CIFT proposes safety steps for fishing boats

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The Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), which studied the safety of small fishing craft in the wake of the devastation left behind by Cyclone Ockhi, has recommended certification of boats for safety and stability.

A statement issued by CIFT said the institute had held a technical survey of the losses and damage in the wake of the cyclone and a report, along with recommendations for safer boats, had been submitted to the State government.

It recommends that there should be a sufficient number of life jackets and buoys as well as sufficient fuel reserve and a fire extinguisher on board the vessels.

It says a longitudinal rod must be fitted just below the chine line so that in the capsized condition, fishermen could hold on to the boat.

A sufficient number of life jackets (number of crew plus 1) with illumination and whistle must be carried on board vessels. Fishermen are advised to wear life jackets while fishing.

Two life buoys are to be fixed in the forward part of the boat and two at the aft area under the seat so that they could be released during an emergency.

The forward compartment and space below the working deck and other spaces should be made watertight so that the boat would have sufficient buoyancy and float even in the capsized condition.

Reflective tapes
The report also recommends that reflective tapes be provided for easy identification during rescue operations.

The colour of the portion of the boat under the water line should follow the colour code (preferably orange) specified by the Department of Fisheries for easy identification from afar. The inclusion of radar reflector must be made mandatory for facilitating detection from afar and the gears must be registered and marked for facilitating identification during retrieval, CIFT said.