

# CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF ODISHA, KORAPUT

## OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS

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### **Researchers from the Central University of Odisha finds a new freshwater edible fish from Koraput**

The researchers of the Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput, and the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have recently found a rare freshwater edible fish from the Kolab River at Ghatguda, Koraput. The research conducted by Ms. Supriya Surachita, DST INSPIRE Fellow on the topic "Diversity, distribution of fishes and threats in the freshwater bodies of Koraput in Eastern Ghats of Odisha" under the supervision of Prof. Sharat Kumar Palita, Dean of School of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources of CUO, Koraput during her ichthyological survey found this new cyprinid fish species from Kolab River, which is one of the important tributaries of Godavari River. Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of CUO, Prof. Chakradhar Tripathy has congratulated the research team for this outstanding contribution to the field of science and especially to biodiversity.

While carefully examining some fishes of genus *Garra*, researchers of CUO along with Ms. B. Roy Choudhury of Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Kolkata identified the new species. This cyprinid fish species was named *Garra laishrami*. The new species is named after Dr. Laishram Kosygin of the Zoological Survey of India to honour his remarkable contributions to understanding the taxonomy of Indian freshwater fishes. The findings of the study have been published recently in the internationally reputed taxonomy journal "Ichthyological Exploration of Freshwaters" published from Germany.

Fishes of the genus *Garra* are elongate, small to medium-sized and bottom-dwelling fishes and are characterized by the presence of a gular disc developed from tissues of the gular region and that exhibit variation in the size, shape, and arrangement of the snout tubercles. These groups of fishes are distributed from Borneo, southern China and southern Asia through Middle East Asia, Arabian Peninsula and East Africa to West Africa. However, the new species *Garra laishrami* is known to date only from the type locality Kolab River in the Eastern Ghats of Odisha, Godavari River drainage. The new species is a member of the proboscis species group and distinguished from other members of this group distributed in the Indian subcontinent by the development of proboscis, degree of tuberculation on the proboscis and transverse lobe on snout and nostrils, position of transverse groove and morph metric data of the body.

The maximum length of the fish is from 76 mm to 95.5 mm. The species is edible and local people consume it. The fishes are usually found under rocks and among stones and boulders of torrential streams and rivers. This finding confirms the biodiversity richness of Koraput region and equally the biodiversity richness of the river Kolab (Saberu near Gupteswar). Prof. S.K. Palita, Head of the research team is of the opinion that Koraput is a rich reservoir of biodiversity with many species of organisms still unknown to the scientific world. There should be a thorough investigation into this rich biodiversity and efforts for its conservation are the need of the time. Prof. Palita is hopeful to find some more new species of fish from this region.

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