



Newspaper/Magazine: *Business Standard* Date: 21/9/2005

Place of Publication: Delhi/Chandigarh/Faridabad/Meerut/Jaipur/Bangalore/Mumbai

CIFT designs aluminium fishing boats

SURINDER SUD
New Delhi, 20 September

The Cochin-based Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT) has designed fishing boats made of aluminium alloy, instead of traditional teak wood, to save forest resources.

The aluminium alloy boats offer several advantages, such as being light weight, strong and tough, dent-resistant and corrosion-resistant.

A prototype of the aluminium boat, manufactured by M/s Parur Metal Works, Parur, under the CIFT supervision, has already been tested successfully in both inland waters and ocean. Named Kayal, this boat is 5.20 metres in length, 1.10 metres in breadth and 0.55 metres in depth.

The hull is welded to the craft. It also has two seats for the fishermen and a buoyancy chamber in the forward end of the craft for safety. It can be powered with on-board as well as out-board engines.

"The boat was formally launched on August 20 and has given good performance," said CIFT director K. Devadasan. The prototype had cost Rs 1,20,000 without the engine.

He said aluminium could be popularised as fishing boat construction material after a few more successful trials. "As aluminium is available in large quantities in India, this can be a viable alternative to wood and can, in the long run, save the depleting forests", he added.

Devadasan said the CIFT had also been evaluating several other materials for constructing fishing vessels. Even a wood like Venteak had been found to be a good alternative for costly teak.

Trials were conducted on the canoes made of treated rubberwood, an under-utilised locally available wood. Boat made of coconut wood was also being tried out as it was relatively cheap.

Among the non-plant materials, fiberglass and ferro-cement were tested, he said. Steel had traditionally been the most successful and popular non-wood material for fishing boat construction.

The CIFT had earlier designed and promoted fuel efficient steel fishing vessels. Aluminium alloy has now been tried out for the first time for building boats for operation in fresh and marine waters.