Blue Swimmer Crab (Portunus reticulatus)

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

Why in News?

Recently, Indian Council of Agricultural Research – Central Institute of Brackish water Aquaculture (ICAR-CIBA), Chennai successfully demonstrated India's first Blue Swimmer Crab farming technology.

- **Common Names –** Blue swimmer crab, blue manna crab, flower crab.
- **Scientific Name –** *Portunus reticulatus*.
- **Family –** Portunidae (brachyuran crabs).
- **Appearance –** Hue of blue colour, Flat, disc-shaped hind legs adapted as paddles for swimming; nine spikes along carapace near eyes.

- **Distribution –** Widely found in Indo-Pacific (Indonesia, Vietnam, Philippines, China, Japan, Malaysia, Australia, India, Singapore).
- In India, dominant fisheries at Palk Bay and Gulf of Mannar.
- **Diet –** Bivalves, fish, and macroalgae during high tide.

Key Characteristics

- Stays in burrows under sand/mud during daytime and winter, has high

tolerance to ammonium/ammonia.
- **Cannibalism** – Lower compared to other brackishwater crabs (suitable for farming).

Aquaculture Technology Package (ICAR-CIBA)

- **Seed Production –** Standardized hatchery protocols, short production cycle comparable to shrimp farming.
- **Feed –** Formulated pelleted feed branded as BSCrabPlus.
- **Farming Practices –** Nursery rearing and grow-out culture at 1 crab/m^2 stocking density.
- **Outcome –** Marketable crabs harvested in 105 days; revenue handed to *beneficiaries under Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan.*

Reference

PIB | Blue swimmer crab

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