

To Make the State Self-Reliant in Fish Farming, Government Takes Multiple Initiatives: Fisheries Minister

The state government has undertaken various initiatives to make Tripura self-reliant in fish farming. Efforts are being made to utilize unused water bodies for aquaculture, and several schemes have been launched to encourage fish farmers. Speaking at the state-level National Fish Farmers' Day celebrations held yesterday at Lotus Community Hall in Kalyanpur and at the 25th National Fish Farmers' Day event at the College of Fisheries in Lembucherra, Fisheries Minister Sudhangshu Das emphasized the government's plans to expand aquaculture. The minister highlighted that the annual fish demand in the state is around 1.17 lakh metric tons, while the current production is only 86,000 metric tons resulting in a shortfall of 31,000 metric tons. This gap is filled by importing fish from neighbouring states like West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh, as well as from Bangladesh. He acknowledged the limited availability of space for fish farming in the state and stressed the need for fishery scientists to develop modern techniques to increase fish production in smaller areas.

Under the Chief Minister's Fisheries Development Scheme, fish farmers are provided with ₹6,000 annually. Additionally, in response to the growing trend of fish being poisoned in ponds, the government has introduced a compensation scheme offering up to ₹20,000 for affected farmers. He emphasized the significant role of aquaculture in strengthening the rural economy and urged stakeholders to take up fish farming sincerely, pointing out its high return on low investment. The state government continues to support fish farmers through various initiatives, encouraging them to become economically self-sufficient.

Speaking at the Kalyanpur event, Government Chief Whip and MLA Kalyani Saha Roy encouraged fish farmers to adopt scientific fish farming methods to strengthen the rural economy. MLA Pinaki Das Chowdhury also noted the government's focused efforts to boost fish production. Other dignitaries present included MLA Nirmal Biswas. Director of the Fisheries Department, Santosh Das, delivered the welcome speech, and the event was chaired by Soumen Ghosh, Chairman of Kalyanpur Panchayat Samiti. Fish farmers who played key roles in fish seed production, technological fish farming, and ornamental fish breeding across districts were honoured with first, second, and third prizes. The Fisheries Minister and other guests presented the awards to them. A total of 403 fish farmers from different districts of the state participated in this state-level event. At the Lembucherra College of Fisheries, key speakers included NABARD General Manager Anil S. Kumuir Kotmayar, former ICAR Director Dr. S. Damray, Director of State Fisheries department Santosh Das, and Professor Indira Sarangthem, Director of Instruction, Central Agricultural University. The welcome address was delivered by Professor A. B. Patel, Dean of the Fisheries College, and the vote of thanks was given by Professor Gosneid Waikhom. The event also honoured eight of the best fish farmers from the northeastern states.