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# Priced fish catches discarded at Kalamukku fish landing centre

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**T**he success of marine fishing industry depends on the efficiency and performance of a plethora of departments like vessel manufacturers, net makers, ice plants, cold storages, exporters and retail outlets. If any of the departments fail wholly or

partially, it cripples the industry and the people most affected are ultimately the fishermen who toil hard in the sea to earn a livelihood.

Ice is an inevitable requirement of the fishing industry. A large quantity of ice is required right from

the time fishes are caught from the sea, till it is sold out to the consumer. Of late, in Kerala, shortage of ice has become a serious problem and is found to affect the sale of fish from the landing centres. On 25<sup>th</sup> August 2008, about 200 kg of Bull's eye, *Priacanthus hamrur*, weighing approximately 150-300 g each (18-24 cm total length) and about 70 kg of Rusty jobfish, *Aphraeus rutilans*, weighing approximately 35-55 g each (15-18 cm total length) were thrown back to the water after it was landed by the trawlers at Kalamukku fish landing centre (Fig. 1). Upon enquiry with fishermen and other stakeholders at the landing centre, it was found that the low availability and the soaring price of ice have prevented the wholesalers from buying large quantities of fish that were landed. As the entire quantity of fish could not be auctioned, the left over fish, although of high-value, were discarded; a sight which was highly discouraging. The Malayala



Fig. 1. A view of the fishes thrown back to the water at Kalamukku fish landing centre

Manorama daily newspaper (dated 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2008) also reported that the low production of ice and its high cost have led to a crash in the price of fish and the frequent interruption of power supply in Kerala was attributed as the main reason for the low production of ice.