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(i)

**COMPOSITION OF THE DEPARTMENTALLY RELATED
STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT (B)
DEPARTMENTS, 2022-23**

CHAIRMAN::

Shri Ramendra Narayan Kalita,

MLA & Chairman.

MEMBERS:

2. Shri Terash Gowalla,	MLA & Member
3. Shri Utpal Borah,	MLA & Member
4. Shri Sibu Misra,	MLA & Member
5. Shri Rupak Sarmah,	MLA & Member
6. Shri Kaushik Rai,	MLA & Member
7. Shri Taranga Gogoi,	MLA & Member
8. Shri Diganta Kalita,	MLA & Member
9. Shri Darsing Ronghang,	MLA & Member
10. Shri Rupsing Teron,	MLA & Member
11. Shri Dharmeswar Konwar,	MLA & Member
12. Shri Bharat Chandra Narah,	MLA & Member
13. Shri Kamalakhya Dey Purkayastha,	MLA & Member
14. Shri Jakir Hussain Sikdar,	MLA & Member
15. Shri Nurul Huda,	MLA & Member
16. Shri Rekibuddin Ahmed,	MLA & Member
17. Shri Pradip Sarkar,	MLA & Member
18. Shri Abdur Rahim Ahmed,	MLA & Member
19. Smti. Renuroma Rajkhowa,	MLA & Member
20. Hafiz Bashir Ahmed,	MLA & Member
21. Shri Aminul Islam (Senior),	MLA & Member
22. Shri Phanidhar Talukdar,	MLA & Member
23. Shri Abdul Aziz,	MLA & Member
24. Shri Charan Boro,	MLA & Member
25. Shri Manoranjan Talukdar,	MLA & Member

OFFICERS, ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Hemen Das, IAS, Principal Secretary
2. Shri Dulal Pegu, Secretary.
3. Smti Prativa Teron, Joint Secretary.
4. Shri Samir Das, Under Secretary.
5. Shri Swapan Das, Protocol Officer.
6. Shri Madhab Chetri, Committee Officer.
7. Shri Fakhar Uddin Choudhury, Committee Officer.
8. Shri Mahen Chandra Doley, Superintendent.
9. Shri Lakhi Nath Mardhi, Assistant Research Officer.
10. Dr. Rosy Saikia, Assistant Language Officer.

(ii)

INTRODUCTION

1. I, as Chairman of the Departmentally Related Standing Committee on Development (B) Departments, Assam Legislative Assembly having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this **TWENTY FOURTH REPORT** on Demands for **Grant No. 54** of the **Fisheries Department** for the financial year, **2022-23**.
2. Demands for Grant have been examined by the Committee under Rule 260 J (1) (a) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Assam Legislative Assembly.
3. The Committee took evidence of the representatives of the **Fisheries Department** on **23rd March, 2022**.
4. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on **26th March, 2022**.
5. The Committee expressed its thanks to the Officials of the **Fisheries Department** for placing before them the requisite materials and their considered views in connection with the subjects under consideration.
6. The Committee would also like to place on record their deep sense of appreciation for the invaluable assistance rendered to them by the Officials of Assam Legislative Assembly Secretariat attached to the Committee.

Dispur :
Dated 26th March, 2022

Shri Ramendra Narayan Kalita,
Chairman,
Departmentally Related Standing
Committee on Development (B) Departments,
Assam Legislative Assembly.

REPORT

CHAPTER-1

Fisheries and allied activities have been gaining importance in the last few years providing opportunities for livelihood and income generation. This important sector is also providing nutrition and employment opportunities. As result demand for technological support for shifting from traditional fish farming to scientific & intensive fish farming is increasing in the State. Considering the importance and potential of the sector, both Central as well as State Government has been supporting fisheries sector through various schemes. For fulfilling the dream of Honourable Chief Minister of Assam for promoting Assam among the top developed States in the Country, it is intended to contribute as much as possible from the Fisheries Sector not only by increasing fish production but also to develop supporting infrastructure and development of entire value chain system right from production to consumption as well marketing.

