

# SILK STATE

Third Edition

November 2019

## SERICULTURE FIELD VISIT DURING THE 2ND WORLD BANK MISSION



*Mission team during their field visit*

A field visit of the 2nd World Bank Mission Team headed by Shri Vinayak Ghatate and accompanied by the Sr. Agri. Specialist and Rao Saheb Bendre, Agriculture Specialist, OPIU-Agri, the Director of Sericulture, Assam, Nodal Officer for APART, OPIU- Sericulture, and Officers from the ARIAS Society. The team visited Chayani Borduwar area in Kamrup District (South) on 16th September 2019 to review the field activities of the Silk value Chain taken up by the Department of Sericulture under APART. The visiting team held interactions with the beneficiaries besides reviewing the following activities:

- Govt. Eri Seed Grainage and eri beneficiaries

- Private Muga Graineur, namely Shri Pabitra Rava at Falafang village and his ongoing grainage activity with a target for 2.50 kg of muga dfls.

The visiting team advised on improving the quality in the field activities and aligns them towards the objectives and target of the project for vertical progress rather than horizontal progress. Since Muga and Eri culture is the pride of Assam and Assamese culture, Shri Vinayak Ghatate, Sr. Agri. Specialist further advised that there should not be any lapse in the implementation of the activities. All valuable suggestions extended by the team during their observations were well noted for compliance.

## TRAINING OF DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS



*Participants during the training programme*

4-day intensive training on the latest technologies developed by Central Silk Board on Eri & Muga Sericulture was held from 19th to 23rd August 2019, the training session also covered topics on the development of Managerial, Personal, Communication and Motivational Skill was. A total of 20 Departmental Sericulture Officials, from different cadres viz Demonstrator, Inspector, Manager, Asstt. Manager,

Superintendent, Extension officer, Project Officer, Reeling Expert and Assistant Director from all the APART districts were trained during the said training. As the part of the training programme, the trainees were also taken out for one-day study visit to Udalguri, BTC and exposed to different promising eri sericulture activities both at state Govt. and Farmers level.

### EXPOSURE VISIT OF SERICULTURE OFFICIALS

A team of eight (8) Sericulture officials from six (6) different districts of Assam visited different Research Institutes at Bengaluru and Mysore including the Cocoon market at Ramanagaram, developed by the Central Silk Board(CSB)

in the State of Karnataka from 8th to 12th August 2019. During this exposure visit, they were made to understand the latest and improved sericulture technologies and know-how, outside the state.



*Exposure Visit Team at Ramanagaram Cocoon Market*



*Exposure Visit Team at Reeling Division, C.S.B. Bengaluru*

### MONITORING OF ONGOING ACTIVITIES ERI BENEFICIARIES' FROM OPIU-SERICULTURE DURING SEPTEMBER 2019



*Construction of Eri Rearing House by Smt. Tutumoni Phukan at Lahdoigarh in Jorhat District.*



*Som plantation by one muga beneficiary Shri Debajit Dihingia at Demao Khelua block in Sivasagar district*



*Apprising the Eri beneficiaries in Jorhat district about the Eri Economics & income generation under the project modality*

## HANDLOOM AND TEXTILES AWARENESS PROGRAMME UNDER APART

A total of Fifty (50) Awareness programmes is planned in the five undivided project districts (including 3 newly declared district). The main objective of these different programmes is to create awareness among the weavers and entrepreneurs about APART. Till October 2019, 14 nos of

programmes were conducted covering 5 project districts viz., Kamrup, Sivasagar, Jorhat, Lakhimpur and Sonitpur, Sivasagar District (including Charaideo), Sonitpur District (including Biswanath) and Jorhat districts.



*Participants attending the awareness programmes*

### EXPOSURE VISIT OF DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS

An exposure visit of departmental officers was conducted from 16th July 2019 to 24th July 2019 to Hyderabad, Pochampalli, Dharmavaram and Bengaluru. A total of ten

officers from the five undivided project districts participated in the programme.



*Officials during the exposure visit*

### FIELD VISIT AND DISCUSSION WITH IIT-GUWAHATI

During the World Bank Second Implementation Review Mission, field visits have been conducted to IIT-G for discussion and demonstration of the technologically improved loom and visit to the Incubation & Design Centre

of Tata Trust at Bijoynagar on 18th September 2019 along with team members from World bank, ARIAS Society and Directorate of Handloom & Textiles, Assam.

### ERI SILK IS THE ONLY “AHIMSA SILK” OF THE NORTH EASTERN REGION

Compiled By: Dibakar Choudhury  
Handloom Textile & Sericulture, Technical Officer, OPIU

The process of creating ahimsa silk begins in one of two ways: either the pupa is allowed to hatch and the leftover cocoon is then used to create silk, or the cocoon may be cut open, achieving much the same result but often saving the resultant material from contamination by urine from the hatching moth.

Eri silk of Assam is the only Ahimsa Silk in which the pupa flies away after its maturity and the cut cocoon is used in the spinning process to make the yarn. It is also referred to as the “Ahimsa Silk” or the “Peace Fabric” as the pupae are not killed to obtain the silk. The traditional method of killing cocoons for reeling mulberry silk is an ethical problem for

animal activists. To make one pound of the finest silk, 2600 silkworms must die.

The climatic condition prevailing in the entire North Eastern Region (NER) is suitable for commercial exploitation of all four varieties of silk i.e., Mulberry Silk, Tasar Silk, Muga Silk & Eri Silk. Specially Assam has a favourable agro-climatic condition for healthy growth and development of the Eri Silk.

The rearing of Eri silkworm is known as Eri culture. Eri is also known as Erandi or Endi. The north-eastern state of Assam has been the home of Eri silk. Eri culture is an integral part of the rural economy as it provides economic activities, especially for rural and tribal women. They utilize their leisure time in the rearing of Eri silkworms and weaving of Eri fabrics using their traditional knowledge. Eri silkworms belong to two species, namely *Samia Ricine* and *Philosamia Recine*. Among these two, *P. recine* is domesticated and fed on castor leaves and it produces white or brick red silk. The name Eri is derived from the Assamese word "Era" which means castor. Eri is the only completely domesticated silkworm other than *Bombyx Mori*, the Mulberry silk. The other food plants include Tapioca and Kesseru, Papaya. Eri

is grown as a multi voltine. It takes ten days to hatch for the eggs. The moth is allowed to emerge. Hence the

filaments are not continuous. Since they are not uniform in thickness and cannot be reeled they are spun to produce Eri silk yarn. The ease in growing the food plants everywhere makes Eri culture a possibility in almost every part of the country.

The main qualities of ahimsa silk are derived from the idols surrounding the concept of Ahimsa. This allows the silk to be manufactured without harm to the beings that created it. These idols appeal to religions like Jainism, Hinduism, and Buddhism whose followers forego all injury to other forms of life. Non-violent lifestyle proponents have more recently found peace silk to be in keeping with their way of life. These arguments while valid for many other reasons have not been conclusively proven to affect the actual physical structure of the cloth itself.

Bhutan and Nepal have consumed a huge number of Eri silk products for religious purpose. The quality of the eri silk product is very much popular among these countries.



*Different Eri Silk Products*

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