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## 'Fishermen affected by UPCL will get relief'

- Special Correspondent



Pramod Madhwaraj

Pramod Madhwaraj, Minister of State for Fisheries, Youth Services and Sports, on Saturday promised suitable compensation to a delegation of traditional fishermen whose livelihood was affected due to the discharge of water from the thermal plant of Udupi Power Corporation Ltd (UPCL) to the sea.

Chairing a meeting at the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Mr. Madhwaraj listened to the grievances of traditional fishermen who catch fish, mostly mackerels, near the seashore at Padubidri and surrounding areas. The grouse of these fishermen was that fish production had gone down due to discharge of water from the 1,200 MW coal based thermal power plant of UPCL at Yellur in Udupi district, to the Arabian sea.

These fishermen usually go in traditional boats and catch the mackerels near the sea shore.

In the colloquial language, they are called 'kantale bale menugararu" because of the fishing nets they use for catching mackerels.

Mr. Madhwaraj said that the 'kairampani' fishermen, another group of traditional fishermen who catch fish near seashore, had earlier been provided a compensation of Rs. 1 lakh each due to the losses suffered by them due to the thermal plant.

The decisions taken at a meeting in 2010 to compensate affected fishermen would be implemented. An amount of Rs. 4 crore, given by the UPCL, was with the administration.

Mr. Madhwaraj said that guidelines would be formed to distribute a compensation of Rs. 3 crore in a transparent manner.

The Minister agreed to the suggestion of fishermen leaders that the compensation should be distributed to fishermen in installments. The meeting decided to find solutions to the problems of fishermen and fisherwomen, who face problems due to the pipeline of the plant passing through Tenka and Bada villages.

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