Assam has vast fishery resources which plays important role in providing employment, nutrition, women empowerment and livelihood security. State fish production during 2020-21 is 3.93 lakh MT. Assam has occupied the 5th top fish consuming States in the country with consumption of 11.72 kg fish per year. The State has become surplus in fish seed production. It is targeted to reach 15 Kg. fish per capita as annum by the next 3 years and to export fish to neighboring States and Countries through sustainable resource utilization.

RECOGNITION:

Assam has been awarded with four National Awards from the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India for outstanding contribution in Aquaculture in the country during 2020. Continuing the good performance in 2021, the Fisheries Department is again awarded with 3 National Awards from Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Govt. of India.

FISH AND FISH SEED PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS

Year	Fish Seed (Million Nos)	Fish (Lakh MT)
2016-2017	6578	3.07
2017-2018	8000	3.27
2018-2019	9893	3.31
2019-2020	9519	3.73
2020-2021	9886	3.93
2021-22 (Anticipated)	10831	4.32

For overall development of the sector Department's major functions are :

- To increase fish and quality fish seed production in the State with optimum utilization of resources.
- To implementation of Fishery related schemes of the Government of Assam and Government of India.
- To identify and promote research and studies on fisheries and fishery related areas so that benefit can be disseminated to the grass root level users.
- To collect, compile, analyze and make available adequate / relevant statistical and other information for proper planning to promote fish farming and related industries/ activities
- To prepare / support in preparation / vet project reports and proposals related to Fisheries and fishery related industries.
- To provide extension services to Fish farmers / fishermen and fishery entrepreneurs.

**PERFORMANCE BUDGET / ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF 2021-22,**

Particular	Allocation	Financial Sanction	Celling demand	FOC issued
SOPD (G+SCSP+TSP)	997.93	942.70	905.93	612.98
Blue Revolution / PMMSY (CS & SS)	4927.50	4927.50	4927.50	4916.28
RIDF (LS and SS)	1827.00	1827.00	1827.00	1552.67
EAP (SS)	44.51	-	-	-
TOTAL SFPD	7796.94	7697.20	7660.43	7081.93

**Present status of the scheme-wise activities implemented
during 2021-22 is as follows :-**

1. Fish & Fish Seed Farming – (General).
2. Fishery Extension Service.
3. Head Quarter Establishment.
4. Marketing and Transport of fish.
5. Salary for FFDA staff.
6. Grants-in-aid to Assam Fisheries Development Corporation Ltd.
7. Training in Fisheries.
8. Fish and Fish Seed Farming (SCSP)
9. Fish and Fish Seed Farming (TSP)
10. Centrally sponsored schemes (Pradhan Mantri-Matsya Sampada Yojana).
11. Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF).
12. EAP (SS).

CHAPTER-II

- 2.1 A total sum of Rs 14395.92 lakhs is required for approval of the House during the Financial year, 2022-23.

The total allocation of fund under Grant No. 54 for both Revenue and Capital sector for administration of Fishery Department during the financial year 2022-23 is Rs 14395.92 lakhs which is presented before the House for approval. The total amount so allocated is proposed to be spent in the Revenue Expenditure.

The detailed Budget allocation under Grant No. 54 as under.

Estimate of the amount required for the year ending 31st March, 2023 to defray the expenses in connection with the Administration of "FISHERIES"

	REVENUE	CAPITAL	TOTAL
VOTED	11354.01	3041.91	14395.92
CHARGED	0.00	0.00	0.00

Under the following heads, an estimated budget allocation has been fixed as shown below :

HEAD OF ACCOUNTS		
"2405"	Fisheries	11108.76
"2415"	Agriculture Research & Education	245.25
"4405"	Capital Outlay on Fisheries	3041.91
		14395.92

The amount so allocated is presented before the House and is proposed to be spent in the Revenue Expenditure and Capital Expenditure respectively.

The Committee examined Grant No.54 both major heads and minor heads and took evidence of the Departmental official.

The DRSC in its sitting held on 23rd March, 2022, examined the papers & documents received from the Department and took evidence of the departmental representatives. At the same time, the Committee considered the Action Taken Report on the Recommendations made in its 23rd Report presented to the House on 4th August, 2021.

