A New Catfish Species in Manipur

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Environment*

Why in News?

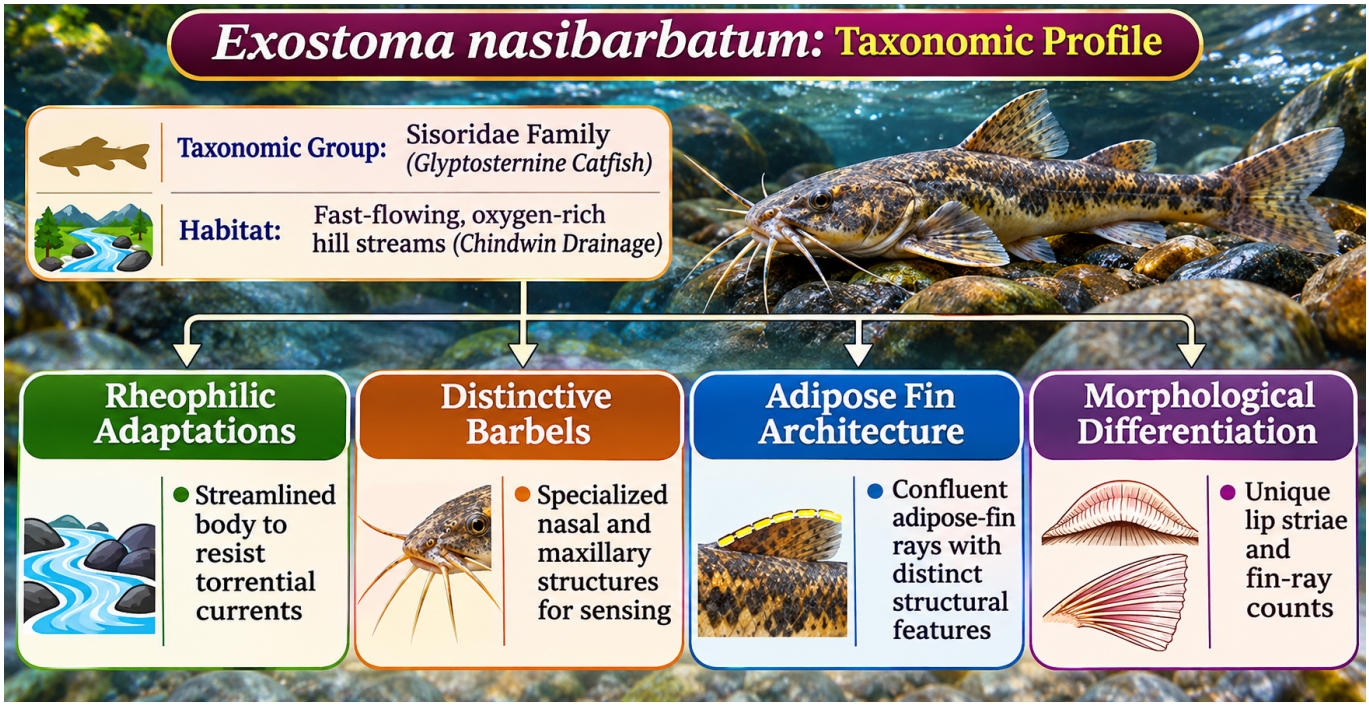
Recently, ichthyologists and researchers announced the discovery of a new species of rare glyptosternine catfish, found in the hill streams of Manipur, part of the Chindwin-Irrawaddy river basin system).

Key Highlights

Parameter	Species Characteristics
Scientific Classification	• Order - *Siluriformes* • Family- *Sisoridae* • Subfamily- *Glyptosterninae* • Genus – *Exostoma* • Scientific name - *Exostoma nasibarbatum.*
Type Locality	• Hill streams in the **Chandel district** (Bupal stream / Chindwin River drainage system) of Manipur, northeastern India.
Habitat & Ecology	• Inhabits high-energy, fast-flowing, clear rocky hill streams. • Possesses specialized morphological traits (such as flattened bodies and adhesive apparatuses) allowing them to cling to rocks against torrential currents (rheophilic adaptations).
Key Distinguishing Features	• Distinguished from other *Exostoma* species in the Chindwin-Irrawaddy drainage by specific structural variations in its lip striae (anastomosing, rounded striae), adipose-fin proportions, and barbels. • Adds to the expanding catalog of endemic freshwater fish biodiversity tucked away in the remote river systems of Northeast India.

Strategic Significance

- Northeast India is an integral part of the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot.
- Discoveries like *Exostoma nasibarbatum* underline how many micro-endemic aquatic species remain undocumented in remote Himalayan and sub-Himalayan headwaters.
- Rheophilic catfishes like *Exostoma* are highly sensitive to siltation, water pollution, and habitat disruption, they serve as critical bio-indicators of freshwater ecosystem health in the region.



Reference

Eastern Mirror | New catfish species Manipur

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