

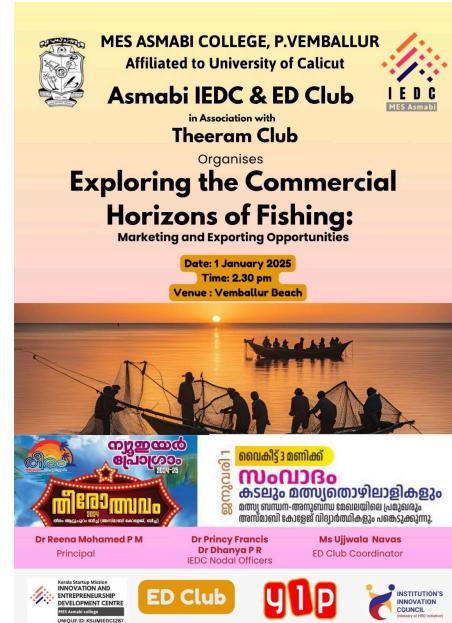
Report of Group Discussion on "Exploring the Commercial Horizons of Fishing" on 1/1/2025

The Asmabi IEDC & ED Club, in collaboration with Theeram Club, successfully organized a group discussion titled "**Exploring the Commercial Horizons of Fishing: Marketing and Exporting Opportunities**" on January 1, 2025, at Vemballur Beach. The event aimed to explore the untapped potential of the fishing industry while focusing on marketing and export strategies to benefit local fishermen. Esteemed speakers, including **Sivaprasad**, Assistant Director of Fisheries, Azhikode; **Babu P V**, a seasoned fisherman; **Naushad Karukapata T**, an export businessman from Three Star Fish Company; and **Shihab K P**, President of the Traditional Fishermen Union, Kodungallur Region, shared valuable insights. Their discussions highlighted the need for modern export opportunities and emphasized sustainable fishing practices to ensure long-term growth in the sector.

The event attracted over 100 participants, including fishermen, students, and community members, creating a dynamic platform for interaction between traditional



fishermen and industry experts. The group discussion addressed pressing challenges like declining fish stocks and fluctuating market prices while proposing actionable solutions. The program also underscored the importance of innovation and entrepreneurship in revitalizing the fishing industry. The success of the event was attributed to the collaborative efforts of **IEDC Nodal Officers Dr. Princy Francis and Dr. Dhanya P R**, along with **ED Club Coordinator Ms. Ujjwala Navas**. This initiative reaffirmed MES Asmabi College's dedication to social responsibility and its pivotal role in fostering community development.



fishermen and industry experts. The group discussion addressed pressing challenges like declining fish stocks and fluctuating market prices while proposing actionable solutions. The program also underscored the importance of innovation and



Proposal to MES Asmabi College: Exploring the Commercial Horizons of Fishing

On January 1, 2025, MES Asmabi College facilitated a group discussion with local fishermen on the topic "Exploring the Commercial Horizons of Fishing." The session highlighted the challenges, opportunities, and innovative strategies to expand the commercial viability of the fishing industry. This proposal aims to translate the insights gathered during the discussion into actionable initiatives for MES Asmabi College as the **INSTITUTION DISTINCTIVENESS** to undertake, fostering socio-economic growth and empowering the local fishing community.

Key Insights from the Discussion

Challenges

1. Financial Challenges

- **Low Income:** (Inconsistent earnings due to seasonal fishing and market price fluctuations.)
- **Debt Traps:** (Difficulty in obtaining loans from banks due to lack of collateral or documentation. Hence they are more depend on high-interest loans from informal sources)
- **Lack of Savings:** (Poor financial literacy leads to insufficient savings for emergencies)

2. Risk to Life

- **Harsh Weather Conditions:**
- **Inadequate Safety Measures:**
- **Health Hazards:** (Prolonged exposure to sun, saltwater, and strenuous physical labor causing health issues like skin diseases, dehydration, and musculoskeletal disorders.)

