Tripura News Articles compilation
by ICSF
**Tripura: Awarded for maintaining cleanest fish market**


Tripura has been awarded on 70th Republic Day for maintaining the cleanest and most hygienic fish market in India by National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB). The wholesale fish market of M G Bazar in Agartala has been built at the cost of Rs 2.25 Cr with modern facilities including, scientific sanitation system, for which the state entered into the award category. More than 100 fish markets across the country had made entry for the award under swachha market component of Prime Minister’s Swachha Bharat Abhiyan last year, which was aimed to create competitive environment among the markets in terms of cleanliness and hygiene, officials of NFDB said here.

**Bangladesh: Fish imports to Tripura from Bangladesh resume**


Bangladeshi exporters started exporting fish to Tripura early on Saturday after more than three weeks of impasse. Fish export to Tripura stopped after a 10,000kg consignment, valued at $37,000, got spoiled on September 4 as it could not be transferred to the markets after some goons allegedly demanded “tax” from the Bangladeshi exporters. Secretary of Exporter and Importer Entrepreneur Sangha, Khokan Bhaumick, said Bangladeshi exporters brought 10 truckloads of fish in the morning. “We received a huge consignment of fish today from Bangladesh. The supply crisis in the fish markets has ended,” he said. He said a meeting was organised between exporters and importers on Friday evening.

“The meeting was fruitful. We are hopeful the trade relations between the two countries will remain cordial. The problem was solved due to intervention by the Tripura BJP general secretary Pratima Bhaumick,” he said. He said the BJP leader assured the Bangladeshi exporters that they will face no such problems in the future. Adhir Das, a fish trader at Battala market here, said he expects the prices to come down after the arrival of fresh supplies. Tripura has nearly 40 per cent deficit in fish demand, which is met by importing fish from Andhra Pradesh, Bengal and Bangladesh. The state government has started a few projects to boost fish production and become self-sufficient in this sector.

**Tripura: Fish supply hit hard after â€”extortionâ€™ threat to Bangla traders**

The fish-loving citizens of Tripura are facing a harrowing time with Bangladeshi exporters stopping the supply of fish to the state early this month over alleged extortion demand by anti-socials. With only a fortnight to go before the start of the Durga puja festival, the snapping of supply has led to the increase in the prices of fishes like ‘rohu’, ‘katla’, and ‘pabda’ in the state, which is dependent on arrival from Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Bangladesh. The supply was stopped after suspected goons allegedly stopped some exporters from entering the state after they refused to pay ‘tola’ (extortion money) at the Agartala-Akhaura integrated-checkpoint on September 4.

A sizeable amount of fish enters the markets through the checkpoint, a customs official on the condition of anonymity on Wednesday. Around 10,000 kg of fish, therefore, got spoiled, resulting in the loss of around 37,000 USD (approximately Rs 26,87,495 at current rates), he added. When the Indian traders contacted their counterparts in Bangladesh, they clearly stated that if a responsible government official from India give a written assurance against any illegal interference in the trade in future, only then would they resume fish exports, the official said.

“There was a meeting of the exporters from Bangladesh in their country on September 17, during which they raised a question about how would they be compensated for their loss on September 4,” an executive of the Agartala Exporter and Importer Entrepreneur Sangha said.

The joint director of the state fisheries department, Abani Debbarma, said roughly 70 per cent of the total consumption of fish was produced in the state and the rest comes from Bangladesh, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. The total consumption of fish per year in Tripura is 92,000 million tonnes, of which 72,276 million tonnes are produced in the state and the rest comes from outside, including Bangladesh. The per-capita fish consumption is around 22 kg in the state. Speaking on the issue, ruling Bharatiya Janata Party’s state vice-president, Pratima Bhowmik, said she would take the initiative to solve the problem. “I will hold a meeting with the exporters and importers of the state to discuss how the problem can be solved. I am hopeful a solution will come out,” she told PTI.

A fish trader, Adhir Das, who sells fish at the Battala Market, the capital’s main market, said, “The price of fish is soaring every day, because production in the state is not sufficient for consumption. We are facing livelihood problem because there are hardly any customers. We are facing the problem for the last one month.” When contacted, Selim Shah, economics professor at Tripura University, said, “Tripura is not self-reliant in fish production. We mainly depend on fish from Andhra Pradesh and Bangladesh.” “The people are fond of fish from Bangladesh, because those are fresh. Durga puja is also knocking at the door. Requirement of fish is more during the festive season,” Shah said, expressing apprehensions that if the stalemate continued, fish would be out of reach of the common people.
**Bangladesh: Fish import from Bangladesh to Tripura stopped for 20 days**


“Bangladeshi exporters have stopped exporting fish to Tripura after a damage to 10,000 kg of fish valued at Rs 22 lakh on September 5 due to some ‘monetary disputes’. The fish was damaged as these could not be off-loaded timely,” a senior Customs official said, but requested not to be named. He said: “Bangladeshi fish exporters want security during cross border trading. Fish traders of India and Bangladesh are likely to meet here on Wednesday to settle the dispute.”

