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Japan likely to ban shrimp imports from India

George Joseph, Business Standard

24 August 2012, Kochi: The detection of ethoxyquin, an antioxidant, in the shrimps exported to Japan has badly hit India's export prospects to that country. Japan had already rejected more than 10 consignments of shrimps exported from India in the recent weeks, causing heavy losses to exporters and shrimp farmers.

High level sources said as the issue is yet to be sorted out, Japan is likely to ban shrimp imports from India. There have been a lot of cancellations from Japan and this has badly affected exporters based in Odisha and West Bengal. It is learnt that the commerce ministry had called for an urgent meeting in Chennai on August 27 and a high level delegation is likely to visit Tokyo soon.

The problem has also caused a drastic reduction in the prices of shrimp in the global market, with these falling 25-35 per cent in two-three weeks. There is also a fall in export orders from other major import destinations like the Europe and the US.

Odisha and West Bengal regions are the most affected areas as around 60 per cent of the black tiger variety of shrimp produced in these regions is exported to Japan. G Mohanty, president of Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI), Odisha region, told Business Standard that Japan had started the testing of ethoxyquin, without any notice to exporters or to the government. He said the aquaculture sector in Odisha and West Bengal is in crisis as the prices had dropped heavily. "There will not be any shrimp aquaculture production in the coming years," he added.

"Already importers have been asked not to ship the cargo until the issue is sorted out. So, a large number of containers are now stocked in Kolkata," said Taj Mohamed, president, SEAI, West Bengal region.

Due to this India suffered a serious setback in marine product exports during the April-June period of the current financial year as the country's products lost their sheen in major export markets like Europe and Japan. Cumulative export in the period dropped to 131,000 tonnes, valued at Rs 2,700 crore, as against 165,000 tonnes, valued at Rs 2,870 crore in the same period of the last financial year. This shows a fall of 20 per cent in volume and five per cent in value. In dollar terms, the decrease was 20 per cent at $515 million as against $645 million. Last fiscal, exports increased 6.02 per cent in volume and 28.65 per cent in rupee terms when compared to those in 2010-11.

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WB CM seeks Anand Sharma's intervention in shrimp export

PTI

September 13, 2012, Kolkata: Faced with Japan's ban on shrimp from India, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee today urged Union Commerce Minister Anand Sharma to take up the issue with the concerned authorities to protect the interests of the country's fishermen.

"India exports shrimp, mainly black tiger prawns, worth over Rs 1000 crore. A major consignment has been rejected by the Japan government, substantial quantity of which was from West Bengal", Banerjee said expressing concern for the state's fishermen.

Sharma, she said, has assured her to look into the matter and take appropriate steps in this regard. Reportedly Japan, like the EU, has imposed strict standards for import of shrimp from India following the alleged presence of banned antibiotics in some consignments.

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Mamata Banerjee seeks bailout for seafood exporters from commerce ministry

Sutanuka Ghosal, Economic Times

October 3, 2012, Kolkata: West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee has written to the Union commerce and industry minister Anand Sharma to bail out the seafood exporters who have sent black tiger shrimp consignments to Japan.

The importing nation has rejected the consignments on the ground that they have high levels of ethoxyquin. Banerjee wants the Centre to immediately negotiate with the Japanese authorities so that exporters, who are largely from West Bengal and Odisha, don't suffer a huge loss this year.

The two eastern states together export tiger prawns worth Rs 1,200 - Rs 1,500 crore annually to Japan.

But the Asian nation has suddenly reduced the ethoxyquin content in shrimps to 0.01 parts per million (ppm) without informing the Indian government or the exporters. It has not only come as a major blow to exporters but to 50,000 farmers who have taken to aquaculture. It is learnt that 200 containers of shrimp have been rejected over the past few weeks by Japan on the detection of ethoxyquin.

Taj Mohammed, regional president (West Bengal) of Sea Food Exporters Association of India (SEAI), said: "Anand Sharma has taken up the issue with his Japanese counterpart. We are hoping that the Japanese authorities will amend their regulation."

