

# NEW SAFETY DEVICE TO BE FIXED IN FISHING BOATS IN KERALA

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Mechanised fishing boats anchored at the Neendakara harbour in Kollam.C. Sureshkumar

The State government has begun installing high-security registration boards on fishing boats in a bid to ensure the safety of fishers.

The high-security registration board with GPS/GPRS networking helps locate and identify deep-sea fishing craft. Manufactured from materials that can withstand rough sea conditions, the boards have holographic and laser systems to detect fake registrations.

The project is being implemented by the State Fisheries Department for the protection and remote monitoring of boats, the government said on Sunday.

A hologram board is affixed to the top of the boat's wheelhouse for better identification and communication.

## Clear view

This ensures a clear view of 360 degrees and avoids damage to the board from direct contact with saltwater or mid-sea collisions.

In the first phase, hologram registration boards will be installed on 300 boats. The boards have already been installed in approximately 100 vessels which operate out of Neendakara, Munambam and Kochi fishing harbours. As many as 1,500 boats will be covered in the second phase, and about 4,000 boats in the third phase. The boards are being installed at a subsidised rate, with the technical assistance from C-DIT.

## Illegal activities

The system is meant to help government agencies track fishing vessels venturing far out into the sea and prevent crime and smuggling using such vessels. The agencies will be able to investigate unregistered fishing boats and those displaying fake registration numbers if they carry out any illegal activities along the national maritime border.

The bogus number can be identified quickly as the registration number and serial number can be verified using a satellite-based communication device.

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