Bangladeshi media quoting the traders across the border said that some people in Agartala-Akhaura border demanded donation from the fish traders causing the disputes among the traders.

On an average 14,000 to 15,000 kg of various fish, excluding delicious hilsa fish, is being imported from Bangladesh to Tripura through the Agartala-Akhaura integrated checkposts, just along the Agartala capital city. A fish trader said that due to no import from Bangladesh, over 200 loading and unloading labourers and transport workers remained jobless during the past 20 days. Industry and Commerce Department, Customs and Agartala Land Port Authority officials refused to comment on the “sensitive and disputed issue”.

Meanwhile, an official of the Agartala Land Port Authority said that Bangladesh has reportedly lifted a 2012 ban on the export of their national fish hilsa (or Elish), whose key markets include India, to check its smuggling and tap into the growing global demand for the popular but scarce food species. Bangladesh’s Ministry of Commerce had banned the export of hilsa fish on August 1, 2012 due to its low availability. “Though the Bangladesh government reportedly withdraws the ban on the export of hilsa fish to India, the decision was not executed through the India-Bangladesh border with Tripura,” the Agartala Land Port Authority official said. Tripura imports on an average 32,000 kg fish daily from other states, specially from Andhra Pradesh, to meet its local demands.

**Tripura: Nine new items added to Tripura's list of exports to Bangladesh**


Nine new items have been added to the list of export items to Bangladesh from Tripura, taking the total number of products to be shipped to the neighbouring country to 30, official sources said. In a notification issued Tuesday, the director of Industries and Commerce Department, Sandip R Rathore, said the nine approved items, including rice, dry fish and soyabean seeds, will be exported to the neighbouring country through three land custom stations of the state. The state so far had been exporting 21 commodities to Bangladesh through eight land custom stations. "While rice, betel leaves and dry fish would be exported through Srimantapur station in..."
Sipahijala and Manughat station in South Tripura, rubber latex, bamboo-based products, broomstick, soyabean seeds, spare parts of CNG-run vehicles and maize would reach the neighbouring country through Agartala-Akhaura International Check Post," he said.

Debashish Nandi, the manager of Agartala-Akhaura ICP, asserted that fish and other perishable organic items will go through several rounds of inspections before they are shipped to the neighbouring country. Welcoming the Bangladesh government's decision, Tripura Chamber of Commerce and Industries (TCCI) president ML Debnath said Tuesday the move would increase the export volume from Tripura. "We had imports worth Rs 300 crore from Bangladesh in the last financial year, but the value of total exports did not exceed Rs 80 lakh. Trade balance needs to be established along the Tripura-Bangladesh border," Debnath added. Earlier in March, TCCI had proposed relaxing policy restrictions on a number of items for export to Bangladesh. The list was later amended following a series of discussions with Bangladesh government officials.

**Bangladesh: To stop fish exports to Tripura**


According to sources at the Agartala-Akhaura Integrated Check Post, Bangladesh is going to stop exporting fish to Tripura from Saturday. “Bangladesh has decided to stop exporting fish to Tripura. However, it is not their fault. It is the fault of importers in Tripura, who are embroiled in internal disputes,” the sources said, on condition of anonymity. “A shipment of fish arrived here last Wednesday. After necessary procedures at the integrated check post, gate-passes were allotted at 9am.

However, various quarters have claimed that delivery of the shipment to the markets was delayed due to internal clashes between importers. As a result, the fish began decomposing,” they added. “Consequently, Bangladeshi exporters incurred huge losses. Naturally, they demanded compensation from the importers in Tripura, and said they would never export fish to Tripura otherwise,” the sources continued. Furthermore, there has been a hike in the prices of fish in Tripura, as the Indian state is heavily dependent on fish imports from Bangladesh. Tripura usually imports 12-15 tons of fish from Bangladesh every day.

**Tripura: Fisheries Dept backs Tripura CM’s duck-oxygen theory**


Rameshwar Das, the Principal Secretary of Tripura’s Fisheries Department, has backed Chief Minister Biplab Deb’s comments about raising oxygen levels in water bodies by releasing ducks, saying that bird is a natural aerator and its presence in water bodies provides multiple benefits.
The practice of introducing something else with fish is known as Integrated Fish Farming. It is used in animal husbandry, agriculture, etc.

