

Establishment of a Rice Museum at BRRI

Rice is not only our staple food but also a part of our history, heritage, tradition and culture. Rice security is synonymous with food security in Bangladesh. BRRI has set up a rice museum (Fig. 1), the first of its kind in the country, at the BRRI premises in Gazipur to collect, preserve and display material and tools related to the heritage and history of rice farming in the country and also to acquaint visitors with the chronology of transition of traditional culture to modern technology based rice farming in the Bangladesh. This KGF funded project was designed to help BRRI scientists collect exhibits of rice-based heritage and cultural tools, rice germplasm, traditional tools used in rice farming and specimens of major rice insects and diseases for display at the BRRI Rice Museum.

Methodology

The concerned BRRI scientists made field visits throughout Bangladesh to collect: i) documents, photos, paintings and other memorabilia related to the history, traditions, culture and heritage of rice farming, ii) seeds and plants of local and high-yielding modern rice varieties grown in diverse agroecosystems, iii) traditional and modern tools, implements and machines used in rice cultivation, iv) specimens of harmful and beneficial insects and pests, diseases and weeds affecting rice plants. The project work also entailed creation and maintenance of records of the exhibits collected, developing narratives for presentation to visitors and making preparations for systematic display at the museum galleries.

Results and Outputs

For the Rice Museum, the first of its kind in Bangladesh, BRRI collected and put on display: (a) replicas of the rice plant at different growth stages, (b) samples of 24 paddies, parboiled and



Fig. 1. The BRRI Rice Museum, BRRI Central Station, Gazipur (source: BRRI web page)

un-parboiled samples (Fig. 2) of BRRI developed rice varieties (placed in three-chambered display boxes), (c) more than 350 traditional rice germplasm from different parts of the country (preserved in glassware), (d) thirty-five samples of different rice products and by-products (preserved in glassware), (e) display material of BRRI developed rice production (around 50 samples) (f) samples of major rice insects, pest, diseases, and weeds along with symptoms (around 100 samples), (g) traditional and rice tools and types of machinery (around 150 samples), (h) landscape replicas of rice-based heritage and cultural practices (Fig. 3), (i) murals of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Hon'ble Prime Minister Shaikh Hasina made of rice also collected and displayed, and (j) historical books on rice (Fig. 44). These exhibits were displayed to visitors of the BRRI Rice Museum.



Fig. 2. Some BRRI developed rice varieties on display at the BRRI Rice Museum



Fig. 3. An old painting of rice landscape and cultural practices on display at the BRRI Rice Museum

Expected Impact

A rice museum, the first of its kind in the country, has been established at the BRRI central station, Gazipur which displays material and tools related to the heritage and history of rice farming in Bangladesh highlighting the chronology of transition of traditional culture to modern technology based rice farming in the country. Some samples and showpieces for display at the rice museum are growth stage replicas of the rice plant, 324 paddies, parboiled and un-parboiled samples of BRRI developed rice varieties, more than 350 traditional rice germplasm collected from different parts of the country, different rice products and by-products (around 35 samples), around 50 items to showcase BRRI developed rice production technologies, around 100 samples of major rice insect pests, diseases and weeds and symptoms of infestation, traditional rice production and processing tools and machinery, historical books on rice etc. This museum presents a total picture of rice farming and agricultural transformations in Bangladesh. It is a knowledge hub, especially for farmers and new generations of Bangladeshis as it preserves and showcases all rice varieties and the farming history and culture of Bangladesh.

Recommendations

- The establishment of the first rice museum of the country is meant to showcase rice farming, the prime agricultural tradition and heritage of Bangladesh in its entirety to future rice researchers and common visitors; the display materials need to be carefully preserved.
- Collection of display items from across the country needs to be continued to add to continually add to the diversity and volume of the showpieces the museum exhibits.

This Technical Bulletin has been prepared on the basis of technical information available from a completed BKGET-KGF Funded Project, the details of which are given below:

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