister in the Government of India, Shri Pon. Radhakrishnan, Joint Secretary (Fisheries), GoI, Smt. Neetu Kumari Prasad, Chief Executive, National Fisheries, Development Board (NFDB), Dr. L. N. Murthy, Commissioner of Fisheries, Government of Tamil Nadu, Dr. K. S. Palanisamy, Collector of Ramanathapuram District, Shri Thiru B. Vishnu Chandran and other key dignitaries were also present on the occasion. This begins a new chapter and is seen as a key strategic initiative to boost the seaweed sector in India.

The program was started with Bhumi Pujanam and foundation-stone laying at the Multipurpose Seaweed Park site, at Valamavur, Thondi, Ramanathapuram by Shri Parshottam Rupala, Dr. L. Murugan and other dignitaries. Prior to arrival at Seaweed Park site at Valamavur, Shri Parshottam Rupala had interactions with groups of fisherwomen engaged in seaweed cultivation at Mandapam centre of CMFRI. He informed the objectives of Seaweed Park namely seaweed cultivation for creation of employment opportunity for the coastal fisher youth and fisherwomen, development of value-added seaweed products by encouraging private sector/entrepreneurs and support them in setting up seaweed processing units in the proposed seaweed park, development of seaweed seed bank in collaboration with research institutes, universities, private entrepreneurs and fisheries department, exploration of untapped seaweed potential in the coastal districts of Tamil Nadu through scientific and traditional seaweed farming and development of R&D centres for production of quality seaweed.

The seaweed park includes promotion of seaweed cultivation in 136 coastal fishing villages in 6 coastal districts of Tamil Nadu namely Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Pudukottai, Ramanathapuram and Thoothukudi. It will involve and engage manpower of 8821 people to promote their livelihoods, establishment of tissue culture labs and R&D facilities, shore-based infrastructure facilities (drying yard, warehouse etc), skill development and capacity building, storage and marketing facility, processing and value addition facility etc. The seaweed park will also provide a single window support for the entrepreneurs, processors etc. to access information on schemes, licenses/approvals required, while also providing space to set up processing centres.

In addition to promoting seaweed cultivation, the park will also focus on the conservation of marine ecosystems and will house an aquarium highlighting various marine species that rely on seaweed for survival. It is expected to attract tourists, researchers, and entrepreneurs interested in the potential of seaweed as a sustainable resource while serve as platform to create employment opportunities for local communities and contribute to the economic growth of Tamil Nadu. Therefore, Multipurpose Seaweed Park stands not just as a testament to human ingenuity, but as a promise to safeguard the delicate balance of our planet's ecosystems.

Department of Fisheries, Government of India is focused on strengthening the Fisheries and Aquaculture sector by understanding grass root challenges and pave a roadmap with actions that needs to be implemented to make India, a hub for Aquaculture and Fisheries Investment. The core objectives of the “Sagar Parikrama Yatra” are to create awareness among fishers, fish farmers and other stakeholders on the sustainable use of marine fishery resources and protection of marine ecosystems; to facilitate interaction with fishermen, coastal communities and other stakeholders so as to disseminate information of various fisheries related schemes and programs being implemented by the government and showcasing the best practices that may be adopted; to maximize the benefits of public sector schemes so as to raise the standard of living of the fishers living in the coastal areas; to demonstrate solidarity with all fishers, fish farmers and stakeholders as a spirit of Aatmanirbhar Bharat; to protect the marine life and sea from pollution and to solve the problems of fishers, fish farmers and other stakeholders.

In last seven phases, the East coast has been covered in key locations in coastal areas of Gujarat, Daman and Diu, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The Phase VIII programme of Sagar Parikrama has been organized during 31st August to 02nd September, 2023 from Kanniyakumari to Ramanathapuram through a pre-decided sea route covering 4 coastal districts of Tamil Nadu.

In line with the Union Budget 2021 announcement, India’s 1st Fisheries Aquapark in form of ‘Multipurpose Seaweed Park in Tamil Nadu’ was announced by Finance Minister. In due course of time with due technical evaluation and due diligence, the project was approved with the total investment of Rs 127.7 crore. Based on the hub-and-spoke model, it aims to promote the cultivation and conservation of seaweed and is envisioned as a research and development centre for seaweed cultivation for scientists and researchers to study different species of seaweed and their potential applications while also serving as a training centre for local communities to create awareness.

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