The commerce ministry has rushed a delegation led by the chairman of Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) and comprising the director of Export Inspection Council and the resident director-designate of MPEDA in Japan. G Mohanty, regional president (Odisha) of SEAI, said: "There are no international norms fixed for ethoxyquin levels in shrimps by authorities in America or the European Union, for instance. And, even Japan permits it up to a certain level in fish."

Fishmeal forms an important component of feed for shrimps. To avoid rancidity in fishmeal, a large range of anti-oxidants are used. Ethoxyquin is one of the most popular and effective anti-oxidants used worldwide, M K Ram Mohan, deputy director, MPEDA said. Mohanty added that Japanese importers are requesting the Indian exporters to take back the consignments.

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Centre sounds hopeful on Japan lifting ban on shrimp import

TNN

October 4, 2012, Bhubaneswar: The Union government is hopeful of Japan lifting its curbs on import of shrimps from India, said director, Export Inspection Council of India (EICI), S K Saxena. Around two months ago, Japan had put restrictions on importing shrimps from India on the ground that the seafood contained higher levels of ethoxyquin, an anti-oxidant and also an ingredient in shrimp feed, than it could allow.

Saxena, who along with chairperson of Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) and others recently visited the East Asian island nation, termed the Japanese decision "non-scientific". "We have represented our case to Japan's health authorities and food safety commission and requested them to remove the non-technical barrier," Saxena told TOI.

"For fish, the maximum residue limit (MRL) of ethoxyquin fixed by Japan is one ppm (parts per million). But there is no prescribed limit for shrimps, which means Japan has put the curbs based on default standards," explained Saxena, who was here last week to hold discussions on the issue with Odisha government representatives.

"The presence of ethoxyquin in Indian shrimp consignments was found to be 0.1 ppm, which is very low and posed no problem. Hence, the Japanese decision was not backed by any scientific evidence," he said, adding, "The Japan government did not consult us before imposing the restrictions. We have told them that we will be constrained to move the World Trade Organisation (WTO) unless they act fast and remove the barrier."

Industry insiders said presence of ethoxyquin in fish and shrimp was not surprising because it being an anti-oxidant was used in fish meal and shrimp feed. "Shrimp is being exported from India during the last few decades to different countries. We use the same practice and same feed for all countries, but barring Japan no other country has raised any objection. This has forced us to suspect foul play by competing countries," said president, Seafood Exporters Association of India (Odisha chapter) G Mohanty.

Japan's restrictions on shrimp import has hit Odisha as an estimated 50,000 people are directly or indirectly engaged in shrimp culture in the state, said sector insiders. State fisheries and animal resources development secretary Satyabrata Sahu said he was optimistic that the issue could be resolved. "There is no need to panic. I believe this is a temporary trade obstacle, which could be overcome at the earliest," he added.

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Spices, Seafood Log Low Exports This Fiscal Year

P K Krishnakumar Kochi, Economic Times

15 November 2012, Kochi: Exports of plantation crops and seafood have plunged in the first few months of the financial year due to dull overseas markets, tight supply and high prices. Pepper, cardamom, cashew, coffee, rubber, tea and seafood exports have seen a downturn during the year after a good performance last year.

Although demand for some commodities is tepid despite the onset of Christmas and New Year orders, exporters hope it could pick up in the last few months. Pepper, cardamom, cashew and rubber have had a bad run this year. Indian pepper lost out to the spice from other origins due to high prices triggered by limited supply. Pepper exports till the end of August are said to be down by nearly 40% at about 6,000 tonne.

Indian pepper is valued at $8,000 per tonne, nearly $1,500 to $2,000 costlier compared to the commodity from other major producing countries. But the coming months bring hope as the forecast of a higher crop in India will soften the price enabling more exports. Akin to the previous year, Vietnam (the largest producer) has predicted a conservative figure of 1 lakh tonne for 2013 to keep the prices high. The industry feels it will be much higher than that, said Geemon Korah, the chairman of All India Spice Exporters Forum.

Cardamom exports suffered due to a month-long disruption to auctions. Exports have slid by about 50% till the end of August to 700 tonne. Exporters say there is high demand despite reports of a good crop in Guatemala, the biggest producer of the spice.In the case of cashew, sluggish market conditions due to a slowdown in Europe and a glut have hit the purchases. As a result, prices have dropped. Even at lower rate, there are few buyers, said P Somarajan, proprietor of Kailas Cashew Exports.

