

Tea production may fall 1.5m kg short of target

Officials blame drought-like situation in last 2 months

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

Tea production in the country this year will remain a little behind the target due to the drought-like situation in last 2 months, officials said.

After the serious setback caused by floods and inclement weather during June-August, tea gardens enjoyed an even rainfall in September, which helped the highly sensitive crop to recoup the damage.

But absence of rain in the crucial months of October and November caused a serious blow to the commercial crop, they said.

There is no scope to reach the target, according to AFM Badrul Alam, Director of Bangladesh Tea Research Institute (BTRI).

The drought-like situation has retarded the growth in gardens he said.

This year, the production may be about 56 million kilograms against

the target of 57.5 million kilograms. Last year, 56.7 million kilograms were produced, he added.

"By now it is clear that there is no scope to recoup the huge damage caused by the floods as the sensitive crop depends on nature's behaviour, Alam said.

Same was the view of AKM Doulatul Islam, Manager of Malnichhera Tea Estate in Sylhet, one of the oldest tea gardens in the country. He said, the weather behaved "totally erratic" in last two months compared to the situation in the previous year, he told this correspondent yesterday.

Normally, November sees light rains almost every year, which is very much beneficial for the crop.

This year, tea production may fall short of the target by at least 10 per cent, he added.

The June-August floods had caused a large-scale damage to the

industry for the first time in many years. Waters rolling down the natural canals through the gardens in the region due to excessive and continued rains damaged the crop heavily. The waters swamped plantations and nursery areas in many tea gardens while many roads, labour colonies, small culverts and bridges were also badly damaged.

A record rainfall in July and August this year coupled with insufficient sunshine was harmful for tea plants.

The period from May to August is considered very important for tea production. It plays a vital role in tea production.

Besides, there were incidents of landslides in many gardens this year. The infrastructure damage in the affected tea garden areas due to floods was estimated at over Tk10 crore, said an official source.

Over 50 tea gardens in Monu-Dholoi, Lashkarpur, and Balisera tea

valleys were badly affected by the sudden floods. Several hillocks had also collapsed.

The country's tea production was a little better last year compared to previous years due to a favourable weather and a "reasonable amount of rainfall" in the main tea-producing region.

Tea is the largest agro-based industry in the country. There are 160 tea estates producing around 55 million kilograms of 'made tea'. Roughly two thirds of this is consumed at home, while the rest is exported.

Bangladesh earns about Tk 1500 million in foreign exchange annually by exporting tea.

The sector contributes to 0.81 per cent of the GDP and employs about 0.15 million people, which is about 3.3 per cent of the country's total industrial employment.

4,000 telephone lines in Barisal still out of order

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

About 4000 digital telephone lines in Barisal city are out of order since Wednesday morning.

Around 1000 important telephones belonging to high officials and professional including some journalists have been kept operative through emergency measures. But their numbers have been temporarily changed.

Sources at the divisional telephone exchange said they can not say when the lines will be restored.

The massive disorder occurred after the hard disk drive (HDD) of the central processing unit (CPU) of main frame distribution (MDF) section, installed by ITALTEL company of Italy, crashed.

Locking-unlocking and meter reading systems in the exchange have also collapsed, they said.

Sub-assistant engineer Sharif was sent to Narayanjanj in search of a similar CPU. But he returned disappointed on Friday as a spare CPU was not available there. The Narayanjanj telephone exchange was also installed by ITALTEL.

CPU manufactured by any other company does not fit in the Barisal exchange, they said.

ITALTEL has no representative or office in Bangladesh.

The Barisal exchange will be reactivated when a CPU will be brought from Italy and installed, they said.

When contacted yesterday, Divisional Engineer Jagadish Chandra Mondol and engineer-in-charge of switch room Shariful Islam said they are trying their best to restore the lines.

Renovated Zainul Sangrahashala ready for celebrations

5-day birth anniversary programme begins Dec 25

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

The renovated Zainul Abedin Sangrahashala in the town on the bank Old Brahmaputra river is ready to celebrate the 90th birth anniversary of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin.

The authorities of the Sangrahashala has undertaken a five-day programme from December 25 to 29 on the occasion.

The programmes included children's painting competition, discussion meetings, cultural functions and holding of a Zainul Fair on its campus at Shaheb Quarter Park area in the town. The cultural functions will be held at the open-air stage every afternoon.

To make the programmes a success, a preparatory meeting was held recently with Deputy Commissioner Shah Alam Bakshi in the chair.

The renovated and spruced Sangrahashala on a 3.20 acre area has taken a festive look with a lush green lawn and an open air stage.

According to sources, the renovation work done by the National Museum authorities at a cost of Tk six crore and fifty thousand was started in 1992 and completed in June this year.

The project included construction of boundary walls, cottage for the artists, open air stage, approach road, main gate, ticket counter, repair and beautification of rooms, development of the garden, installation of fire fighting equipment and purchase of accessories.

