

Black pearls produced through culture; A pioneering successful effort in the country

Under the MoES funded blacklip pearl oyster farming project operated from Port Blair in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the first pair of cultured black pearls were produced. The oysters *Pinctada margaritifera* were seeded by a Tahitian expert in February 2011 and after more than 300 days, the pearls were harvested. The pearls were oval/baroque in shape, measuring 4.8x3.7 mm and weighed nearly 80 mg. The pearls which were grey-black with golden hue were valued at US\$ 40-50 each. The oysters were held in a sub-surface longline in chaplets with wire mesh cover.



Considering the success of pearl production and hatchery rearing of spat the MoES has extended the project in the 12th plan period also.

(Molluscan Fisheries Division)