Cashew exports fell by 16% to 45,572 tonne till the end of September 2012.The drop in value was almost 12% at Rs 1,892 crore.

Seafood exporters were pinning their hopes on the three months to November when Christmas and New Year shipments take place. All major markets have cut short imports. Buying from the US, Europe, China and Japan is down this year, said Anwar Hashim, managing director of Abad Fisheries. Southeast Asia, the largest buyer of Indian seafood last year, has reported a better production this time and cut down purchases. Exports are said to be 20%-30 % down in value. After a record performance last year, coffee exports are down by 10% at 1.86 lakh tonne in this fiscal till November 13.Falling global prices have led to a decline in rubber exports, which fell by 60% to 8,573 tonne till the end of September.

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Shrimp Export: India protests unscientific, unjustified standards

Amiti Sen, Economic Times

4 December 2012: India has raised with the World Trade Organisation what it calls "unscientific and unjustified" health standards imposed by Japan on its shrimp exports.

The move comes as more than 140 containers of frozen Indian shrimps await clearance at Japanese ports. Japan, which has recently lowered the acceptable level of ethoxyquin in shrimps, has since August rejected seven Indian consignments of the seafood. Ethoxyquin is an anti-oxidant widely used in shrimp feed.

"We have raised the issue with the sanitary & phytosanitary committee of the WTO. We believe the new standards that have been imposed are unscientific and unjustified," a commerce department official told ET.

According to industry estimates, export of shrimps from Odisha and West Bengal has fallen by up to 50% in the last four to five months due to the Japanese restrictions. In 2011-12, shrimps accounted for half of India's total seafood export of $3.5 billion.

While India is not immediately filing a case against Japan at the WTO, it hopes that discussing it at the SPS committee will generate pressure on Japan to respond positively.

"There are other countries like Vietnam that are facing similar entry barriers in Japan for their shrimps. We hope to generate enough pressure at the WTO forum to force Japan to reconsider," the official said. "If this doesn't work, we could consider a formal case against this restrictive measure."

The commerce department has also sought a clarification on why the testing procedures were institutionalised selectively only in 2012, despite the notification being made in 2005.

Japanese authorities rejected shrimps from India in August after the level of ethoxyquin, an anti-oxidant, in some shrimps was found to be in the 0.02-0.04 ppm range. Japan's newly introduced health standards tolerate ethoxyquin levels up to 0.01 ppm.

"Figures supplied to us unofficially by the marine products export development authority reveal that more than 140 containers that have reached the Japanese port face the risk of rejection," the official said.
New Delhi's primary concern is that Japan has not carried out a risk assessment for setting the tolerance limit for the chemical and the extremely low default level of 0.01 ppm has been set without any scientific justification.

"Most of the countries, including the US and the EU, and international bodies like Codex have not prescribed any limit for ethoxyquin in fish and shrimp. So far, there is no evidence to prove that ethoxyquin at a level above 1ppm is injurious to health," MPEDA chairman Leena Nair said.

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US is largest importer of Indian seafood

George Joseph, Business Standard

Kochi, 28 December 2012:After a gap of 10 years, the US became the largest importer of Indian seafood items in rupee value terms during the April-September period (H1) of the current financial year (FY13), pushing the European Union (EU) to the second spot. The US's share in India's seafood export kitty for H1 stood at 24.40 per cent, followed by the EU at 24.18 per cent, according to the latest data released by the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA).

However, Indian exports recorded a positive growth in both volume and rupee value terms only to the US. In fact, India suffered a serious setback in marine product exports in all its traditional markets in H1, except the US.

While exports to the US recorded a growth of 11.42 per cent in volume and 9.33 per cent in rupee value terms, shipments to the EU dipped 11.27 per cent in volume, and Japan recorded a dip of 14.26 per cent, according to the MPEDAdata. Among the most serious drop was shipments to Japan, where exports dipped in all parameters — volume, rupee and dollar value.

