The process was repeated and one more “snake” emerged. The third time there was no “snake”, and my father assured him that he had cleared all the evil spirits that were haunting him.

Rice conservationist Dr Debali Deb has been working with local communities to make farmers independent of large corporations and GM crops and to help secure their access to local seed varieties.

“Thus the probability of finding heirloom rice varieties is much higher in the mainstream villages,” he says. “In rice-growing areas, the smallholder farmers have far fewer rice varieties which he collected from the indigenous farmers. Usually only one to five rice varieties would have been grown, and we have identified at least 35 to 50 varieties which he had not modernized his farming system. Even though his rice varieties were old and small, simple PRRS was not expected to succeed, providing him with an early warning sign.

One such example was EIRAL, a double-crop variety, Sujoy Deb, “The farmer, Kumala Kanta Jana from Bishnupur district, had heard about the seeds, but he was not ready to accept the seeds from us at first. We were almost ready to give up the project. He decided to grow the seeds, and his yield was higher than his expected yield.”

“Somehow, the farmer is trying to protect the rice seeds. If he tries to protect the rice seeds, then it is likely that the farmer will get better yields. We have observed that the farmer is happy to grow rice and show his yield.”

Deb’s work has been well received by the farmers. He has been working with communities for over a year and has helped them to understand the importance of indigenous rice varieties. He has also been successful in increasing the farmers’ awareness of the benefits of using local seeds.

The farmer, Kumala Kanta Jana, from Bishnupur district, had heard about the seeds, but he was not ready to accept the seeds from us at first. He decided to grow the seeds, and his yield was higher than his expected yield. Deb’s work has been well received by the farmers. He has been working with communities for over a year and has helped them to understand the importance of indigenous rice varieties. He has also been successful in increasing the farmers’ awareness of the benefits of using local seeds.

Deb’s work has been well received by the farmers. He has been working with communities for over a year and has helped them to understand the importance of indigenous rice varieties. He has also been successful in increasing the farmers’ awareness of the benefits of using local seeds.