

Government of Meghalaya



*Address by
Dr. Mukul Sangma,
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya
on the occasion of the
All India Conference of State Ministers in-charge of
Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries
on 16th- September, 2014 at New Delhi*

Distinguished guests

1. It gives me immense pleasure to be here at the National Conference of the Ministers i/c of Animal Husbandry Dairying and Fisheries, to discuss the pressing issues pertaining to the sector. As a person with keen interest on a sector that provides livelihoods to lakhs of people of our state, I consider it a privilege to be a part of this conference. The conference I am sure, will provide us an opportunity to put forward our views and help us evolve practical approaches and solutions.
2. The State of Meghalaya is endowed with abundant natural water resources in the form of Lakes, rivers, springs, bheels, swampy areas, and cold water streams. The Department of Fisheries had implemented in the past, the “1000 – Ponds” Scheme to boost fish production in the state. The state developed 2500 hectares of water area under this scheme and the production increment out of these ponds is more than 5000 MT (approx.) per year. But the scheme had its limitations in that it focussed only on Area Expansion and not on the development of critical infrastructure viz. the Hatcheries, Feed Mills, etc. and minimal attention was given to the capacity building of the stakeholders, as also for creating training infrastructure.
3. As per the available estimates, the present demand of Fish in the State is about 33,000 MT while the production is about 7,500 MT. The demand - supply gap therefore is more than 25,000 MT and it is being met by way of imports from other states.
4. To revitalize the Fisheries Sector in the State, the state Government launched the “Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission” on 5.03.2012 to be implemented co – terminus with the 12th Plan Period (2012-2017). The objective of the Mission is reflected in a simple and yet powerful Slogan **“from dependence to self-sufficiency”**. The Fish Farmers Development Agency (FFDA) is implementing the Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission.
5. Through the Mission, the state seeks to create 1 (one) lakh new fish ponds of 0.1 Hectare each, covering a total water area of 10,000 (ten thousand) hectares within a span of 5 (five) years (2012-2017). The anticipated additional production would be 20,000 MT per annum by the end of 12th

Plan Period. When that happens, the state will emerge as a strong player in fresh water fish production in the whole of the North Eastern Region.

6. Some of the key limitations of the earlier 1000 ponds scheme were plugged in the present Aquaculture Mission. Critical infrastructure like fish seed, feed, conservation of natural aquatic resources, Capacity building of the potential and current farmers etc. have been accorded high priority in the Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission (MSAM).
7. At the end of the second year of the Mission, 7118 nos. of individual fish ponds have already come up and another 14,000 fish ponds are at varying stages of processing and completion. 12 (twelve) Eco-hatcheries with an annual production capacity of 2.88 crore fingerlings and 14 (fourteen) Fibre Re-enforced Plastic (FRP) hatcheries with an annual production capacity of 1.40 crore fingerlings are established or in the final stages of establishment. In addition, establishment of 3 (three) Fish Feed Mills that can produce both the ground and pelleted Feed is in progress. 4 (four) Departmental fish farms to supplement the fish seed requirement in the state are also being upgraded through the support of RKVY.
8. Conservation of native, endangered and traditional species of Meghalaya, like the Chocolate and golden Mahaseer through the creation of “**Fish Sanctuaries**” is one of the major initiatives taken. 54 such sanctuaries have been sanctioned and are currently being set up in various remote locations of the state. The state of Meghalaya is well known for sport fisheries. The rivers and streams of the state have been the angling hubs for both local and foreign anglers. An initiative to set up a **Mahaseer Eco Park** with the support of the Directorate of Cold Water Fisheries and Research, Bhimtal is underway.
9. Creation of mass awareness, capacity building and skill development of the stakeholders and provision of technical support for long term sustainability of fishery sector are some of the priorities of the Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission (MSAM). I am happy to share with you that the state has established an exclusive Farmers’ Training Institute, known as **Meghalaya State Fisheries Research and Training Institute**

(MSFR&TI) at Mawpun, in Ri Bhoi District with the assistance provided under the RKVY. The Institute was inaugurated on 2nd May, 2013 and 31 batches of farmers have been trained so far, covering more than 1000 farmers already.