Exports to China also recorded a setback as shipments dropped 33.09 per cent drop in volume terms. Total exports to China during H1 FY13 stood at 21,488 tonnes, valued at Rs 435.41 crore against 32,116 tonnes valued at Rs 486.40 crore during the same period last year.

On the quantity front, south east Asia became the biggest importer with 31 per cent of the total volume of exports, followed by Europe with 20 per cent, the US 13 per cent and Japan with 10 per cent. This is mainly due to the bulk export of low-value items, such as mackerel and Red fin broom to the south east Asian market.

Detection of ethoxyquin, an anti-oxidant used in shrimp feed above the permitted level had stalled shrimp exports to Japan for weeks together in June and July that caused huge loss to exporters in Odisha and West Bengal. The issue is not settled and India has sought intervention of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in sorting it out.

Global economic recession, especially in the Euro zone, is also a major reason for this set back. Implementation of new import regulations and certification systems in markets such as China and Japan has also hurt exports.

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US producers seek more duty on Indian shrimp

George Joseph, Business Standard

Kochi, 1 January 2013:India's seafood export industry is facing a serious threat after an American shrimp producers' organisation has filed petitions against subsidising shrimp exports by seven countries, including India.

On Friday, the Coalition of Gulf Shrimp Industries (COGSI) filed petitions with the US government, seeking relief from the subsidised shrimp imports from China, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. The petitions seek imposition of countervailing duties (CVD) on shrimp from these countries. These duties are needed to offset the unfair trade advantage currently held by these countries, they said.

If Washington imposes CVD on imports, India's seafood exports industry will be in deep crisis as the US is the largest importer of Indian seafood in value terms. The exports industry is already hit by a drop in exports to other major markets, such as the European Union, Japan, South-east Asia and China. During April-September, however, the US imported 45,540 tonnes valued at Rs 1,947 crore, registering a growth of 11.42 per cent in value terms. The US is the only country which recorded growth in import during the period.

Earlier in 2005, the US Department of Commerce had imposed 11.17 per cent anti-dumping duty on Indian shrimp, which had caused a steep fall in exports. This was based on a petition filed by the Southern Shrimp Alliance, a producer's organisation.

Over 280 exporters were shipping shrimp out to the US during that period, which had come down 68 in 2009. Thanks to the concerted efforts by the industry and the government of India, Washing-ton was forced to reduce the duty to 2.52 per cent last year, following which Indian shipments rose again.

COGSI, in a press statement, said the US shrimp producers struggled hard to compete with "artificially low-priced" imported shrimp that is heavily subsidised by foreign governments. Since 2009, shrimp producers in these seven countries have gained US market share by aggressively undercutting domestic prices, they said.

Shrimp is a major export commodity in each of these seven countries, and their governments have set specific growth and export targets for their domestic shrimp industries. To meet these targets, these governments are spending billions of dollars on subsidies, including grants, investments, low-interest loans, tax breaks, provision of land and export credits and guarantees. The petitioners document over 100 programmes benefiting shrimp producers in these countries, including numerous export subsidies.

"Today's filing is about the survival of the entire US shrimp industry," said C. David Veal, executive director of COGSI.

The petitions will be investigated by the US International Trade Commission (USITC) and the Department of Commerce, with final determinations expected in the second half of 2013.

USITC will issue questionnaires to US producers, importers, and foreign exporters next week. Finally, in mid-February ITC will issue its preliminary vote. If it votes in the affirmative, the case will proceed, but if it votes in the negative, the case ends. ITC is composed of six commissioners, and at least four need to vote in the negative for the case to end. If the case continues, the Department of Commerce will proceed with its investigation through the issuance of questionnaires to the government and largest packers and will conduct verification after issuing a preliminary determination of CVD.

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Seafood exporters to oppose US countervailing levy on shrimps

Business Line (The Hindu)

Kochi, 4 January 2013: The Seafood Exporters Association of India will be sending a professional team to the US to discuss the issue on the imposition of countervailing duties on frozen warm water shrimps from India.

“We will be engaging US-based lawyers to represent the Indian industry to appear before the United States Department of Commerce (DoC) to sort out the issue of countervailing duties, Norbert Karikkassery, President of SEAI, Kerala region, said.

