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WEBINAR ON "NATIONAL SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME FOR AQUATIC ANIMAL DISEASES

Relevant for: Indian Economy | Topic: Economics of Animal-Rearing incl. White, Blue & Pink Revolutions

Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India organized a webinar on "**National Surveillance Programme for Aquatic Animal Diseases: A Step towards Establishing Disease Governance System in India** "on 15th February, 2022 as a part of "*Azadi Ka Amrit Mohatsav*". The event was well-attended by more than 150 participants including officials of Department of Fisheries, ICAR institutes, GoI and fisheries officials of different States/UTs, faculties from State Agriculture, Veterinary and Fisheries universities, entrepreneurs, scientists, farmers, hatchery owners, students and stakeholders from aquaculture industry across the country.

The Webinar began with the welcome address by Shri I. A. Siddiqui, Fisheries Development Commissioner, DoF along with introduction of the theme of the Webinar and the distinguished panelists Shri Sagar Mehra, Joint Secretary (Inland Fisheries); **Dr. Joykrushna Jena**, Deputy Director General (Fisheries Science), ICAR, New Delhi; Dr. Iddya Karunasagar, Advisor (Research and Patents), Nitte University, Mangaluru; Dr. A.G. Ponniah, Former Emeritus Scientist and Former Discipline Leader, WorldFish Centre, Malaysia,; Dr. K.K. Lal, Director, ICAR- National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources, Lucknow; Dr. Neeraj Sood, Principal Scientist ICAR- National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources, Lucknow; Shri. V. Balasubramaniam, General Secretary, Prawn Farmers' Federation of India, Bengaluru and other participants.

Shri Sagar Mehra, Joint Secretary (Inland Fisheries), in his opening remarks mentioned that aquaculture production through intensification and diversification has added to the risk factors of spread of new and emerging aquatic diseases in aquaculture. Early detection of emerging diseases is considered key to their control, and knowledge about the existing disease is essential in developing national control or containment strategies. Mr. Mehra briefly highlighted the role played by NSPAAD in aquatic diseases surveillance and reporting to international agencies and the long-term objectives of strengthening the aquatic diseases surveillance system in the country.

During the technical session, **Dr. Joykrushna Jena**, Deputy Director General (Fisheries Science), ICAR, New Delhi, set the context for the webinar and stated that India is a vast country with state divergent levels of capabilities and fisheries priorities hence Surveillance programme for monitoring and controlling spread of diseases of national and international concern has become a primary requirement for effective health management and ultimately for sustainable aquaculture. Dr. Jena further stated that the National Surveillance Programme for Aquatic Animal Diseases (NSPAAD) of India has made its own example in establishing a coordinated surveillance programme for aquaculture.

Dr. Neeraj Sood, Principal Scientist ICAR- National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources, Lucknow delivered a detailed presentation on NSPAAD along with the status of the project in the country and the future aims of the project. Later, Dr. Iddya Karunasagar, Advisor, Nitte University, Mangaluru focused on strategising aquatic animal health management based on disease surveillance through a knowledge filled session. Dr. A.G. Ponniah, Former Emeritus Scientist and Former Discipline Leader, World Fish Centre, Malaysia delivered an informative session on emergency response in case of detection of exotic aquatic diseases and Shri. V. Balasubramaniam, General Secretary, Prawn Farmers' Federation of India briefed about the

industrial approach and the need of fisheries and aquaculture sector for disease surveillance in shrimp aquaculture.

After the presentation, an open discussion session was held with the scientists, fish farmers, entrepreneurs, hatchery owners, students, scientists and faculty of the universities. After the discussion, the webinar concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by Dr. S. K. Dwivedi, Assistant Commissioner, DoF.

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