CASE STUDY (1)

Story of Sumati Bala Barman: A small Entrepreneur of Agomani

There is a village called Gharialdanga situated 8 k.m. away from Agomani Development Block under Dhubri district. The village is mostly inhabited by Koch Rajbongshi people and they are primarily engaged in farming and allied activities along with other subsidiary non farm activities for their livelihood. From this village an entrepreneur who produces *Muri* and *Chira*, a special type of local food item, has been randomly selected. This micro enterprise is owned by Srimati Sumati Bala Barman, age 47 years. Her family consists of 4 members, two sons and one daughter. Sumati is a primary passed person. Her husband had no agricultural land except a small piece of homestead land and he worked in other’s farm on casual basis. Previously Sumati was a housewife and looked after the family. After sudden death of her husband the burdens of maintaining family fell on her.

Since Sumati came from a farmer family and hence, she was expert in some works such as, boil the rice seeds, harvesting and threshing. These are the traditional skills which a rural woman gets from her parents and in laws. Hence after the death of her husband, she started commercially selling of *Muri, Chira* and *Akhai* in her locality. The demand for *Muri, Chira* and *Akhai* is very high in the local markets. This is because these are very common food items of the local people.

In the year 2000, Sumati has invested a sum of Rs. 5000 as fixed capital for starting the activity, of which Rs.3000 has invested for construction of one room for producing the food items and for utensiles she has invested Rs.2000. She borrowed the funds from her brother without any interest. Regarding working capital investment presently she is invest-
ing Rs.6500-8000 per month for purchasing raw materials and other requirements. In this establishment she did not employ any hired workers. But her daughter and son help her as part time basis. Her elder son Suresh (23 years) helps her directly in carrying raw materials from the local market and distributes the finished food items in different markets of the locality. Sumati is now just engaging herself in producing activities and entire marketing looks after by her son Suresh. The production method is totally traditional in nature.

The activity is perennial in nature, on the average Sumati manufactures about 200-300 k.g. of Muri-Chira monthly and sell them out at the rate Rs30 Per k.g. of Muri, Rs 35 per k.g. of Chira and Rs 60 per k.g. of Akhai. To produce the same, she spends Rs.6500-8000 per month as working capital. Net profit accrued per month by Sumati is Rs. 3000-4000. At present she sell the finished products in the markets of Gharialdanga, Agomani, Pokalagi, Chagoliya and Halakura.

Future Vision: Sumati and Suresh like to remain in the same business. She is hopeful about the future prospects of the manufacturing of Muri-Chira-Akhai. She wants to expand the production activity by installing new machine (As the producers in Kochbihar and Tufan Ganj use the modern machines to produce Muri). For this reason she seeks Govt. assistant.

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