



Channelling water from the sea to production area

Poor Men and the Sea



Collecting the gift of the sea



Dressing the bed

AKM Mohsin arrests different phases of salt production in frames



Levelling the bed

Living within the Limits

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH: Farmer Ayub Ali Shah has proved that no exertion goes in vain and every good effort has its rewards. Now Ayub takes great pleasure in his success, which has ultimately given him more courage.

This year Ayub has cultivated wheat on three bighas, cotton on two bighas, garlic on 20 decimals, onion on 23 decimals, cauliflower cabbages and turnip on 25 decimals in a planned and systematic way. Also many vegetables like chilly, pumpkin, green leaves and radish were cultivated on his land. At times, he cultivates different crops at the same time to get more profit.

When this correspondent visited some agricultural plots of Ayub Ali, he saw that all the plots were cultivated in a planned way. All his cattle-heads were cleaned regularly. A good environment was prevail-

ing there. Two of Ayub's sons were studying in school. Both of them were meritorious, Ayub informed.

He also informed that he had been earning at least sixty thousand taka every year from his lands excluding all expenses.

When asked, Ayub said that many farmers were motivated to see his success and the number of good farmers were increasing in his locality as he supplied good quality seeds among the farmers so that all the farmers of the area should become self-sufficient. Ayub was also happy to see the success of other farmers and believed that all of it was due to him.

Some established fruit vendors said that they were facing serious problems to send fruits from the south western districts due to disruption of ferry services at Daulatdia ghat of Padma river. A huge quantity of perishable fruits are perishing in the loaded truck at the ferry ghats when unavoidable situation arises due to hartal or traffic jam. If there were fruit processing industries in the south western regions they would not incur losses in such situations, they added.

The experts of fruits, vegetables and allied products said that the concerned department of the government should come forward to take initiatives for establishing the Agrobased Industries and Technology Development Project (ATDP) in south western districts for greater interest of fruit growers in the region.

Fruit Growers Left in Cold

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA: A huge quantity of fruits produced in the country's south-western region rot every season due to absence of processing industries and adequate number of cold storage.

Seasonal fruits like banana, jackfruit, guava, melon, papaya, jujube (borai), lemon and coconut grow aplenty in most districts of the region. Available statistics puts annual production of banana in greater Jessore, Khulna and Kushtia districts at 90,000 to 100,000 tonnes; jack fruit at about 75,000 tonnes; guava at 4,500-5,000 tonnes; watermelons at 18,000-20,000; lemon at 4,000-5,000 tonnes; and coconuts at about 48,000-50,000.

According to the growers and vendors, 35 to 40 per cent of seasonal fruits are wasted every year due to the absence of fruit processing management and shortage of cold storage facilities.

in the cold storages, most of the fruit growers are not in a position to store fruits like banana, melon, jackfruits for selling in future to get a higher price. As a result, the poor growers are compelled to sell their fruits at a nominal price of their produce.

While talking to a group of growers of watermelon and tomatoes in greater Jessore district, this correspondent came to know that the poor and marginal growers of watermelon, tomatoes, jackfruits find it difficult to preserve their produce. Due to abundant supply of their produce in different markets, the prices of these fruits have come down. As a result, price is much less than the production cost.

The government did not take any initiatives for setting up fruit processing industries in the south-western districts. Jam, jelly, powder and juice could be produced from seasonal fruits.

It was learnt from the concerned sources that a huge quantity of processed fruits like jam, jelly and juice are imported from the USA, Bhutan, India and other countries.

Whereas, here, a huge amount of fruits perish due to lack of fruit processing management. A huge quantity of different varieties of borai and guava are grown in the region. Due to lack of fruit processing, most of the borai and guava are perishing.

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An age-old mode of fruit processing ... a village girl preparing pickle of jujube (borai). — Star photo by Monojit Kumar Das



Sad Story of an Old Widow

"I was given neither any relief nor the money allocated for elderly citizens," complained Julekha Khatun of Kabirpur, a village in Sailkupa thana of Jhenidah.

She is more than a hundred years old. It's been a long time, more than sixty years, since her husband died, and her son used to earn for the family. He has grown-old, too, and is jobless now. Her daughters have their own families to take care of. The old woman lives on the mercy of others.

With the help of a stick, she walks from one door to another, begging for whatever she gets. At the end of the day, she gets ten to fifteen taka, hardly enough for the two-member family, one of her grand daughters lives with her. They don't even have a place to stay.

Local leaders, ward commissioners and chairman of the union parishad have not been of any help either. No VGF card, no allowance, no government help. She doesn't know why she is being deprived.

— From Delwar Kabir, Jhenidah

Prelude to a Glorious War

From Monojit Kumar Das

MAGURA: Heroic contributions of the general people and student community of Magura in the non-cooperation movement called by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in March, 1971 were glorious.

The all-party student action committee was formed here at the beginning of March '71. Munshi Rezaul Haque, the then president of Magura sub-divisional Chhatra League became convener of the Student Action Committee (SAC). Rostom Ali, Abu Naser Bablu, Jahidul Islam Baku of Chhatra League, Mostafa Mazed, Sharif Amirul Hasan Bulu of Chhatra Union (Menon group), Samshur Rahman and Golam Ambia of Chhatra Union of (Matia group) were the members of the student action committee.