A BIREF NOTE IN RESPECT OF GRANT NO. 54

For doubling farmers income, support livelihood and nutritional security, employment generation and overall growth of the State, Fisheries department has emphasized on promotion of fisheries and allied activities. To achieve this aim, strategies have been adopted including encouraging technology based fish farming, sustainable management and exploration of the resource, advancement in scientific fish culture with emphasis on best management practices, alternative fish system and fish health management and conservation of the resources. It is also expected that the activities taken up will contribute towards economic uplift of fish farmers, fishers and stake holders. Fish farming, as an economic activity, especially in the context to fish production, farmers are adopting practices for production of fish seed, the most vital input for the sector as a commercial venture with significant success. Thrust has also been given on achieving self-sufficiency aligning the activities with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

With a view to achieve the goals, the Department has been functioning with the following board objectives:

- Horizontal growth through construction of ponds and reclamation / renovation of existing ponds and areas.
- Vertical growth through productivity enhancement by adoption of intensification of aquaculture inculcation of improved technologies, best management practices and integrated approach in fish farming for vertical growth.
- Self-employment generation through scientific fish farming practice, ornamental fish business and value chain development.
- Sensitization and awareness for popularization of scientific fish farming and conservation of resources.
- Capacity building and skill up-gradation of farmers and extension functionaries.
- Infrastructure development for production of quality fish seed and fish feed to ensure availability of quality fish seed and making quality fish feed available at affordable price.
- Conservation of fish species through implementation of legal provisions of Assam Fishery Rules and Assam Fish Seed Rules.
- Empowerment of resource poor section of the society and women by getting them involved in fishery and related activities.
- Policy formulation related to fish and fisheries.
- Collate, compile, analyzed and making available adequate ./ relevant statistical and other information for effective planning.

PROPOSAL FOR THE YEAR 2022-23

Under Grant No.54 during the year 2022-23, total budget estimate proposed is Rs.15846.66 lakh including Rs.9325.00 lakh under State Fund for Priority Development (SFPD) as per the sectoral allocation, Out of the total budget proposed. Rs. 4093.00 lakh was under capital outlay and Rs. 11753.66 lakh was under revenue outlay. The revenue outlay consists of Rs.6521.66 lakh for establishment expenditure including salary, wages & non-salary and Rs. 5232.00 lakh under SFPD.

Against allocated amount under SFPD, amount proposed is Rs.4150.00 lakh for SOPD-G & ODS, Rs. 2806.00 lakh as central share of CSS. Rs. 311.00 lakh as State share and Rs. 1218.00 lakh for RIDF. Additionally an amount of Rs. 250.00 lakh for SCSP and Rs. 90.00 lakh for TSP has been allocated by WPT & BC department. Additionally, an amount of Rs. 500.00 lakh has been allocated under EAP targeting the “Assam Fisheries Development and Livelihood Project” for funding from JICA. Thus total allocation is Rs. 9325.00 lakh against which following activities are proposed.

- a. Fish and Fish Seed Farming (General)
- b. Grants-in-aid to Assam\ Fisheries Development Corporation Ltd.
- c. Fishery Extension Service.
- d. Head Quarter Establishment
- e. District Administration.
- f. Marketing and Transport of Fish
- g. Salary for FFDA staff
- h. Fish and Fish Seed Farming (SCSP)
- i. Fish and Fish Seed Farming (TSP)
- j. CSS Pradhan Matri Matsya Sampada Yojana.
- k. Rural infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF)

NEW SCHEMES:

- A. Geo-tagging, Geo-mapping & Development of MIS of Fishery Resources**
- B. Fisheries Development in Gorukhuti Bahumukhi Krishi Prakalpa are in Darrang District.**
- C. Construction of State Level Aquarium in Guwahati.**

ACTION TAKEN REPORT
ON THE OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED 23RD
REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENTALLY RELATED STANDING COMMITTEE ON
DEVELOPMENT (B) DEPARTMENTS ON GRANT NO.54

1. The Committee observed that expansion of activity related to fishery sectorate the most potential ways that can contribute not only in increasing fish production but also in providing employment opportunity and income generation to alleviate poverty in the state. Development of this sector for achieving self-sufficiency in fish production can be attained through proper planning supported with sufficient funding.

The Committee recommended that the Fishery Department should explore all possible sources for maximum funding for development of the sector. The Committee further recommended that Government should enhance present level of funding considerably in the state budget for development of Fishery Sector.

Action Taken :

Under Grant No.54, total Budget approved during the year, 2021-22 was Rs. 13100.91 lakh that includes Rs.7796.94 lakh for schemes under State Fund for Priority Developmnt (SFPD). During 2022-23 sectoral allocation earmarked for Fishery Department under SFPD is Rs. 9325.00 lakh, with about 20% increase. Sectoral allocation under SOPD is Rs. 4150.00 lakh during 2022-23 against the budget provision of Rs. 845.93 lakh during 2021-22 with an increase of about 5 folds.

Additionally, Finance Department has allocated Rs. 20000 lakh for excavation of 2000 lakh ha Revenue Village Community Tanks with fish farming inputs under RIAS (Rural Infrastructure Assistance to State Government), a new project under NABARD for the year, 2021-22. The Department submitted the detailed Project Report in the Finance Department in the month of November, 2021. The project will be implemented in all the districts of the State after approval.

Under CMSGUY, an amount of Rs. 48020 lakh has been allocated for excavation and fish farming, covering 5000 ha of Village Community Tank in the entire State. Survey is under process in all the districts of the State to accommodate under the project.

2. The Committee observed that the fishes from Bangladesh is illegally coming into the State through different routes, especially in the bordering districts affecting the market value of locally produced fishes.

The Committee recommended that the Fisheries Department should examine the matter and take necessary initiatives to stop such illegal practice.

Action Taken :

Considering the importance of issue as recommended by the Committee, All the Districts were already immediately with special attention to the bordering districts of Assam and Bangladesh viz Cachar, Hailakandi, Karimganj and Dhubri. The concerned District Fishery Development Officers were directed to examine the matter related to fishes coming illegally from Bangladesh and to take necessary initiatives to stop such illegal practices in co-ordination with district administration. Most of the districts reported that illegal fishes from Bangladesh could not be detected, but Cachar district has reported action like seizing of such illegal fishes vending in some markets. Few other districts intimated that periodic visit to the markets and trading points with Custom Officials will be helpful to keep record and to stop such illegal practices.

3. The Committee observed that a section of farmers is practicing tradition and unscientific methods of fish culture resulting in low fish productivity. Some of them are applying excessive chemicals and inorganic fertilizers in fish ponds which is a matter of concern for human health.

The Committee Recommended that the emphasis should be given on making the fish farmers aware on the following aspects: (a) Scientifically recommended methods of fish farming including different species combination for maximum sustainable production from the fish pond. (b) Encouraging farmers for application of organic manures in fish production These can be done through programmes like training and awareness. Additionally, Departmental field staff should frequently visit rural areas and suggest farmers to adopt such practices.

Action Taken :

All District Fishery Development Officers were directed to take necessary action and to sensitize the fish farmers through the field staff during their visit. Although due to Covid situation, not much of formal awareness programme were conducted, both the issue i.e. (i) scientific fish farming with recommend species combination and density for sustainable production and (ii) judicious use of fertilizers and thrust on use of organic materials were emphasized in the training and awareness programme conducted recently in different districts. Hon'ble MLAs and their representatives also graced in some of such skill development programmes with their valuable appeal to public on the issues. Efforts has also been made to pass the messages to the farmers through personal contact during field visits. Under APART, 57 field level training programme has been conducted by College of Fisheries, Raha where the issues were included in the topics. Additionally, the recommended issues have been incorporated in the publications, prints and advertisements published by the department with captions like "Please stop imprudent use of chemicals, fertilizers and antibiotics in fish culture. It is harmful for both fish and human health" The message has also been widely made available to the public through social media and mygov.in portal.