There are several benefits of introducing ducks with fish. Firstly their droppings increase the fertility and helps raise the level of plankton in the water, which the fish consume, hence helping them grow,” Das told ANI. Das further explained how ducks act as natural aerators, “Fish require dissolved oxygen. The surface area of the water body is directly proportional to the dissolved oxygen, and to increase the surface area, there needs to be a disturbance on the surface, it cannot be still. So, when ducks swim on water, they act as natural aerators, and with ducks not there, we have to artificially aerate the waters,” he said.

Raising similar points as Das, a scientist at the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, Ajay Debbarma also said that ducks acted as natural aerators and that their droppings were beneficial for the growth of fish, saying that studies and research prove the same. Meanwhile, citing a research by Chhattisgarh’s Indira Gandhi Agriculture University that proves the Chief Minister’s points are valid, Sanjay Mishra, the Officer on Special Duty to Deb, said that the controversy was sparked to dent the Chief Minister’s image. This isn’t the first time that such a controversy has erupted over the Chief Minister’s speech.

Those present at the spot understood what he was saying and didn’t start any controversy, but those not present there did. This has been happening to tarnish his image,” Mishra told ANI. On Monday, Dev said that he would distribute as many as 50,000 indigenous ducks to people living close to water bodies, stating that ducks will add to the aesthetic beauty and help increase the oxygen levels in the water. According to media reports, the Chief Minister was criticised and mocked over his comments, with Tripura Pradesh Congress’ Tapas Dey saying that scientific evidence should be relied upon for policy making.

**Tripura: Backward state in fish production, 20551 17 MT fish imported from others state**


The Economic Review of Tripura reveals that the state in which 95 per cent people are fish eater and local production of fish in Tripura is 71,981.28 MT. The demand for fish is high, the state exports fish from others state. A total of 20,551.17 MT fish imported in the year 2016-17 from Bangladesh and others state of India, informed by Directorate of Economics & Statistics Planning (Statistics) Department, Government of Tripura, Agartala.

A total of 11,783.27 MT fish imported from Bangladesh and 8,767.90 MT fish also imported from others state of India for the fulfillment of fish demand in Tripura, informed the report of Economic Review of Tripura, 2016-17. The total availability of fish in Tripura is 92,532.45 MT. The officers of fishery department, Government of Tripura informed that there is tremendous
potential of available aqua resources in the state, the local production of fish can meet only 18.91 kg against actual per capita fish consumption demand of 22.28 kg at the end of 2015-16. The other factors have also influenced to raise consumption demand of fish due to population growth, rising incomes, urbanization and improved marketing distribution channels.

Thus, the department has given much emphasis to reduce the gap between consumption demand and local production and to fulfill the consumption requirement of fish in coming years for its populace through implementation of various schemes in the State, added officers of fishery department of Tripura. The scientists of fishery department said on the basis of the statistical report that fish remains an important favored food commodity as well as provides a great source of nutrition, income and livelihoods for nearly one lakh eighty two thousand people in Tripura.

Besides, fish being an important constituent of daily diet of more than 95 per cent of its populace, the role played by fisheries department of Tripura towards the food security of State’s population is significant. The per capita consumption of fish in the State is reported to be highest among the Inland States of the country. The state Tripura has made considerable achievements with regard to carp seed production. Presently, Tripura is surplus in fish seed production. This is the first state in the North East, rather one of the very few land locked States of the country, to produce seed of fresh water prawn in artificial sea water on a commercial scale, informed the fishery department.

**Tripura: Monsoon fury hits Tripura, floods leave over 3,000 families homeless**


Two persons including a child were killed and over three thousand families have been rendered homeless as torrential rain in the last 24 hours triggered folds in Tripura. The state witnessed a rainfall of 86 mm in the last 24 hours and the situation could worsen further with the Met Department warning of heavy rain in next 24 hours. A report from State Emergency Operation Centre said that a total 3472 homeless families took shelter in 64 camps set up by the state government throughout the state and about 41 houses were damaged in the flood.

A State Emergency Operation Centre official said a child was killed in the flood in South District. One man was reported missing and suspected to be washed away in the flood in Sabroom in South District and one woman was injured in a landslide in Dhalai district. The rain triggered landslides in 17 locations. Eleven of the landslides occurred in Khowai district, one in Gomati and five in Dhalai. All major rivers in the state are flowing above normal. Although all eight district of the state have been flooded, there have been no reports of damage and homeless families from Sepahijala and West districts.
Tripura has recorded a rainfall of 275.9 mm since June 1 after an exponential rise in pre-monsoon rain. This year, a total 979.9 mm pre-monsoon rainfall was recorded against an average of 574.2 mm. “The state received 75% more rainfall on an average than the normal pre-monsoon rainfall. This is an exception this year,” a Met official said. Last month, six people were killed and over 17,000 families were rendered homeless due to floods.