

Aquaculture benefits should reach fishers, farmers: Naidu

Vice-President inaugurates Indian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOCHI

Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu has called for measures to ensure that the economic benefits from capture fisheries and aquaculture reach fishers and farmers.

Inaugurating the Indian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum here on Tuesday, Mr. Naidu pointed out that "much of the economic benefits from capture fisheries and aquaculture were not going to the farmers".

The event was organised by the Asian Fisheries Society (Indian Branch).

Attention should be focused on areas that would improve the economic condition of farmers. Efforts to "reduce the role of middlemen, provide crop insurance, enhance access to credit, develop cold chains and good upcountry market linkages, provide infrastructure for post-harvest storage, handling and value addition" were needed, he said.

Declining resources

The fisheries sector must focus on "judicious use of the declining fishery resources", reduce losses and provide value-addition to products. Steps for ensuring the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries should be taken. A "more regulated and well-managed fishing environment through global marine capture fisheries policy and governance" was needed, he said.

Mr. Naidu urged the researchers to follow the slogan, 'From labs to fields', and make the fruits of technological advancements and



Minister for Fisheries J. Mercykutty Amma greets Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu at the inaugural session of the Indian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum that got under way in the city on Tuesday. Minister for Local Self-Governments K.T. Jaleel is also seen. ■THULASI KAKKAT

researches available to farmers.

Scientific conferences

should make conscious effort to convey the scientific knowledge and advance-

ments to common people, fish farmers and primary producers, he said.

Recalling his association with the fisheries sector, Mr. Naidu said a great part of his "public life had been entwined with activities related to the welfare of the coastal people" in his home State, Andhra Pradesh.

Most Asian countries were focussing on increasing the fish production through advanced technological interventions, as the production from marine capture fisheries do not hold much promise in terms of quantity, he said.

The net effect

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

What was a chief guest, who loves fish, to make of a gift of a fishing net presented to him by the organisers of a fisheries conference?

"I like fish but the organisers didn't give me fish. Instead they presented me a fishing net. It's an ideal present with a message," said Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu, leaving a hall of delegates in splits.

The occasion was the inauguration of the Indian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum, or-

ganised by the Asian Fisheries Society (Indian branch) here on Tuesday, and the organisers had presented the Vice-President a miniature of a Chinese fishing net.

Mr. Naidu was at his jovial best and often deviated from his scripted speech and cracked jokes, which were well-received by the crowd.

Earlier, before proceeding to the dais, the Vice-President walked through the aisle of the hall with folded hands and greeted delegates, even engaging in small talk with them.