

Organization of National Seminar on “Fisheries and Aquaculture: Livelihood security, Sustainability and Conservation” during 21-22 January, 2016

North East Society for Fisheries and Aquaculture (India) and Asian Fisheries Society Indian Branch (AFSIB), in collaboration with Central Agricultural University (Imphal), organized a National Seminar on “Fisheries and Aquaculture: Livelihood Security, Sustainability and Conservation” during 21-22 January, 2016 at College of Fisheries, CAU (I), Lembucherra, Tripura. The national seminar brought different stakeholders including academicians, researchers, line department officials, research scholars, graduate students and farmers from the country in general and NE region in particular on one platform and enabled them to share the recent research findings encompassing seven technical sessions namely; (1) aquaculture production systems including climate resilient aquaculture, (2) aquatic resources and their conservation, (3) harvest and post-harvest technology, (4) fish genetics and biotechnology, (5) fish nutrition, biochemistry and feed technology, (6) aquatic animal health management and environment; and (7) emerging social issues in aquaculture and fisheries.

His Excellency Shri Tathagata Roy, the Hon’ble Governor of Tripura, the chief guest of the seminar, inaugurated the two-days National Seminar on 21st January, 2016. The inaugural function was graced by Dr. J. K. Jena, Deputy Director General (Fisheries Sciences), Prof. M. Kurup, Vice Chancellor, KUFOS, Dr. M. P. Singh, Former Vice-Chancellor, Central Agricultural University (CAU), Imphal, Dr. S. S. Baghel, Former Vice-Chancellor, Central Agricultural University, Imphal, Dr. W. S. Lakra, Former Director/Vice-Chancellor, Central Institute of Fisheries Education, Mumbai, and was presided over by Prof. M. Premjit Singh, Vice Chancellor, Central Agricultural University, Imphal.

Hon’ble Governor of Tripura, while addressing the gathering as Chief Guest of the function, emphasized the need for coordinated field based out-of-box initiatives by different institutes associated with the fisheries and aquaculture sector. He also stressed upon augmenting the local fish production without compromising the sustainability. He emphasized the need for special focus on sustainable utilization of the rich bio-diversity of the north-east region, which is gifted with more than 300 fish species.

Dr. J.K. Jena, D.D.G. (Fisheries Science) & Chairman, AFSIB highlighted the importance of aquaculture as the fastest growing food sector and emphasised the fact that

India being the second largest producer in the world, it produces only about 10% that of China. Considering that fish demand is going to increase, he summed up growth potential of aquaculture in the country by declaring “Sky is the limit”. He also emphasised important role of aquaculture in livelihood security in the country and pointed out steps like location specific species and feed resource diversification for ensuring sustainable development of aquaculture in the country.

In his presidential address, Prof. M. Premjit Singh, Vice-chancellor, CAU highlighted that the university since after its inception in the year 1992 has made commendable progress in the fields of teaching, research and extension. The university was awarded 2nd best agricultural university of the country by the Hon’ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi for its academic excellence in the year 2014. He enlightened the august gathering about the role of university in augmenting grain production through location specific varieties of paddy in particular. He expressed his hope that the National Seminar will provide fruitful futuristic direction for the overall growth and development of the sector, especially with regard to the NE region of the country and thus will help in improving the socio-economic status of the people.

Dr. Pramod Kumar Pandey, Dean, College of Fisheries, CAU and Chairman, Organizing Committee briefed about the activities of the college and NESFA. He highlighted the fact that the College is one of the best performing colleges of the country in academics as reflected by the fact that its students have been excelling consistently in the all India competitive JRF examination conducted by ICAR for securing admission into the PG programmes. In this regard, he drew attention of the house that in the year 2013 all the TOP (first) ranks including that of general, OBC, SC, ST, UPS were secured by students of this college. He stated that organization of a National seminar in NE region was a timely initiative considering the important space fish enjoys in not only nutritional but food security vis-a-vis huge deficit between local fish demand and local fish production.

Prof. R. K. Saha, convenor of the seminar, presented the vote of thanks and expressed his sincere thanks and gratitude to all the dignitaries, participants, organizing committee members, press and media on behalf of organizing team.

A “Souvenir” containing various emerging issues in fisheries and aquaculture sector of National as well as of Regional importance and a “Book of Abstracts” comprising summary of research accomplishments of various scientists across the country were also released by the Hon’ble Chief Guest on this occasion.

The said national seminar was attended by more than 170 delegates from 20 states and Union Territories including professors, researchers, planners, administrators and officials from different ICAR research institutes, fisheries colleges and industries, state line departments, Niti Ayog, NGOs, and private sectors and also by 130 UG and PG students. A set of recommendations has been prepared based on deliberations and presentations during the national seminar which would be disseminated to various stakeholders for addressing the issues pertaining to sustainable aquaculture development, biodiversity conservation and improving the livelihood security of fishermen and fish farmers of the country in general and NE region in particular. Major recommendations are as follows:

- There is need for improving and periodical updating of the present database of fisheries resources, fish diversity and fish production of the country, especially NE region including GIS based resource inventories and field catch data collection/acquisition systems.
- Research and development efforts should be made for aquaculture species diversification in holistic manner through development of protocols for commercial seed production, rearing, grow-out for region-specific prioritized species, e.g. *Osteobrama belangeri*, *Ompok bimaculatus*, *Cirrhinus reba* for NEH region.
- With a view to increase export earnings and conserve endemic ornamental fish species particularly of NE region, research into domestication and propagation of local indigenous ornamental fish and feed development should be taken up.
- Development of organic aquaculture certification may be undertaken to establish, promote and popularize organic aquaculture, especially in specific zones of NEH region.
- Development and enforcement of regulatory mechanism and surveillance to check introduction of exotic species that may lead not only to biodiversity concerns but also transboundary movements of pathogens



Hon'ble Governor of Tripura, Mr. Tathagata Roy addressing the assembly during the National Seminar organised by NESFA (I)



Address by Dr. J. K. Jena DDG (Fy), ICAR during the National Seminar organised by NESFA (I) at College of Fisheries, Lembucherra



Foundation Stone laying of P.G. Boys' Hostel by Hon'ble Governor of Tripura, Mr. Tathagata Roy



Poster presentation session during the National Seminar organised by NESFA (I)



A panoramic view of the dignitaries on dais during the National Seminar organised by NESFA (I)