

2-day Meen Mahotsav begins

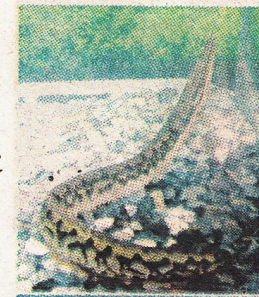
Government to curb illegal fishing

ITANAGAR, Nov 21: 'Stringent steps shall be initiated to curb the menace of illegal fishing which has posed a serious threat to the states' rich indigenous fish population,' warned Chief Minister Nabam Tuki while addressing the 1st ever "Meen Mahotsava" organized by the department of fisheries here at Indira Gandhi Park today.

While calling the Panchayat leaders and village councils to step in voluntarily to conserve the natural habitat, Tuki said that the open water system which once was rich in fish population has dwindled to an alarming state of extinction. He appealed the department and the PR leaders to come forward in checking the illegal practice of poisoning, electrocuting, dynamiting, killing of juvenile fishes by miscreants in the rivers, ponds and lakes. He also advised to introduce "close season" during fish breeding time for even traditional fishing methods besides identifying fish sanctuaries for protecting the precious fishery wealth from being completely extinct.

Tuki further directed to strictly comply with the Arunachal Pradesh Fisheries Act-2006 for ensuring conservation of aquaculture in the state.

'It is also equally important to develop fish based aqua-tourism and aqua parks and organizing fishmelas and Mahotsav which will help in bringing



awareness among the fish farmers about technology and potential of this sector in changing the socio economic condition of the rural community,' Tuki emphatically said.

He called upon the farmers to expose themselves to the emerging opportunities like ornamental fish culture, trout farming, freshwater prawn culture, Cat fish culture, integrated farming in order to build up entrepreneurship in

aquaculture development.

Tuki expressed hope that the Meen Mahotsav would provide platform to address all short-coming while infusion of experience and expertise would emerge new ideas and innovation techniques which would revolutionize fishery and aquaculture in the state.

Finance, Planning and PWD Minister Chowna Mein stressed for proper planning and policy for

scientific development of fish farming in the state. He was of the view that the state having the potential of both cold water and warm water fisheries could emerge as one of the largest producers of river water fish if properly planned and executed.

He later called upon the farmers to gather as much knowledge from the visiting scientists and expert and implement in management of their farms for better efficiency for enhancing fish production.

In his key note address, Fisheries Minister Rajesh Tacho while placing a statistical data on pisciculture said that the state could only harness 30% of the existing resources while vast portion have been left out untapped. He however disclosed that the department has been serious in its plans and have already started initiating steps to enhance fish and fish seed production.

While dwelling on number of projects being undertaken by the department, Tacho informed that regular co-ordination is being maintained with various organizations devoted for research and development of fisheries in the state.

The minister also informed that appropriate steps are being taken to conserve the indigenous fish species by curbing illegal fishing and other anthropogenic activities.

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'Although we are very rich in river water resource which has potential of abundant fish production, we still depend on import of fish for consumption from outside the state,' Chief Secretary Hari Krishna pointed out in his address.

He called upon the department to initiate steps to motivate the farmers and make them know the scientific approach towards development of fish culture for socio-economic development. He disclosed that the state government

Earlier, Secretary Fisheries Dani Sallu in his welcome address informed the gathering about the concept of the Meen Mahatsav. Other highlights included release of souvenir by Chief Minister, release of book on ancestral knowledge in Agri-Allied sciences of India written by Dr. Ratan Kumar Saha, release of leaflets by Agri-Horti Minister Setong Sena, felicitation of former department officers by the CM apart from inauguration of exhibition stalls.

Among others, Parliamentary Sec-