3. Bad Habits

- **Substance Abuse:** (High prevalence of alcohol and tobacco consumption due to stress, peer influence, or lack of awareness.)
- **Gambling:** (Widespread gambling habits drain financial resources and lead to family conflicts.)
- **Neglect of Health:** (Reluctance to seek medical attention or adopt healthy lifestyle practices.)

4. Rough Nature

- **Aggressive Behavior:** (Harsh working conditions and financial stress often result in short tempers and rough interpersonal relationships.)
- **Social Isolation:** (Long hours at sea limit interaction with the broader community, leading to poor social skills or resistance to change.)
- **Resistance to Modernization:** (Hesitation to adopt new fishing techniques, technology, or sustainable practices due to mistrust or attachment to traditional methods.)

5. Family and Social Challenges

- Education Gap: (Children often drop out of school to support the family financially or due to lack of access to quality education.)
- Gender Inequality: (Women in fishing families are often excluded from decision-making and economic activities.)
- Community Marginalization: (Fishermen's communities often face neglect in terms of infrastructure, healthcare, and government support)

6. Environmental Challenges

- Declining Fish Stock: (Overfishing and pollution reduce the availability of fish, directly affecting livelihoods.)
- Pollution and Waste: (Coastal pollution impacts fishing activities and health.)
- Climate Change: (Rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and unpredictable weather patterns disrupt fishing cycles.)

Supporting Mechanism

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach involving financial inclusion, safety measures, health awareness, education, entrepreneurship and social reforms. Outlined below are some of the support mechanisms aimed at uplifting local fishermen:

1. Create awareness about financial support schemes, insurance, and subsidies available to fishermen through the **Fisheries Department and local government**.
2. Link cooperatives **with government programs, NGOs, and financial institutions for resources**.
3. Conduct training sessions on value-added products such as **fish pickles, dried fish, and seafood snacks**.
4. Offer skill development programs for **women**, such as handicrafts, fish processing, or tailoring.
5. Provide training and capacity building for fishermen in **financial literacy** and entrepreneurship.
6. Encourage the formation of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to pool savings and provide small loans through local governance
7. Organize **camps with local banks** to open accounts and educate on formal credit options.
8. Develop a **digital marketplace** for fishermen to sell products directly to consumers.
9. Assist in branding, packaging, and marketing seafood products.
10. Provide **digital literacy** training for fishermen and their families so that they can use apps for banking, UPI payments, and accessing government subsidies.
11. Train the community to use platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp to market their products.
12. Organise **free medical check-ups and health awareness sessions**.

13. Organize stress management workshops and promote open conversations about **mental health**.
14. Celebrate special days with the community to foster a sense of inclusion and well-being.
15. Assign **student volunteers to work with specific families**, offering mentorship and support.
16. Facilitate regular interactions to **understand community needs and adapt solutions accordingly**.
17. Organize **regular cleanup activities** to reduce plastic waste and improve marine health.
18. Initiate **plantation and grow bag vegetable cultivation** among fishermen families

It is suggested that, under the leadership of the IQAC, each department at MES Asmabi College organize **at least one training program to foster entrepreneurship**, focusing on local fisherman families, in collaboration with its students as part of the IEDC initiatives. Additionally, it is recommended that **every class undertake one community service activity annually in Asmabi beach area**, reflecting the institution's distinctiveness and commitment to social responsibility.

Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced livelihoods for local fishermen through increased income and market access.
- Adoption of sustainable fishing practices, ensuring long-term resource availability.
- Strengthened collaboration between MES Asmabi College and the local community.
- Creation of a replicable model for other coastal regions.

This proposal outlines a roadmap for MES Asmabi College to play a pivotal role in transforming the fishing industry in P. Vemballur. By leveraging its resources and expertise, the college can drive sustainable development, empower the fishing community, and contribute to the region's economic growth. We look forward to your support and approval to initiate these impactful programs as the **INSTITUTION DISTINCTIVENESS** of the college for the next NAAC purpose.

Dr Princy Francis

Dr Dhanya P R

IEDC Nodal Officer

Ms Ujwala Navas

ED Club Coordinator