Addressing a press conference here on Friday, he said that the US-based Coalition of Gulf Shrimp Industries filed a petition before the International Trade Administration, DoC, and US International Trade Commission for imposing such duties from China, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. The petition makes several allegations regarding the counter-valiable subsidies provided in India with regard to the manufacture, production and export of certain frozen warm water shrimp.

The petition identifies certain subsidy programmes as counter-valiable to the shrimp industry in India.

It also alleged that the Indian Government is aggressively promoting its shrimp industry through the provision of generous Government subsidies, SEAI officials said.

It also called for the initiation of an investigation into the counter-vailable subsidies and to impose duties through a countervailing duty order in an amount that would offset the benefit conferred by these subsidies.

The SEAI President pointed out that the seafood industry is passing through a tough phase due to unforeseen developments in the international scene that included the recessionary trends in the US and Europe. This coupled with the technical trade barrier by Japan has also affected the sector.

India’s marine exports are unlikely to surpass the $3.5-billion mark achieved last year due to various other issues in the domestic sector as well.

There has been a decline in the marine products exports for the first half year April-September 2012-13 compared to the corresponding period.

The exports have registered a decline of 6.91 per cent in quantity and 16.60 per cent in dollar earnings, he added.

Besides, the increase in reefer base rates by all the shipping lines operating from Indian coasts for freezer container rates, terminal handling charges levied by terminal operator in the Kochi port, revised US anti dumping duty on frozen shrimp imports from India, withdrawal of Status Holder Incentive Scheme for marine industry had also made an impact on marine exports, he said.

The number of Indian companies exporting to the US has come down to 68 as on today from 270 in 2005 on account of various factors, he added.

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U.S. to continue shrimp trade probes against seven countries

Xinhua

Washington, 7 February 2013: The U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) on Thursday cleared the way for the government to continue anti-dumping investigations on imports of frozen warmwater shrimp from seven countries.

The USITC voted 5 to 1 in determining that there is a reasonable indication that a U.S. industry is materially hurt by imports of frozen warmwater shrimp from China, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. It also alleged these shrimp were subsidized.

As a result, the U.S. Commerce Department will continue its countervailing probe that began on Jan. 18 and is expected to make its preliminary decision in late March.

In 2011, the United States imported frozen warmwater shrimp from China at an estimated 153.7 million U.S. dollars, 8.4 percent less than in 2010, according to the U.S. government's data.

In addition, the U.S. government has already slapped antidumping duty orders on frozen warmwater shrimp from Brazil, China, India, Thailand and Vietnam.

As the U.S. economy is undergoing a slow recovery, Washington has increasingly resorted to protectionist practices. As of Nov. 6, 2012, it has imposed anti-dumping or anti-subsidy duties on more than 120 products from 36 countries on the excuse that the imports had materially harmed related U.S. industries.

Chinese products including consumer goods, chemical, iron and steel products, farm produce and sea food are heavily targeted by such punitive duties.

The Chinese Ministry of Commerce has repeatedly urged Washington to abide by its commitment against protectionism and help maintain a free, open and just international trade environment.

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Seafood exports dip on dull demand

PK Krishnakumar, The Economic Times

Kochi, 7 March 2013: Seafood exports are likely to fall short of $3.5 billion achieved last year due to falling demand and declining catches. Recession and debt crisis in Europe have slowed down purchases while an antidumping duty and a cut in government spending in the US have been a setback for exports.

The presence of anti-oxidant ethoxyquin in shipments to Japan are yet to be sorted out while China and Southeast Asia, which was major buyers last year, have not been active in the market this year.

"Southeast Asia is basically a primary market. They buy from us, add value and export them. When the secondary market is in doldrums, you can't expect the primary market to perform," said Norbert Karikkassery, president of Seafood Exporters Association of India, Kerala region.

During the April-December 2012 period, exports rose to 6,60,703 tonne valued at Rs 13,994.46 crore ($2.6 billion). The quantity is down 2.62% while value in dollar terms has fallen by almost 8% year-on-year partly due to rupee depreciation.

