

LAUNCH CEREMONY OF “HATCHERY BRED MARINE ORNAMENTAL SHRIMPS AND NANO AQUARIA”

A NEW INITIATIVE IN INDIA, INTRODUCED BY THE ICAR-NBFGR,
LUCKNOW AND VGP MARINE KINGDOM, CHENNAI

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A ceremony to launch Hatchery Bred Marine Ornamental Shrimps and Nano Aquaria for country's hobbyists, was concluded in the premises of VGP, Marine Kingdom, Chennai on 20th May 2022. Mr. Anitha R. Radhakrishnan, Honourable Minister for Fisheries and Animal Husbandry, Govt. of Tamil Nadu has presided over the function and launched the marine ornamental shrimps with Nano aquaria. The ceremony was held in the presence of Director, ICAR-NBFGR, Chairman and Managing Directors of VGP group and other dignitaries and scientists from different institutes.

The minister addressed the gathering and informed the initiatives of the fisheries Department for the betterment of the fishers of the state for improving their livelihood options for them. He emphasized the need for the initiative, which will help in maintaining the sustainability of the marketing component of the envisaged concept and the possibility of expanding the same across various states of the country. He appreciated the efforts taken by the ICAR-NBFGR and VGP Marine Kingdom on the new concept of Marine Nano aquaria with captive raised shrimps. During the program, Dr. K. K. Lal, Director of ICAR-NBFGR explained the initiatives of ICAR-NBFGR, the concept of community-based ornamental aquaculture and the need of collaborative involvement with market leaders such as VGP Marine Kingdom. Mr VGP Ravidas, Managing Director of VGP group explained about the VGP marine kingdom and the pioneering efforts in establishing the first oceanarium in the country at Chennai.

The ICAR - NBFGR has established a facility for conservation and captive breeding of marine ornamentals at Agatti island, Lakshadweep. An initiative of the ICAR-National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR) at Agatti Island of Lakshadweep on breeding and dissemination of

marine ornamental organisms (shrimps and fishes), through community aquaculture units for improving the income of native women has been undertaken at Lakshadweep. The facility has provided capacity building training to 82 local islanders (77 women). The facility is hand-holding community aquaculture units, maintained by the trained women groups to raise the marine ornamental shrimps from seed to marketable size, for alternate income. This is a unique venture, where science and Societal development are converging together by utilizing the indigenous resources for livelihood development and support empowerment of native women of Agatti, Lakshadweep island. During 2021, ICAR-NBFGR and M/s VGP Marine Kingdom, Chennai signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for procuring the marine ornamental shrimps/finfish raised by women groups for further trading in the market. Nano aquarium is a table top aquarium needing small footprint and ease of maintenance, will be packaged with ingredients and beautified with ornamental shrimp *Thor hainanensis* (sexy shrimp) or *Ancylodactylus brevicarpalis* (peacock tail shrimp) and sea anemone.

Taking forward, this model has potential to create a hub in Tamil Nadu for new marine ornamental organisms which in turn empowers native communities and build a case history of successful access-benefit sharing based on indigenous genetic resources. The launch program jointly organized by ICAR-NBFGR, Lucknow and VGP Marine Kingdom, Chennai is a leap in this direction.



Dr Kuldeep K Lal, Director, ICAR-NBFGR Lucknow, speaking about the program and collaboration with VGP Marine Kingdom during the launch ceremony.



Honourable Mr. Anitha R. Radhakrishnan, Minister for Fisheries and Animal Husbandry, Govt. of Tamil Nadu receiving from Mr VGP Premdas, CEO, VGP Marine Kingdom, the first Nano aquarium with hatchery bred Ornamental Shrimp from ICAR-NBFGR supported women group at Agatti at the launch ceremony.



Ornamental shrimp, *Thor hainanensis* from Lakshadweep island is raised by women groups using hatchery bred seed.