4. During the course of discussion, the Committee observed that there are fourteen villages (1200 families) around Deepor Beel Wetland, most of which are directly or indirectly dependent on Deepor Beel. Above 850 poor families belonging to Socio- economically backward scheduled caste and scheduled tribes have entirely been dependant their livelihood on fishing at Deepor Beel. But, due to declaration of an area of 4.10 sq km out of the total area of the Deepor Beel as Wildlife Sanctuary, thereby resulting in conflicting interest among various Government departments and due to lack of a conflict resolution mechanism, fishermen related with this Beel are losing their livelihood.

Thus the Committee is of the view that as the Assam Fisheries Development Corporation Ltd. is the only management authority of the Deepor Beel, so, the rest part of the Deepor Beel may be handed over to the AFDC Ltd. by the Government for development and management so that the Corporation is able to take alternative measure of rehabilitation, food and nutrition and security of the fishermen around Deepor Beel by introducing modern practices of aquaculture and development activities.

Moreover, the Committee also recommended the AFDC Ltd. to prepare a Master Plan for restoration of environment and ecology of the Deepor Beel and Water retention to keep the operational area of fish, wild birds and animals etc. along with the economic upliftment of fishermen.

Action Taken :

The Managing Director, Assam Fishery Development Corporation Ltd. has informed that follow up action for preparation of Master Plan for undertaking various development activities in

Deepor Beel as per recommendation of DRSC has already been initiated with constitution of a 3-Member Committee. Further action will be initiated once the remaining portion of Deepor Beel excluding the area of 4.10 Sq. KM which has been declared as Deepor Beel Wildlife Sanctuary out of total area of the Beel is handed over to the Corporation.

In this connection, it is pointed out here that a joint survey of the area will be carried out by Fishery Department through Revenue Circle Officer, Azara under DC, Kamrup (Metro) in presence of concerned Officials of Environment and Forest Department and AFDC Ltd to identify and demarcate the area of remaining portion of Deepor Beel excluding areas falling within Deepor Beel Wildlife Sanctuary so that same can be handed over to AFDC Ltd. to enable them to prepare Master Plan for rehabilitation of poor SC/ST people living in the vicinity of Deepor Beel who are mostly dependent on the Deepor Beel for their livelihood. The process is expected to be completed within 31st March, 2022.

5. There are potential areas in the hill districts for fisheries development.

The Committee recommended that the Department should take necessary initiative to survey potential areas for fishery development and increase more physical allocations in the hill districts. Development of swampy areas suitable for fish pond construction should also be explored.

Action Taken :

District Fishery Development Officers of the concerned district i.e. Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao were directed to take necessary action to survey potential areas for fishery development. Both the districts intimated that preliminary survey has been conducted and block-wise potential areas including swampy areas for development has been identified.

Physical allocation for different activities for these two districts during 2021-22 is mentioned below :

Dima Hasao: 1 ha of new seed rearing ponds, 1 ha of construction of new ponds with input and 2 ha for inputs for integrated fish farming, 2 nos of backyard ornamental fish units and establishment of 2 small biofloc units under PMMSY.

1 refrigerated four wheeler van, 1 Mini Fish Feed Mill and 6 three-wheeler fish carrying van with ice box under RDIF XXVI.

Karbi Anglong: (Including both Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong district).

2 ha of new seed rearing ponds, 2 ha of construction of new ponds with input and 4 ha for inputs for integrated fish farming establishment of 3 small biofloc units 3 motor cycle with ice box and 1 fish Kiosk under PMMSY.

2 refrigerated four-wheeler van, 1 Mini Fish Mill and 8 three- wheeler fish carrying van with ice box under RDIF XXVI.

Additionally, proposal sought for construction of village community tank covering 1 ha from each revenue village under CMSGUY and RIAs. Tentative target allocated under CMSGUY to Dima Hasao and Karbi Anglong district are 5 and 75 numbers respectively.

6. The Committee observed that the Fish seed and fish feed are the most critical inputs for fish production. Although the State is producing sufficient fish seed, there are some areas where availability of fish seed is not enough. Fish feed is insufficient in most of the areas hampering fish production.

The Committee recommended that the Department should establish more fish seed hatcheries with sufficient land for nursery, rearing & brooders tank, especially in the areas where it is not easily available for the farmers. Emphasis should also be laid in establishing fish feed mills in all districts. Sites should be selected strategically so that fish feed becomes easily available in the State specially in remote areas.

