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Two new species of needlefish from Indian waters identified by CMFRI

Kochi, May 8 (IANS) Researchers at the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) have scientifically described and added two new species of needlefish from Indian waters. Genetic and molecular analysis, coupled with taxonomic examination, confirmed that these newly identified species have unique characteristics.

The newly identified species were scientifically named Ablennes joseberchmansis and Ablennes gracalii. The research was carried out by Toji Thomas, a research scholar at CMFRI, under the guidance of EM Abdussamad, Principal Scientist. The study focused on specimens collected from Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu.

These commercially valuable species of fish are known for their palatability and nutritional content. Primarily caught using hook-and-line methods, they are identifiable by their green spines and elongated beaks with sharp teeth. Their market price is around Rs 400 per kilogram. Found abundantly along the Indian coast, these species of fish are pelagic resources and available for fishing in the upper water column (0-20 metres depth).

According to CMFRI, further research is needed to understand the distribution and population patterns of the newly identified species of fish in Indian waters. Given their high demand, the researchers believe these fish have the potential to benefit the country's marine fisheries sector.