In rupee terms, there is an increase of 6.03% according to the provisional estimates of Marine Products Export Development Authority. Shrimps accounted for 52% of total earnings and their exports increased by over 16% during the period.

The prices of most the marine products except vannamei have fallen in the world market.

"Vannamei fetches Rs 400 per kg for the premium variety. The harvest, which will peak in May and June, could fall by around 20% compared with last year's output as farms in Nellore, Gudur and Kota have reported losses ," said Surya Rao, an aquaculture farmer in Andhra Pradesh.

The slump in exports has been attributed to lower shipments of fishes, squid and cuttlefish, which are caught from the sea.

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Shrimp exports to US under anti-dumping scanner

George Joseph, Business Standard

Kochi, 1 April 2013: The US Department of Commerce (DoC) has started a countervailing duty (CVD) investigation against India and six other countries on export of shrimp to that country, covering the period January 1-December 31, 2011.

The other countries are China, Ecuador, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. The investigation was initiated on the basis of a preliminary finding that 21 subsidy programmes extended to seafood exporters in India merit further investigation. This is based on a complaint by the US shrimp industry.

Among the Indian programmes under the scanner are the Duty Entitlement Pass Book Scheme, tax and duty incentives under the Special Economic Zone programme and the export-oriented units programme, duty incentives under the Export Promotion Capital Goods programme, export financing, export credit insurance, subsidised loans to the marine products industry, the Development of Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture scheme, assistance from the National Fisheries Development Board and 13 subsidy / assistance schemes of the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA). Another 25 such subsidy schemes of China, seven of Ecuador, 14 of Indonesia, 16 of Malaysia, 12 of Thailand and 20 of Vietnam are also being scrutinised.

In February, a US International Trade Commission panel said there was reasonable indication that the US shrimp industry was being materially injured by import of allegedly subsidised shrimp from these countries.

Consumption of warm-water shrimp in the US in 2011 was 1.3 billion pounds, of which 87.6 per cent came through imports. In 2011, the US imported shrimp products worth $4.3 bn from these countries, 86 per cent of the total value of shrimps imported that year.

The move has left Kochi-based exporters concerned. "A high rate of CVD will seriously affect our exports to the US," one of them told Business Standard.

The US is the largest importer of Indian seafood, in value terms. The industry is faced with a drop in exports to other major markets, such as the European Union, Japan, Southeast Asia and China. During April-September 2012, the US imported 45,540 tonnes, valued at Rs 1,947 crore. This is a growth of 11.4 per cent in value terms. The US was the only country with growth in exports during that period, shows data from the MPEDA.

In 2005, DoC had imposed an 11.7 per cent anti-dumping duty on shrimp, causing a steep fall in exports. This was based on a petition filed by the Southern Shrimp Alliance. Around 280 exporters were shipping shrimp to the US during that period; this fell to 68 in 2009. Later, the US dropped the duty to 2.52 per cent.

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Sliding rupee brings cheer to seafood exporters; vannamei farmers may gain

K. P. M. Basheer, Business Line (The Hindu)

Kochi, 14 June 2013: The rupee's slide against the dollar has brought cheer to seafood exporters and shrimp farmers as exports now fetch higher value in rupee terms.

However, how much the industry stands to gain depends on a lot of factors - mainly how long the rupee slide will continue or at what level it will stabilise.

"Exporters are naturally happy about the rupee situation," said Nobert Karikassery, Treasurer of Seafood Exporters Association of India, who is also the President of the Kerala Seafood Exporters Association. "Those who have booked forward are happier as they gain more."

The total value of seafood exports this financial year would definitely go up, he told *Business Line.*

East Coast May Gain

Karikassery, however, said exporters on the East Coast would harvest better value than those on the West, as the latter relied more on sea catch while the former focused on aquaculture.

The aquaculture sector on the East Coast is expected to reap a windfall as this year there was record production of vannamei shrimps.

"This is the best year for vannamei shrimp industry in terms of production, productivity and prices." The farmers had recorded aproductivity level of 24 tonnes a hectare.

The West Coast exporters would not gain much from the rupee depreciation as the 47-day monsoon trawl ban, which drastically cuts fish landings, has just begun.

