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TRAWLERS

Dutch refusal to finance purchases

BY A STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI, March 30.

The Dutch government has declined to finance additional trawlers for India from its development aid funds, without a preceding "experimental fishing programme" on the sea-food resources in the Indian deep-sea zone.

According to a statement issued by the India Committee of the Netherlands, the Dutch government is of the opinion that trawlers in excess of the nine already delivered should be aid-financed only if the experimental programme shows positive results.

The Indian government has turned down the evaluation proposal on the ground that it will jeopardise the country's sovereignty.

This has caused disappointment

to the Dutch trawler industry which was expecting to net a big part of the 350 trawlers India is to acquire under the Sixth Five-Year Plan.

According to ICN, negotiations are currently on between Dutch shipyards and Indian businessmen for building parts of the trawlers in the Netherlands and assembling them in India. The future course of these negotiations depends upon a positive decision by the Dutch government to finance more trawlers from its aid fund.

In case of an adverse decision by the Dutch government, the Dutch trawler industry fears, the Indian government will now allow commercial trawler contracts with Dutch shipyards.

The latest proposal for the social and cost benefit evaluation of ex-

tension of deep-sea fishing came after the Indian government rejected an earlier proposal to have a Dutch mission to look into the possible harmful effects of the extension of the fleet with big trawlers on the "artisanal" fishery sector.

The Dutch proposal, accompanied by suspension of the financing of eight shrimp trawlers in May 1981, came in the wake of protests by Indian fishermen, especially of Goa, highlighted in the Netherlands, among others, by ICN.

Traditional Indian fishermen are worried that the trawlers, once allowed to fish in the deep-sea, will poach into coastal waters at their expense, unless laws to protect them are strictly enforced.

JCN = India Committee of the Netherlands.

Proficient, ga zo door!

Lucy