

Poverty to Prosperity through Fish culture

An inspiring story of World Fisheries Day –2020 Best Performing Fish Farmer

Mr. Amal Medhi is from Sondha village in Nalbari district of Assam. Till 2008, the main livelihood of his family was agriculture farming. They had 0.5 acres of farm land in which they produced paddy, which barely earned any income for them. Due to erratic and insufficient household income, their financial requirements were barely met. Mr. Medhi looked for a job to support his family after graduating in 2008. Even after several attempts he could not get through any work. He then thought of starting something on his own with the minimum asset what his family owned. He then used their 0.5 acres of farm land for the construction of fish pond and bought 10 lakh number spawn from the local hatchery investing Rs. 20,000/- and started culture on his own. The survival rate of spawn was about 50%. When the spawn turned into fingerlings, he sold them back in the local market which earned him Rs. 50,000/- for the first time.



Motivation:

High returns motivated him to increase his production. He availed loan of Rs.1.95 lakhs from the local banks and bought 2 ponds of 1 acre each in the year 2010 and started rearing the spawn to fingerlings.

Production practices:

In the year 2010, he started breeding Indian Major Carp (IMC) & Exotic carp through Hapa system. This increased the survival rate of spawn from 50% to 60%. He then felt an urge to learn more on the breeding techniques and participated in Fish culture training programs conducted by departments at Assam, Kolkata, Lucknow and Delhi. His urge for learning did not stop with this and hence he attended trainings on indigenous breeding technique of Magur, Kawoi, Singhi and Pabda in Assam in 2012. In 2014, when he earned 4 times more than his investment with the new techniques in place, he bought 10 acres of land and leased 15 acres in neighbouring villages, in which he is practicing mass culture and breeding. So far, he has spent about Rs.65 lakhs in building infrastructure and his current turnover is **Rs. 2.5 Crores** per annum and has provided employment to 15 members in his farm.



In the year 2014, he started breeding Desi Magur, Singhi in 2018 and Pabdhain 2019. Today the indigenous seed produced by him not only gets supplied in his district, but also in other states. He sees a potential market for 500 Cr seed every year in Assam, which is now supplied from Bangladesh and Kolkata which is causing drainage of money out of state. After studying the market trends of North East, he has designed an innovative model for mass scale seed production and rearing of Air-breathing Fish after getting trained in NBFGR, Lucknow. As per his estimation, through this design he will be able to produce 20 to 25 times more than the Fibreglass Reinforced Plastics (FRP) hatcheries. In this system, there can be production of 1 crore spawn in each cycle and one cycle in every 5 days. Further, by distributing these seeds to the trained farmers, they will be able to meet the market demand considering 45% mortality rate.

Knowledge gaining and sharing:

Keeping in view the local food habits of Assam as well as highly nutritive value of indigenous fishes, this seed production technology has attracted the farmers of other districts. Around 10,000 farm families are directly benefitted from this technology, through training & demonstration under the guidance of Mr. Medhi from different districts of Assam. Apart from this, he also

His Vision: *“By the end of 2021, he wants to establish one training centre at his farm which will be helpful for organising skill training programmes on fisheries in North Eastern states”.*



provides consultancy services to almost 15,000 fish farmers who are in direct contact with him over phone. He also conducts training sessions at the Guwahati

University, Assam Agriculture University on indigenous seed production to the students as well as the fish farmers. Thus, there is very fast spread of induced breeding technology and cement tank culture system in all the districts of Assam. The seed produced in his farm is been made available for all the farmers of districts of Assam and also other states.

Rewards & Recognitions:



Mr. Medhi was recognised for his excellent work and has been awarded as the **“Best fish farmer”** and the **“Best quality fish seed producer”** in 2016 and was nominated as **“Fisheries Brand Ambassador of Assam”** in 2019 by Dept. of Fisheries, Govt of Assam. He was also awarded for **“Adopting and promoting new technology in the field of Agriculture and allied area during state level Farmers Fair for Doubling Farmers income by 2020 in Assam”**.
