

## **Strengthening Fisheries-Based Livelihoods in Sikkim: ICAR–NBFGR Conducts Awareness, Capacity Building and Input Support Programme in Aspirational District of Soreng**

The ICAR–National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR), Lucknow, organized an *Awareness-cum-Capacity Building and Input Distribution Programme* under its North Eastern Hill (NEH) Programme on 21st February 2026 at Soreng, an aspirational district of Sikkim. The programme was conducted in collaboration with the Fisheries Department, Government of Sikkim, to strengthen the livelihoods of local fisherfolk and promote sustainable aquaculture practices in the region. A total of 60 fish farmers and beneficiaries actively participated in the event.

Shri A.M. Prasad Sharma, Hon'ble Advisor to the Fisheries Department, Government of Sikkim, graced the programme as the Chief Guest. In his address, the Hon'ble Advisor emphasized that the initiative represents a significant step toward strengthening regional fisheries resources by fostering local expertise and encouraging the adoption of modern and scientific aquaculture practices. The programme was also attended by Smt. Anuradha Gurung, Hon'ble Chairperson, Fisheries Department; Smt. Roshni Rai, Secretary, Fisheries Department; Shri Eras Lucksome, Additional Political Secretary to Honorable Chief Minister; Shri K.K. Shrestha, Principal Director, Fisheries Department, Government of Sikkim; Shri Gayas Pega, Director, Rural Development Department; Shri P. K. Subba, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Soreng district, and Shri Suk Prasad Limboo, OSD Culture Department. Their presence underscored the state government's commitment to the development of the fisheries sector. Dr. Kajal Chakraborty, Director, ICAR-NBFGR, addressed the gathering virtually and highlighted the importance of outreach programmes in promoting scientific aquaculture and conserving indigenous fish genetic resources.

An interactive technical session was organized for the beneficiaries, during which experts from ICAR-NBFGR provided scientific guidance to address key challenges in aquaculture, especially in the context of the region's unique and challenging terrain. The session facilitated knowledge exchange and encouraged farmers to adopt improved technologies and best management practices. As part of the programme, essential aquaculture input materials were distributed to the participating farmers to support and enhance their livelihood activities.

The programme was also attended by Dr. L. K. Tyagi, Principal Scientist, ICAR-NBFGR; Dr. Rejani Chandran, Senior Scientist, ICAR-NBFGR; Shri Amit Singh Bisht, Assistant Chief Technical Officer, ICAR-NBFGR; and officials from the Fisheries Department, Government of Sikkim.

Overall, the programme served as a meaningful platform for knowledge dissemination, stakeholder interaction, and the strengthening of fisheries-based livelihoods in the region.