10. State Level “Aqua-Fests” were organized at Shillong and Tura during 2013 to provide the fish farmers a platform for marketing their harvested fish. The Aqua-Fests generate mass awareness as also impart knowledge of modern technological developments to the farmers.
11. To enhance the outreach, a dedicated website has been created for the mission. Success stories emerging out of the implementation of various programmes of the Mission, the technical manuals of different schemes, modes of implementation etc. are all uploaded on to the mission’s website *www.msam.nic.in* for the benefit of the people of not just the state, but the whole country of the world. The website is very popular in that it has been visited by surfers from as many as 56 countries. The Government has also launched a scheme known as “Multiple Services Providers” to provide extension services to the fish farmers.
12. The State Government is also initiating a process of convergence of Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission (MSAM) with other schemes like MGNREGA, and BRGF.
13. While the fishery sector in our state is developing rapidly there are still several gaps that need to be bridged. We need to improve the productivity in the fisheries sector. More capacity building will need to be done. Given the stage of development in which the sector is poised at the moment in the country, no general solutions would be appropriate for all the states. Policy guidelines could be laid down for the country as a whole, but states will need to find specific solutions to deal with local problems in this sector. We will require financial support for implementing innovative projects like the Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission.
14. We appreciate the role played by the Central Government, as a catalyst, enabler and facilitator. The Ministry may also think in terms of devising a scheme for conserving our natural aquatic resources through a method of

establishing fish sanctuaries across the country. Meghalaya has already taken a lead in this direction.

15. The State of Meghalaya is thankful to the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India for their support and financial assistance to us through the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and other central and centrally sponsored schemes, which have made a major difference to our state
16. The state of Meghalaya also is thankful to the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA) Bhubaneswar, Central Inland Fishery Research Institute (CIFRI) Kolkatta West Bengal, ICAR- Barapani, and GIZ (Germany) for their support through financial assistance, technological inputs, capacity building etc.
17. I earnestly hope that through our sincere endeavours, fisheries sector in our state shall grow at a much faster pace and very soon we will realise our goal of “Self-Sufficiency” in fish production.
18. As for the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary sector, the growth of livestock and poultry population between 2007 and 2012 has not shown much increase in our state except in Goats and Poultry with an increase of 22.60% and 14.55% respectively. Although pig farming is the most preferred activity in the state, the increase during the period stood only at 7.90%, while the cattle increased at only 2.25%.
19. People of the State being predominantly meat consumers, the demand for meat is very large. The annual requirement of meat in the State is about forty thousand tonnes. To meet the demand, about 45% cattle, 13.50% of pigs, 4.10% of poultry and 3.13% Goats will have to be imported from other states. The total egg and milk production in the State is about 1000 lakh numbers and 800 lakh litres annually respectively. Hence, per capita availability of egg is 35 nos/person/year and milk is 75 gm/person/day, which is far below the National average.
20. The State Government has initiated various schemes and programmes, and one such major programme to be launched soon is the **State Livestock**

Mission under the **Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Programme (IBDLP)**. The main objective of this programme is to create a pool of dedicated entrepreneurs in this sector. The programme also envisages Value Chain approach in a systematic manner.

21. However, there are several constraints that need to be addressed promptly. Some are as below:

- Non-availability of Swine Fever Vaccine
- Non-availability of good germplasm for cattle and pig
- Non-availability of feed ingredients in the region
- Lack of technology transfer relevant to the Region
- Poor connectivity for transportation of goods outside the State & Region and
- Lack of training centres of National repute in the Region

In respect of the schemes funded under **CSS and the National Livestock Mission** launched recently, we believe that they should be made more flexible, and scales of financial should be based on the current market prices of the region. The funding pattern also may be made liberal, at 90:10 basis (central:state) considering the difficult terrain and poor connectivity of the region.

If we succeed in our efforts, I believe that our state will march ahead, along with the sister states of the region. I sincerely believe that these are the sectors of future, for the region.

Once again I thank you all and wish the conference a grand success.