

SUCCESS STORY

Carp Yearling Farming Brings New Hope to Rural Assam

Rupak Kr. Taye*, Animesh Deka & Bhabesh Ch. Deka
Krishi Vigyan Kendra, AAU, Nagaon, Assam-782192
*Email: rupaktaye89@gmail.com

Received: 22 August 2025
Revised: 28 August 2025
Accepted: 29 August 2025
Published online: 2 September 2025

Article ID: SR01028

Citation: Taye, R.K., Deka, A. & Deka, B.C. (2025). Carp Yearling Farming Brings New Hope to Rural Assam. *Scientia Review*, 1(3), 43-44

Background

In the heart of Nagaon district lies the quiet village of Jalahgaon where Mr Bilal Ahmed was born and raised. Coming from a humble farming background, his family depended largely on agriculture and small-scale fish culture for their livelihood. In 2012, he owned a 5 bigha pond that had been constructed without any scientific design or technical advice. The pond was shallow in some places and lacked proper water inlets and outlets which are essential for healthy fish growth. Due to these limitations, his fish production was low and inconsistent which meant that the income generated was barely enough to cover the costs of feed and maintenance.

Mr Ahmed had an interest in fish farming from a young age but without proper technical know-how and resources, his dream of running a profitable aquaculture venture seemed far away. The situation changed when he decided to explore new ways to improve his farm and sought guidance from experts.



Situation

By 2012, it had become clear to Mr Ahmed that his fish farm could not continue in its existing state. The unplanned pond structure made management difficult and water quality could not be maintained throughout the year. The yield was poor and the returns were too low to reinvest in better inputs. Competition from other farmers who used improved farming methods meant that his fish could not fetch higher market prices.



Financial constraints were also a major obstacle. Without sufficient profits from the farm, he could not afford to buy quality seed or modern equipment. This created a cycle of low productivity and low income. The need for a

turnaround was urgent if he was to sustain his livelihood and provide a better future for his family.

Response or Initiative

In 2013, Mr Ahmed approached the Krishi Vigyan Kendra in Nagaon to seek technical advice. The KVK experts assessed his situation and suggested that he could adopt the practice of producing stunted fingerlings which was proving to be a profitable aquaculture activity in Assam. They invited him to attend a skill training programme where he learned about pond renovation, water quality management, seed selection and feeding strategies.

As part of the Front-Line Demonstration programme on carp yearling production, he was given hands-on experience in modern fish farming techniques. This included stocking ponds with high-quality spawns, ensuring proper aeration, feeding with nutritionally

balanced pelleted feed and maintaining hygiene to reduce fish mortality. The exposure to these scientific methods convinced him to make a fresh start.

At the beginning of 2014, he purchased fish spawns from West Bengal and Odisha and started culturing them using the improved practices he had learned. By the end of the year, he was selling carp yearlings and earning around Rs 2.5 lakh annually which was about four times more than his initial investment. Encouraged by this success, he expanded his operations by purchasing one hectare of land and leasing an additional two hectares in nearby villages. He also benefited from a Government of Assam fisheries scheme with a project cost of Rs 1.92 lakh which helped him acquire better equipment and inputs.

Challenges

The transformation from a small traditional fish farm to a modern aquaculture unit did not happen without challenges. One of the first hurdles was renovating and expanding the pond area to meet scientific standards. This required both financial investment and physical labour. Managing larger ponds meant that he had to learn advanced water management techniques to maintain optimal oxygen levels and prevent disease outbreaks.

Another challenge was sourcing quality seed consistently. To address this, he built strong connections with reliable hatcheries in West Bengal and Odisha. Feed



management also posed difficulties at first since switching from farm-made feed to pelleted floating and sinking feeds required careful planning and budgeting. Additionally, introducing new technologies like paddle wheel aerators involved learning how to operate and maintain them effectively.

Despite these challenges, his determination and willingness to adopt new methods allowed him to steadily overcome each obstacle.

Result or Impact

By 2024, Bilal Fish Farm had grown into a profitable enterprise with an annual turnover of Rs 14 lakh. The farm was producing 100 quintals of carp yearlings every year and supplying them to local farmers at reasonable prices. This not only improved the income of



Mr Ahmed's family but also benefited the wider farming community who could now access quality seed without travelling long distances.

The farm also became a centre for learning. Both the Krishi Vigyan Kendra and the District Fisheries Office began using it as a demonstration site to train other farmers in modern aquaculture techniques. Through these activities, Mr Ahmed indirectly contributed to improving fish farming standards in the region. His work generated four direct employment opportunities in the village and inspired several youths to consider aquaculture as a career.

His efforts were recognised in 2024 when he received a letter of appreciation from the Krishi Vigyan Kendra during the Entrepreneurs Meet for his excellence in fisheries and his role as a model for rural youth.

Future Potential

Looking ahead, Mr Ahmed has ambitious plans to diversify his farm's activities. He is particularly interested in breeding and culturing air-breathing fish and eel species which have high market demand. To prepare for this, he has already constructed a cemented tank dedicated to eel culture and completed a 15-day study tour to Bangladesh where he learned advanced techniques in eel breeding and management.

With his growing experience, willingness to innovate and strong market network, Bilal Fish Farm has the potential to become a regional leader in diversified aquaculture. By introducing new species and expanding seed production capacity, he can create more employment opportunities and contribute to food security and economic growth in Assam.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest