

2. A BEEKEEPER'S STORY



At Nongthymmai, a village located at Bhoirymbong, beekeeping is an activity that has been practiced for generations. The people of Nongthymmai believe that a house with bees is an active and healthy household. Earlier people would take up beekeeping as a hobby, but now it has become a key income generating activity for many households in the area.

One Shri. Stevenson Shadap of the village started beekeeping out of passion but soon realised its economic potential. He registered himself at the Umsning EFC to get accurate technical knowledge on beekeeping and was given training at RRTC in Umran. Upon completion, Shri. Shadap expanded his bee colonies and started extracting more honey than before. He also began packaging his honey and selling them at markets in Nongpoh and Shillong.

Today Shri. Shadap earns at least ₹1,00,000 and up to ₹2,00,000 annually through the sale of honey. In fact, he states that the demand for good quality honey is so high that he is not even able to meet his own local market demands. This year he plans to increase his number of bee colonies by 10 or 20 boxes.

The community at Nongthymmai is trying to strengthen its beekeeping activities as a collective endeavour by establishing a beekeepers' society through which it aims to scale up honey production, improve packaging and marketing of honey, and even start producing honey-based value added products. Shri. Shadap himself is hopeful that with the launch of the Apiculture Mission in the State, he and his community members will be able to access a wider platform on which to market and sell their honey, and profitably carry on this livelihood activity that was passed down through generations.

(Courtesy: www.mbda.gov.in)