

Bumper harvest of pearl spot fish by tribals

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A bumper harvest of pearl spot (Karimeen) by a tribal community in the cage culture project of Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute has left them ecstatic and ready to ring in the new year with joy. CMFRI had started the cage culture of pearl spot eight months ago under the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) of the Government of India.

During harvest, the tribal community in Thandassery Colony in Maradu Municipality got pearl spot with an average weight of 200 to 300 gram from two GI pipe constructed cages. A number of 750 fingerlings of pearl spot was stocked in the cages at a density of 20 numbers per square metre. Pearl Plus, the feed developed by CMFRI for pearl spot farming was used in the cage culture which was carried out by the institute with the participation of five families in the tribal community.

The CMFRI team headed by Dr Bobby Ignatius, Principal ScientistM trained the tribes in farming activities and empowered them to become entrepreneurs in cage culture enterprise, a less expensive farming method. CMFRI Director Dr A Gopalakrishnan said the institute utilised the Tribal Sub Plan to make the tribes self-reliant by empowering them to use cage farming venture.

“CMFRI has already developed economically viable cage farming models. We believe that the farming model is very much feasible among the tribal community to uplift their living standard”, he said. He said more people, including women’s groups from Maradu Municipality had approached them, expressing willingness to participate in the cage farming enterprise in future.

“CMFRI has been carrying out the novel farming model among tribes in all the maritime States in the country under the TSP”, Gopalakrishnan said, adding that the institute would popularise the technology by conducting training programmes.

“Under the TSP, the institute has envisaged the idea of popularising cage farming method for the economic upliftment of the tribes and a livelihood option for the community”, said Dr Imelda Joseph, Chairman of the TSP in CMFRI. Cage culture initiative would provide them an additional income to the community, she said.