



PRESS RELEASE

MPEDA's Mud Crab Hatchery Technology gets patent right for 20 years

- *Technology to boost diversified aquaculture and seafood exports: MPEDA Chairman*

Kochi, May 17: In an impressive milestone in India's aquaculture sector, MPEDA-RGCA's mud crab hatchery technology, the only one of its kind in the country, has been granted patent by the Controller General of Patent, Design and Trade Marks, Govt. of India, for 20 years from 2011 to 2030.

The hatchery technology for mud crab (scientific name – *Scylla serrata*), a much in demand species in South East Asian countries where live crabs are highly preferred as a delectable seafood, has been developed by the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Aquaculture (RGCA), the research and development arm of the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA).

MPEDA Chairman Shri K S Srinivas said it is a remarkable achievement in the history of Indian aquaculture as for the first time the Central Government has granted patent for this technology in the country.

"It will go a long way in meeting the seed requirement of farmers who intend to undertake diversified species for aquaculture instead of concentrating on shrimp farming alone. MPEDA is dedicating this achievement to the aquaculture farmers of the country for their support and to the young scientists of RGCA who have worked tirelessly to achieve this morale-boosting feat," added Shri Srinivas, who is also president of RGCA.

Taking into account that there is no other hatchery for mud crab in India, RGCA had applied for patent right for the mud crab hatchery technology in 2011 with the Controller General of Patent, Design and Trade Marks.

However, the patent was granted after following a long arduous process. Various research institutions in the world discussed the matter with renowned experts, who referred various research references and held a string of meetings with RGCA's scientists with facts and figures. After ascertaining the various issues, it was finally decided to grant the patent right to the hatchery technology of MPEDA-RGCA for 20 years, which is unique in India.

Keeping in view the huge demand of mud crab, especially in South East Asian countries, MPEDA had initiated a pilot project for mud crab seed (known as crab-instar) production during 2004 and subsequently made the commercial hatchery for the first time in India during 2013 with the capacity of one million per annum. Due to its growing demand, the seed production capacity of RGCA's mud crab hatchery has been increased to 1.4 million per annum.

Dr. Emilia T. Quintio, an eminent scientist from Aquaculture Division of International Institute known as Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre (SEAFDEC), Philippines, had extended the consultancy service till 2013 to RGCA. Since then, the technology has been standardized by the RGCA's scientists within a short span of period.

The MPEDA chairman said the major achievement lies in increasing the survival rate of crab instar from three per cent world record to seven per cent. Further, the hatchery unit is designed in such a manner that all sections are under one roof with complete bio-security measures. So far, 7.28 million seeds have been produced and supplied to 659 farmers across the country.

समुद्री उत्पाद निर्यात विकास प्राधिकरण

(राष्ट्रीय एवं उद्योग मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)

एम पी ई डी ए भवन, पनपिल्ली एवेन्यू

डाक पेट्टी सं. 4272, कोच्चि-682006, भारत

**The Marine Products Export
Development Authority**

(Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India)

MPEDA House, Panampilly Avenue

P.B. No. 4272, Kochi-682 006, India



फोन } 2311073, 2311901
Phone } 2311854, 2311903
2313415, 2314488
2315068

फैक्स } : 91-484-2313361
Fax }

E-mail : ho@mpeda.gov.in

Website : www.mpeda.com

RGCA has been set up to give a fillip to commercialization of diversified aquaculture species such as sea bass, mud crab, Genetically Improved Farmed Tilapia (GIFT), cobia, pompano and artemia. It focuses on increasing India's marine products export by producing and supplying good quality seeds, which is a prime input for aquaculture.

"We would like to thank the Department of Commerce and Department of Fisheries of the Central Government besides the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for their continued support to MPEDA-RGCA for implementation of projects for promotion of diversified aquaculture in India," Shri Srinivas said.

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