While talking to advocate Sharif Amirul Hasan Bulu, the then member of the student action committee, he told this correspondent here that the SAC continued to arrange many meetings and rallies in different places of Magura for success of the non-cooperation movement. The movements of that time were so much strong and heroic that all people including women and the elderly and children came out from their houses to take part in the non-cooperation movement with them.

The first public meeting was held at Magura Nomani Maidan on March 3 after the non-cooperation movement had been called by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on March 1. Late Advocate Asaduzzaman, one of organisers in the Liberation War '71 and MP of liberated Bangladesh, was the chief guest at the mass gathering of Nomani Maidan. The map-marked flag of Bangladesh was hoisted after the end of the meetings with the student action committee chanting slogans 'Joy Bangla' at Nomani Maidan.

The general people including the student community and political leaders of the country listened to Bangabandhu's historical address of March 7 from Radio Pakistan in the morning of March 8. According to this historical address of Bangabandhu the local political leaders formed a "Sangram" committee taking the representatives of all sections of Magura town. Late Advocate Asaduzzaman was the chief of the Committee. Among others late Mir Taiybur Rahman, Khondokar Abdul Mazed, Advocate Nasirul Islam, Sayed Mahbubul Haque, S. A. Siddiki, Altaf Hossain, A. Fatah, Advocate Abul Khayer, A. Jalil Sardar, late Afzaruddin Mridha and others were in the committee. Advocate late Sohrab Hossain, the then elected representative of the Pakistan National Assembly (then minister in Bangladesh Government), Sayed Afor Ali,

the then elected representative of the East Pakistan Assembly (he died during the liberation period serving in the Bangladesh government in exile) were also actively involved with the Committee.

Advocate Sharif said, the main office of the "Sangram" Committee was established in a tin-shed house of an Ansar camp at Nomani Maidan of

Magura town. The non-cooperation movement and the preparation of the liberation war operated from this office, he added.

Through the above-mentioned achievements and leaders, the people of Magura, women, children and the elderly, were inspired to take part in the Liberation War.

Arhar gains popularity

MAGURA: Cultivation of Arhar (red gram) is gaining popularity in different areas of the district's four thanas. Arhar is a shrub about two to two and a half metres in height.

According to the Agriculture Department, the soil of Magura, Jhenidah, Kushtia and northern region of the country is suitable for arhar cultivation. The food value of its pulse is very high. Two to two and a half metres height arhar plants function as fencing of land, houses, embankments, roads and gardens. On the other hand, dried arhar trees are largely used for fuel.

Arhar has been cultivated in the vast areas by the sides of different embankment of canals and roads of the district. Huge areas on both sides of the Ganges Kobadak Canal's embankments and the puca road of Magura-Sripur, Magura-Muhammadpur are covered by green plants of arhar or red gram at present. Many farmers are also cultivating arhar in their land.

Mohammad A Salam, secondary school teacher of the district, told the correspondent that red gram cultivation is very profitable for its multi-purpose use. He cultivated red gram on the border areas of his Masalia residence for fencing and meeting demand of pulse and fuel. He expected that he would get 60 kg to 65 kg red grams in his two decimals of land. The dried plants would be used for fuel of cooking purposes. More people in their areas have come forward to cultivate red gram in their areas, he informed.

According to the Agriculture Extension Department (AED), arhar, which is also called Pigeon Pea, is sown from April to June and the early varieties are harvested in January-February and on the other hand late varieties are harvested in April. Usually the matured plants become bushes which are used for fencing. The average yield is 330 kg per acre, the sources said.

Local experts urged the concerned authorities to take massive initiative for expanding Arhar cultivation to meet the high demand of vitamins from Arhar pulse.

Marauding Rivers in South Leave Thousands Homeless

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL: River erosion continues in ominous pace in different areas of Barisal, Patuakhali and Barguna districts under Barisal division in the southern region as the water level in some rivers decreased alarmingly.

Meanwhile, several thousands acres of cropland along the riversides, several hundreds of educational institutions, business establishments and dwelling houses have already been devoured by the rivers.

As a result hundreds of families have lost their homes and are living under open sky either on the embankments or in make-shift shanties.

Rivers Arial Khan, Sandhya, Sugandha in Barisal; Tetulia, Karkhana, Buragaurangav, Rannabad, Agunmukha, Andharmanik in Patuakhali; and Baleswar river in Barguna are still engulfing huge areas with cropland, dwelling houses, bazaars, educational and religious institutions, and organisational establishments in Hazipur, Baherchar, Amrakhali, Dhulia, Keshabpur of Banfal Thana, Kakhin Pan Patti, Geramardam, Bibir Howla, Tungbaria, Katakhal, Felabunia, Taktabunia, Chalitabunia, Chinabunia, charkajal, char-Mahiuddin of Galachipa thana, Gangarchar, Patar-char, Bholaising, Hazrat, charmuni and Bani-shbaria of Dashmina thana of Patuakhali.