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## Puntius Sanctus: New Freshwater Fish

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### Why in News

Recently, ***Puntius Sanctus***, a new freshwater fish, has been found in Velankanni, Tamil Nadu. It has been found in a small waterbody.



- The fish has been identified and named by the Department of Zoology, BJM Government College in Kollam. Sanctus means holy (pilgrim town) in Latin.
- Species of Puntius are known from India mainly from the drainages of the Western and Eastern Ghats, as well as the Eastern Himalayas.

### Key Points

- **Puntius Genus:**
  - The genus shows great species richness in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
  - The Puntius species are known locally as **Paral** in Kerala and **Kende** in Tamil Nadu.
  - It belongs to the family '**Cyprinidae**'.

- ***Puntius Sanctus*:**
  - It is a silver-hued fish. The species is small in size and grows to a **length of 7 cm.**
  - It is different from other species.
    - It has a protractible (extended) mouth, a pair of maxillary barbels (a sensory organ near the snout).
    - It bears lateral line scales and pre-dorsal scales.
      - The lateral line scales are found within the dermis i.e. under the skin of a fish and usually have sense organs.
      - The dorsal scale row in a fish consists of a series of deep scales devoid of spines.
- **Cyprinidae:**
  - It is the family of freshwater fish, collectively called cyprinids, that includes the minnows, goldfish, bitterlings, barbs, and carps.
  - It ranges from small aquarium sized species to huge fish.
  - **Freshwater fish** are those that spend some or all of their lives in freshwater, such as rivers and lakes, with a salinity of less than 1.05%. E.g. **Rohu, Katla, Hilsa** etc.
- The new fish has been deposited in the **Zoological Survey of India** at Pune.
- It has also been registered with Zoo Bank of the **International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature**, the official authority for naming animals.

### **Zoological Survey of India**

- It is a subordinate organization of the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** and was established in 1916.
- It is a national centre for faunistic survey and exploration of the resources leading to the advancement of knowledge on the exceptionally rich faunal diversity of the country.
- It has its **headquarters at Kolkata** and 16 regional stations located in different geographic locations of the country.

### **International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature**

- It regulates a **uniform system of zoological nomenclature** ensuring that every animal has a unique and universally accepted scientific name.
- It creates and revises the **International Code of Zoological Nomenclature**.
- It is based in the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, National University of **Singapore**.

**Source: TH**