By the time the fishing holiday ends, the rupee might recover. Also, demand from Europe, one of the main markets for Indian seafood, was not very strong though the season has begun.

Advantage Shrimp

One major factor in favour of Indian shrimp exporters was the drastic fall in shrimp production in Thailand, the main supplier to the US market.

Karikassery pointed out that there was 24 per cent fall in Thai production which equalled India's total shrimp exports to the US. The vannamei shrimp farmers and exporters could take advantage of this. Coupled with the rupee depreciation and high production, it would be a boom time for the vannamei sector, he said.

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Seafood exports scale new high, topping 9 lakh tonnes

Business Line (The Hindu)

Kochi, 24 June 2013: Vannamei and black-tiger shrimps helped push up India's seafood exports to 9.28 lakh tonnes (lt) in 2012-13 fiscal, up 7.68 per cent over the previous year's 8.62 lt. This was despite the recessionary conditions in Europe, depreciation of the rupee against major international currencies and trade barriers put up by some of the importing countries, Leena Nair, Chairperson of the Marine Products Exports Development Authority, told a news conference here on Monday. She said the value of the exports was Rs 18,856 crore, though in dollar terms the increase was negligible (from $3.50 billion to $3.51 billion). In terms of quantity, exports were at a record high. Output Rises °The increased production of Vannamei shrimp, better productivity of black-tiger shrimp and larger export of chilled products helped to achieve higher exports," she said. She noted that there was a sharp rise in the production of vannamei shrimp as aquaculture expanded to more areas in eastern coastal States and productivity rose. The export of vannamei shrimp to the US increased by 141 per cent in quantity and 100 per cent in value in dollars. One-fourth of the total maritime exports consisted of frozen shrimp; but in terms of value it earned 51.35 per cent of the total marine export dollars. There was a 21 per cent increase in the quantity of shrimp exported, but because of the steep fall in the prices, it could add only 3.56 per cent to the export value in dollars. Frozen fish, which made up 37 per cent of the total maritime exports, was the leading maritime export item.

South-East Asia is India's largest seafood market, followed by European Union, the US, Japan and China, in that order.

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Boost for Indian shrimp export from Southeast Asian malady

George Joseph, Business Standard

Kochi, 19 July 2013: The Indian shrimp export sector is likely to gain this year due to widespread damage to shrimp farms in Southeast Asia, due to a disease called Early Mortality Syndrome. Processing units in these countries will have to import to meet commitments with European and US importers.

This shift would be a big relief to the Indian sector, as it faces a serious problem in export to the European Union (EU).

Shrimp shipments from Thailand, the world's second largest exporter, could slump by half this year from the usual 350,000 tonnes because of the disease, said the Thai Shrimp Association. Supply could fall by half from the normal yearly production of 500,000 tonnes.

Thai shrimp exports to the EU in the first five months of this year were 12,548 tonnes, a drop by 38 per cent in volume and 34 per cent in value compared to the same period last year.

Anwar Hashim, a leading shrimp exporter and former president of the Seafood Exporters Association of India, told Business Standard this was a boon to our seafood export sector here. For the past two years, it has been hit by poor offtake and price reduction by EU importers.

Data from the Marine Products Export Development Authority show Southeast Asia was the largest importer of Indian seafood items in 2012-13. The region had imported 340,944 tonnes, valued at Rs 4,357 crore, which was 37 per cent of India's export and 23 per cent of the total earnings from the sector. The rise in export to this region was 24.9 per cent compared to 2011-12. Hashim forecast a sizable increase in exports to Southeast Asia this year, too. Apart from the disease referred to, demand is also rising in a number of countries in the region.

The disease has killed cultivated shrimps in several countries in Asia, where a million people depend on this type of aquaculture for their living, according to a report of the United Nations' Food & Agriculture Organization. Asia produced three million tonnes of shrimp with a value of $13.3 billion in 2011, it said.

The sector shows signs of recovery after hatcheries, farmers and governments worked to stop the disease spreading but it will take time to compensate the shortage in supply. Prominent Thai companies are considering importing of prawns and related products from Ecuador, India and Vietnam to meet local and foreign demand, according to the Thai Frozen Foods Association.

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