

## **The dawn of a new era on fisheries sector in the northern province of Sri Lanka**

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Fishing has been one of the economic activities in the northern Sri Lanka. The war situation during the last two decades has, however, put the fishing industry under hardship and the relatively prosperous pre-war livelihoods of fishing families have been severely affected .while the northern part of Sri Lanka (Jaffna, Mannar, Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi districts) has provided 30-40% of the total fish production in Sri Lanka before 1983, its contribution was reduced to 3-5% by the end of civil war in 2009.

With the lift of ban on fishing after the war, Tamils, especially the fishing community not only enjoyed but also appreciated the GOSL move .As a result ,large number of the fishermen ventured into the coastal fishing. Consequently the fish production slightly increased. After the lift of ban on fishing in June 2009 fish production increased to 744.7Mt in June 2009 and to 1731Mt in July 2009. (DFEO'S ,Jaffna).

However, the large length of coast line has not yet been allowed (called no man areas) due to the displacement of the people in that areas such as Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts coast line, south and north coast line of Mannar district, southeast coast line of the Jaffna district and also the High Security Zones in Jaffna district. There are approximately 70% of the total coast line in the Northern Province. Further, some of the restrictions imposed on fishing have been released since the remaining restriction constrains the efficient use of the fishing resources. Restriction on fishing time and the limited areas to operate and problems encountered in the shore contribute to this situation. Exploration by Indian fishermen contributes to aggravate the problem.

Lifting of high security zones and resettlement of displaced fishing families specially fishermen from Vanni area, after providing all basic amenities, and replacing destroyed fishing equipment, arriving at an amicable settlement to solve the trespassing of the Indian fishing community, and immediate opening of fiberglass boats, fishing nets; and ice factories, the fish processing centers are recommended as measures to improve the fishing industry in Jaffna.