

Significance of G.O. Rt No. 217 AH DD & Fisheries (Fish) Department Dt.18.08.2021

- The A.P State has 3325 Minor irrigation tanks, 23920 GP Tanks and 118 Reservoirs. All these water sources have potential to raise the fishery through fish culture.
- Disposal of fishery wealth in 3,325 minor irrigation tanks & 118 reservoir is done by Fisheries Department and by Panchayat Raj Department for 23,920 tanks under its jurisdiction.
- The fixation of lease rentals and disposal of fishery wealth of these tanks are done as per the provisions laid down in the GO MS No.776, Food & Agri (Fish-II) Department dated 31-12-1990.
- The government had noticed that the fishery wealth in the minor irrigation tanks is being exploited by the middlemen and the members of the Fishermen Co-operative Society are not able to receive decent returns.
- During the last year a study was conducted on 27 tanks in SPSR Nellore district and found that members of the Fishermen Co-operative Societies are receiving nominal return ranging from Rs.300/- to Rs.10,000/- per year and in more than 80% of these tanks, members income is ranging from more as Rs.300/- to Rs.2,500/-
- Moreover, it was observed that the returns given to the members was much less than the actual returns on the fishery wealth in those tanks.
- Based on the study report and after several discussions, to improve the livelihood and income generation of the members of Fishermen Co-operative Societies in those tanks, the Government have issued operational guidelines vide G.O. Rt. No. 217 AH DD & Fisheries (Fish) Department dated 18-08-2021 for auctioning of fishery wealth in public water bodies which are 100 Ha and above.

- Out of 27,363 tanks there are only 582 tanks admeasuring 76,359 ha which are 100 Ha and above which come under the purview of G.O. Rt. No. 217.
- Out of the above 582 tanks, only 337 tanks are under the lease of 255 Fishermen Co-operative Societies and remaining are under the control of respective gram panchayats.
- The remaining 26,781 tanks (23,920 GP tanks, 28 licensed reservoirs & 2,833 Minor irrigation tanks) do not fall under this G.O. No. 217 as they are below 100 ha water spread area.
- The pilot will be taken up in case of 27 identified tanks of Nellore district encompassing 25,380 hectares covering 27 FCS with 6,614 members depending on these water bodies for their livelihood.
- As per the G.O. Rt. No.217, 30% of the auction amount or 15,000/- per member of the society will be shared as dividend to the members of the FCSs through DBT mode.
- In addition, 20% of the auction amount is proposed to be will be shared to AFCOF for improving the livelihoods of the fishermen.
- Further, priority will be given to the local fishermen for employment for the tank management and during harvesting of fishery wealth.
- Based on the results of the pilot study and thorough discussions with the stakeholders and resultant feedback, action shall be taken for implementation of G.O. Rt. No.217 across the state covering tanks which are over and above 100 ha of area.
- Therefore, fears on implementation G.O. Rt. No.217 are unfounded as it is issued keeping the welfare and betterment of inland fishermen community in view.

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