

# Ockhi damage under lens

## ■ CIFT to study reason for destruction of vessels

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Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT) has initiated a study to assess impacts of Ockhi in the fisheries sector, focusing on safety and adaptability of fishing vessels and gears to address natural calamities.

Once the search and rescue operations are over, the CIFT team will visit Ockhi hit areas in the states and Lakshadweep to assess the damage caused to fishing equipment and will submit recommendations to state governments.

"Ockhi is an unprecedented disaster happened along coastal areas," said Dr Leela Edwin, Head of Department of Fishing



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Technology at CIFT.

"Considering the extensive damage caused to fishing equipment, a comprehensive and scientific study is required to identify the cause of damage. The main objective of the study is to identify the actual reason for the complete destruction of vessels and nets. There are

reports that parts of several broken vessels and canoes are floating in the sea, an unprecedented calamity."

The questionnaire and other necessary details are ready, and the CIFT officials will visit the coastal areas soon.

The study will find out whether all vessels, including those made of steel, wood and fibre have damaged or only old wooden crafts drowned.

"Whether technical aspects such as the quality and age of the vessel, adaptability of its safety appliances, fuel capacity and efficiency of the vessel has impacted its fate will also be looked into. Not all boats made of the same material with similar features have survived. This stresses the need for a study to

improve their seaworthiness even during natural disasters," added Ms Edwin.

Implementation of the Kerala Marine Fisheries Regulations (Amendment) Act 2017 recently passed by the state Assembly will help in the long-run to improve the safety standards of fishing vessels, according to experts. The government has adopted the amendments based on the CIFT recommendations.

Meanwhile, Charles George, president of Kerala Matsya Thozhilali Aikyavedi, said they would organise workshops and training programmes with the support of scientific organisations like CIFT, NPOL and ISRO on the modernisation of fishing equipment.