CIFT declared national-level referral laboratory

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOCHI: The city-based Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT) under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has been notified as a national-level referral food laboratory through a Government of India notification.

The mandate of the institute is notified as for the whole of India and the scope of testing includes physio-chemical analysis, bacteriological tests, detection of viruses, bacterial toxins, and anti-bacterial substances, other microbiological tests, and analysis of pesticide residue and heavy metals in fish and fishery products, said a press release here.

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The decision of the referral laboratory is deemed to be final in cases where opinion is sought for settling a dispute or when samples are submitted through the legal route.

The other functions of the referral laboratory include analysis of samples of food sent by any officer or authority authorised by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for the purpose and submission of certificates of analysis to the authorities concerned; investigation for the purpose of fixing the standard of any article of fish and fishery product; investigation in collaboration with laboratories of food analysts in various States and such other laboratories and institutions which the food authority may approve on its behalf.

Meanwhile, CIFT Director C.N. Ravishankar was cited in a press release as saying that technologies developed by the institute had played a pivotal role in modernising the harvest and post-harvest sectors of fishery in India, making the country a major exporter of processed fish and fish products.