Action Taken :

As fish seed and fish seed are the two most vital inputs for success of fish culture, thrust has been given on these two aspects. As recommended by the Committee, all Districts Fishery Development Officers were directed to survey strategic sites for fish feed mills and seed hatcheries with sufficient land for nursery, rearing & brooders tank etc. for implementation of approved schemes under different programmes / projects.

Under Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), 26 fish seed hatcheries and 200 ha of fish seed rearing tanks has been approved during the last 2 years which are in different stages of implementation. Additionally, 120 ha of seed raising pen culture area have been installed for stocking in beel fisheries.

To address the shortage of fish feed in the State, 4 fish feed plants (capacity 100 MT/day) and 49 mini fish feed mill (capacity of 2 MT/day) has been approved by Government of India under PMMSY and under different stages of implementation. Similarly, NABARD has already approved projects comprising of 44 Fish Feed Mills (with capacity of 1.5-200 MT per day) under RIDF-XXVI, which will be commissioned during the current year in addition to that one Medium Capacity Fish Feed Mill (with capacity of 1.2-1.5 MT per day) is under commission in Darrange district under RKVY-RAFTAAR.

7. The Committee observed that it is essential to have sufficient technical manpower in the Department not only for overall development of the sector but also for according the recommendations forwarded by the DRSC. Lack of sufficient technical manpower leads to inadequate monitoring and supervision of project / scheme implementation and time over run.

The Committee recommended that in the previous year for establishment of full-fledged fishery offices in all districts & sub-divisions, including construction of office building remains stand. Process of creation on new posts of District Fishery Development Officers, Sub sufficient technical manpower leads to inadequate monitoring and supervision of project/ scheme implementation and time over-run. divisional Fishery Development Officers and supporting staff in newly created districts and sub-divisions is to be accelerated. Additionally, the Department should also expedite to fill up the vacant posts through appointment and promotion on a regular basis for bringing dynamism to the Department and successful implementation of plan and programmes. Considering increased volume of civil works and fisheries infrastructure development, it is recommended to create new posts under engineering wing, including junior engineers in the fishery Department. It also recommended that all concerned Departments including Finance Department should extend necessary support in expediting the proposals submitted by the Fishery Department.

Action Taken :

As regards observation of DRSC about lack of sufficient man power in the Department, it is submitted that

- (a) Recently a proposal for creation of 118 Nos new posts under Engineering Wing of the Department starting from Superintending Engineer at the top to plumber at the bottom submitted by the Director of Fisheries, Assam vide No. AF(F) 346/211-12/3296 dated 30.7.2021, which was processed and endorsed to Personnel (A) Department vide UO dated 9-9-2021. The Personnel (A) Department has returned the proposal for re-examination as well as filling up existing vacant post and finalization of Service Rule vide UO dated 30-09-2021.

As regards filling up existing vacant post, it is submitted that only junior Engineer level post are to be filled up by direct recruitment. Other posts are to be filled up through promotion only. It is submitted that at present 35 men are in position against Cadre Strength of 55 Nos Junior Engineer. Against the existing vacancy of JE. The process has already been completed for filling up 18 Nos. posts with selection of candidates by APSC and submission of Select list vide letter No.72 PSC/CON/Exam-22/2020-21 dated 19-2-2022. The process of appointment is expected to be completed shortly after completion of all required formalities.

- (b) As regards establishment of full-fledged Fishery offices in all district and sub-division including creation of new posts of District Fishery Development Officer & Sub-Divisional Fishery, Development Officer with required office staff, a proposal was proceed and approved by AR & T Department vide U/O dtd. 02-09-21 and by Personnel (A) Department vide U/O. dated 26-07-21. It was then moved to Finance Department. But Finance Department returned the proposal for re-submission with approval of Hon'ble Chief Minister vide U/O dated 27-12-2021. Accordingly, file was endorsed to Hon'ble CM. He has directed to re-submit the proposal in next financial year with completion of all required formalities including rationalization of the proposal vide his order in File No. Fish 112/2020.

