

50 more fish sanctuaries established in Rajshahi division

BSS- A total of 50 more fish sanctuaries were established in Rajshahi division with the main thrust of boosting the stock of endangered indigenous fish species besides protecting the fish biodiversity through creating awareness among the public in general.

Apart from this, 150 existing fish sanctuaries were renovated in the division for ensuring a sustainable water ecosystem coupled with developing fish habitat for improving productivity.

The developments were promoted with the intervention of a four-year project titled "Fisheries Development Project in Rajshahi Division", said Kamrul Hassan, director of the project.

The four-year project has been implemented in 65 upazilas in all eight districts of the division involving around Taka 47.47-crore since January 2019 to boost fish production along with enhancing its productivity and habitat development.

Being implemented by the Department of Fisheries (DoF), the project is intended to boost production of fish along with enhancing its productivity

and habitat development through establishing 1,860 demonstration farms and 80 beel nurseries after re-excavation.

Kamrul Hassan said generating more scopes of improving living and livelihood conditions and poverty reduction of the marginalized people, employment generation for the youths and transferring modern technologies among the fishermen are the ultimate goals of the project.

Around 2,000 distressed fishermen were engaged in various alternative income generation activities in phases for reducing overfishing in the natural water bodies.

Training, seminars and workshops were arranged for the beneficiary farmers and the promotional activities progressed through various interventions.

A total of 240 Kuchia demonstration farms have also been established for making the ethnic minority people self-reliant through boosting its production.

A total of 480 farms for demonstration of various small fish species including Shing, Magur, Gulsha and Pabda while another 480 farms for demonstrating Koi, Tilapia and Pungus were set up for production expansion of the tasty and high market valued fish species.

The project includes 180 cage and pen fish farming demonstrations for the

best uses of the open water bodies through promoting cage fish culture coupled with capacity development of the people living alongside the river banks.

As a result of establishing new sanctuaries and renovation of the existing ones, production of the native fish species were enhanced side by side with revitalizing the endangered ones, sources said.

Requisite numbers of beel nurseries were established for boosting fish production to meet the gradually mounting protein demands.

Fish production was enhanced to five to six tonnes per hectare through infrastructure development in natural water bodies together with transferring of modern technologies among the farmers.

In phases, 62,000 beneficiary fishermen were imparted training on modern fish farming technologies aimed at building their capacities.

Project Director Kamrul Hassan mentioned that climate change, employment generation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable uses of updated technologies are the main challenges towards implementation of the project.

The project has started protecting the endangered fish species through installation of fish sanctuaries and habitats, he added.