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Breakthrough in mari-culture

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The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has succeeded in the largescale seed production of orange spotted grouper (*Epinephelus coiodes*), a species which is in high demand in the market.

The achievement is the first of its kind in India. The hatchery seed production of the species, carried by the Vishakapatnam Regional Centre of CMFRI, is expected to provide a boost to sea cage culture enterprises in the country.

The orange spotted grouper, known in Malayalam as 'Kalava', is a commercially important carnivorous fish with high market demand in many parts of the world.

Dr Shubhadeep Ghosh, senior scientist at Vishakapatnam Regional Centre of CMFRI said that the institute made this achievement after continuous efforts by scientists and technical staff for the last three years to enhance the survival rate of the larvae.

"Initial success in seed production of the fish was achieved in 2013, but the survival rate of the larvae was very low. After manipulating different water quality and feeding

CMFRI success



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protocols, enhanced survival rate with 10 per cent was achieved this time," he said.

Dr Gopalakrishnan, director of CMFRI said the success in seed production of orange spotted grouper has raised a ray of hope for the mari-culture of the fish using hatchery produced seeds in the country.

"In most of the major fish landing centres, the fish fetches ₹400-450/kg in wholesale market, whereas the live fish sale in international market fetches 3-4 times higher prices, indicating the prospects of mari-culture of the species," Dr Gopalakrishnan said.