As per the recommendation, an amount of Rs. 500 lakh has been proposed in the Budget Estimate submitted for the current year 2022-23 for construction of new district / sub-divisional Meen Bhawan in phased manner.

As regards promotion and appointment, 29 Fishery Development Officers were promoted to the rank of Sub-Divisional Fishery Development Officers in July, 2021, 7 District Fishery Development Officers promoted to the rank of Deputy Director of Fisheries and 2 Deputy Director of Fisheries promoted to the rank of Deputy Director and Joint Director of Fisheries for the administrative convenience and smooth implementation of various departmental activities. Additionally, 7 new appointments were made in the rank of Fishery Development Officer in January, 2022.

8. The Committee observed that prevailing leasing practices of beels under AFDC Ltd, in the previous year, is not a healthy practice from development perspective.

The Committee recommended that in addition to giving thrust on increasing production for generation of revenue from the beels, AFDC Ltd. should ensure transparent and unbiased leasing practices. The Department should take necessary action in this regard and collect report from AFDC Ltd and conduct the enquiry on the issue as recommended in the previous year and submit enquiry report in due course of time. Fishery Department must strictly look into the matter of the beel leasing and extension process, utilization of fund etc as and when felt necessary. The Department should also arrange a combined visit along with the district administration, local MLA and other concerned, to Kapla Beel, Barpeta District to examine the prevailing situation of beel development and the issues and conflicts related to encroachment etc Henceforth, AFDC Ltd. should also ensure timely appraisal of detail of beel development activities for all AFDC beels including details of the tendering/leasing process, contractors and lessee involved to the MLA concerned.

Action Taken :

As regards observation/ recommendation of the DRSC regarding prevailing practice followed by AFDC Ltd. for leasing out Fisheries under its jurisdiction, the Deputy Secretary of Fishery Department was entrusted to inquire into the matter and submit report for follow up action. Accordingly, the Deputy Secretary sought for details of such fisheries of AFDC Ltd. vide letter No.FISH 159/2018/173, dated 29-1-2021. But he could not complete the inquiry despite several attempts to visit the office personally as office was found closed due to Pandemic Covid-19. Accordingly, he submitted a report vide letter No. AFDC/560/2020/Pt-I/30-A dated

22-07-2021 which was not at all satisfactory. Accordingly, the matter was brought to the notice of the DRSC through the Principal Secretary, Assam Legislative Assembly vide letter No. FISH 159/2018/184 (eCF No.740946) dated 21-10-2021 as the matter was already delayed.

Now, under the circumstances, Govt. in Fishery Department intends to make a thorough inquiry regarding lease of fishery as well as Beel Development with constitution of a Committee headed by the Secretary to the Government of Assam, Fishery Department with 2/3 officers including one Joint Secretary & Sr. FA of the Department / FAO of the Directorate.

9. The Committee observed that there is no Co-ordination between Tourism and Fisheries Departments for proper management of the Dighali Pukhuri for making the place much more attractive for tourist interest. Specially the Fisheries Department needs to collaborate with the Tourism Department to stop which as the mortality rate of fishes in Dighali Pukhuri is increasing day by day .

Therefore the Committee recommended that a good coordination should be made between Tourism and Fisheries Department. The Fisheries Department should come forward to extend their technical support providing a technical officer for stopping fishery related issues arises thereon with the collaboration of Tourism Department.

Action Taken :

After the incident of death of fish in large scale reportedly due to low level of oxygen at Dighali Pukhuri last year, the matter was reviewed by Director of Fisheries, Assam on 1-7-2021 in the light of decision in the high level meeting held on 30-6-21 taken by the Hon'ble Minister, Tourism etc. which was attended amongst others by Additional Chief Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Tourism etc.

District Fishery Development Officer, Kamrup was directed to take immediate measures to cease fish mortality in Dighali Pukhuri and to coordinate with Tourism Department for proper management. Accordingly, the DFDO, Kamrup in consultation with the Directorate of Fisheries coordinated with Tourism Department and assigned one Fishery Development Officer and one Fishery Demonstrator for management of fishery related issue in Dighali Pukhuri and to extend technical support including maintenance of water parameters. The assigned officers visited the site, tested the water quality and took measures and as result the instant problem of fish mortality was resolved. No fish mortality has been reported at present.

