

Indiaphonte bijoyi

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Species

Why in News?

A microscopic crustacean discovered in Lakshadweep has been formally recognised as a new genus and new species.

- **Scientific name - Indiaphonte bijoyi**
- **Genus** - The genus name Indiaphonte honours India.
- **Discovery**- Discovered from the **Kavaratti lagoon, Lakshadweep.**
- **Nomenclature** - Species name bijoyi honours S. Bijoy Nandan, Dean, Faculty of Marine Sciences, Cochin University of Science and Technology (Cusat).
- **Habitat** - It lives in sediments of aquatic environments, including lagoon ecosystems.
- **Distribution** - Kavaratti lagoon, Lakshadweep islands.
- South-eastern Arabian Sea, off India's south-west coast, known for high meiofaunal diversity.
- **Morphological characteristics** - It is a microscopic crustacean, observable only under a microscope.
- It is a part of meiofauna (invertebrate animals <1 mm).
- The body is partly cylindrical and slightly flattened.
- It is broader in the middle and narrows towards the back.
- Males and females look almost the same, which is rare in this group.
- It is identified by distinct features in its swimming legs, tail part and antennae.
- **Ecological importance** - It contributes to marine and freshwater ecosystem health.
- **Produces and converts omega-3 fatty acids** such as Eicosapentaenoic Acid (EPA) and Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA) that support fish and shellfish growth.
- Important for human nutritional security.
- Acts as a bio-indicator due to sensitivity to pollution, oil spills, heavy metals and climate change.
- Used in aquaculture and fisheries as live feed for fish larvae.



References

1. [The Hindu | Indiaphonte bijoyi](#)
2. [ToI | Indiaphonte bijoyi](#)