It is submitted that now efforts are being made for better coordination between Fishery and Tourism Departments for management of Dighali Pukhuri.

As regards better coordination with Tourism Department for management and development of Dighali Pukhuri, steps have already been taken to make it a viable project in close coordination with Tourism Department. The Government in Fishery Department proposes to constitute a Coordination Committee with officials of both Fishery & Tourism Department and a joint meeting with all stake holders is being contemplated shortly.

GRANT NO.54
OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE YEAR, 2022-2023

The Committee after holding a threadbare discussion and on close scrutinization of the Report related to Grant No.54, Fishery Department and the evidence tendered by the Departmental Representatives, made the following Observations & Recommendations.

1. The Committee appreciated the Fishery Department as well as the fish farmers of the State for availability of sufficient locally produced fishes.

However, the Committee opined that although most of the ponds and tanks constructed under the flagship scheme Ghare Ghare Pukhuri Ghare Ghare Maach have been completed, some beneficiaries are yet to receive the final installment.

The Committee recommended Finance Department to release the fund at the earliest so that Fishery Department can do the needful for payment of the eligible amount the beneficiaries at the earliest.

2. The Committee observed that based on the action taken on the recommendation of the previous year, illegal fishes coming in the State from Bangladesh has been controlled to some extent, but not yet fully stopped.

The Committee recommended that the Fisheries Department should constitute a Task Force for the purpose, especially in the Bangladesh bordering districts with support from District Administration.

3. During the course of discussion on the recommendation made during the previous year regarding preparation of a master plan for holistic development of potential part of the Deepor Beel, there is scope for accelerating the process for restoration of livelihood opportunities and socio-economic development of the beel depended fishing community.

Thus the Committee is of the view that Assam Fisheries Development Corporation Ltd. as the management authority of the Deepor Beel should take necessary initiatives in the this regard and to formally communicate with Deputy Commissioner through the Government for handing over of the permissible area of the Deepor beel for sustainable development and management.

The Committee also recommended the AFDC Ltd. should submit the list of all beels under the corporation to the Committee indicate the beels proposed to development with funding support from SOPD / other sources.

4. The Committee observed that although the technical manpower of the Department has been partially strengthened considering the development prospects of the sector and the extent of activities already taken up, the present level of manpower is not sufficient for adequate monitoring and supervision of project / schemes and their timely implementation.

The Committee strongly recommended that Fishery Department should expedite the process for establishment of full-fledged fishery offices in newly created districts and sub-divisions including both office buildings and sufficient technical and ministerial staff. Moreover, it is recommended that staff should also be sufficiently increased in the existing district / sub-divisional establishments.

Recommendation of the Committee in the previous years for creation of new posts under engineering wing, including junior engineers in the fishery department remains stand. Considering increased volume of civil works it is further recommended to create new posts of SE, Assistant Executive Engineer in each zone/division and Assistant Engineers in each district for smooth implementation of the schemes.

5. The Committee observed that many large water area / beel fisheries are lying underutilized which can be taken up development providing opportunities for livelihood and self-employment generation.

The Committee recommended that AFDC Ltd. should identify such potential areas for future development with special reference to two potential large beels in Tongia GP of Lumding LAC under Hojai District which has 700 Bighas of land cover pond under Lumding Dev. Block needed to be converted to notified the Beel for cultivation of fishes in consultation with the local MLA..

6. The Committee expressed satisfaction on the action taken by the Fishery Department in resolving the issues related to fish mortality in Dighali Pukhuri which is under the control of Tourism Department.

The Committee recommended that technical support related to fish and fisheries in Dighali Pukhuri from Fishery Department should continue. Moreover, the Committee recommended that Fishery Department should communicate with Tourism Department for a joint meeting to specify responsibilities of Fishery Department on Dighali Pukhuri.

With these observations, the Committee recommends that the total amount of **Rs. 14395.92 lakhs** as sought for, under Grant No.54 Fisheries for the financial year, 2022-23 be approved by the august House.

The Action Taken Report on the recommendation may be submitted to the Committee within 90 days from the date of presentation of the report in the House.