Multimedia projector and sound control system for hall room and dehumidifier for the gallery have been installed, its Deputy Curator Dr Bijoy Krishna Banik told this correspondent.

He also said that the open-air stage will be rented for cultural activities and the hall room will be rented for seminar, workshop and art exhibition.

Artists from different areas of the country will flock there with their paintings. This will give people to buy their paintings at cheaper rates, he said. The artists will also do painting work at the complex.

The Sangrahashala was inaugurated on April 15, 1975 by the then Vice President Syed Nazrul Islam.

The museum was run by a committee formed by the district administration and local elite as per an understanding with Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin, founder of the museum.

The National Museum took over its responsibilities in 1999. It started development work to make the art museum attractive for the artists, cultural activists and people.

A total of 69 articles used by the Shilpacharya contained in big glass boxes are also on display.

The articles include brush, ink-pot, spatula, scraper, a leather made portrait holder, carbon box, colour tube, colour palette, turpentine bottles, linseed oil, need pen, spectacle, charcoal, wax, metal clip and brush holder.

"These are very valuable and we should preserve these for our future generation", said the Deputy Curator.

The works of the great artist on display include paintings on famine, a malnourished child on her mother's lap, a woman with a pitcher on her waist, portrait of Kazi Nazrul Islam, Monpara 70 and others.

The art museum remains open from 10.30 am to 4.30 pm from Saturday to Wednesday. On Friday it remains open from 3.30 pm to 7.30 pm.

The rush of visitors has increased after the renovation, the sources said. Now, over 100 visitors from different areas of the country visit the museum.



Parul Begum chasing ducks towards her farm in the afternoon. She became self-reliant by starting a duck farm without taking loan.

Self-reliant without loan

Paraul earns Tk 2000 to Tk 2500 a month from duck farm in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

It was a challenge for me when I started duck farming, said Parul Begum.

"I needed to do something to supplement my family income to ensure education of my sons but many in the area opposed."

Parul, a village woman, now owns a duck farm at Chotoshiba village, about 50 kilometres east of Galachhipa upazila headquarters in Patuakhali.

Parul, who crossed only primary level education, earns Tk 2000 to 2500 a month from her farm and adds it to

the income by her daylabour husband Shafiq Gayi.

They have a happy family with three sons - Monir, 12, Masum, 10 and Mamun, 8.

"I was inspired by an elderly man Zafar, who owns a duck farm in the village. He advised me to set up a duck farm to fulfil my dream of higher education for my sons", she told this correspondent during a visit to the village last week.

There are 250 ducks in her farm. She collects around 100 eggs every day from her farm. Her husband sells the eggs in the local market.

Thirty year-old Parul Bagum said

her husband works in farmlands as a daylabour and earns only Tk 40 to 50 a day, which is not enough for buying even rice for her family.

She earlier worked as a maid in a house in the village. He saved Tk 5 a day. When her savings reached Tk 500, she bought five ducks and started her farm.

Her husband Shafiq is helping her in maintaining the farm.

She did not take any loan from any NGO or government.

Parul's success inspired Rina Begum, Aleya Begum and Sandha Rani of the area. They have also started small duck farms.

Bangla TV, UK to build houses for Sylhet flood victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Bangla TV, UK, a community TV channel in Britain, will construct houses for 200 poor families in Sylhet who lost their houses during the devastating floods this year, its officials said here on Friday.

Its officials, now on a short visit to Bangladesh, addressed a press conference at Sylhet Press Club.

Syed Samadul Haque, Managing Director of the Bangla TV, UK, said they have raised funds for the rehabilitation work from the Bangladeshi community in UK and 42,000 Pounds have so far been collected.

Bangladesh's Honorary Consul General in UK Dr. Wali Tosor Uddin, MBE and JP, Bangla TV Chairman Firoz Khan, Former

Councillor of Tower Hamlets Borough Council MA Rahim, Bangla weekly Notun Din Editor Mohib Chowdhury and Community leader Shafique Chowdhury helped us in raising the funds, Samadul said.

"We visited Motulibazar Sadar, Rajnagar, Golapganj, Balaganj and Nabiganj upazilas in the last 3 days and have formed a committee to list the affected people", Samadul said. A local firm would be entrusted with the task of construction of the low cost houses of same type.

Dr. Wali Tosor Uddin, MA Muhit and Bulbul Chowdhury also attended the press conference.

'Notorious' criminal nabbed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A 'notorious' criminal was arrested by Kotwali police from Rathkhola red light area in Faridpur town on Tuesday.

The criminal is Ershaduzzaman Dollar, younger brother of former top terror and Khulna City Corporation commissioner Asaduzzaman Litu who was killed by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in a crossfire recently.

Dollar's three associates, Abdullah, 25, Anjon, 33, and Shahid Khan, 25, were also arrested at the same time.



A view of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Sangrahashala (museum) in Mymensingh town.

Two killed in Rajshahi road accident

RU CORRESPONDENT

At least two persons were killed and 15 others were injured seriously in a road accident in front of Rajshahi Fire Service Office near Dewanpara Intersection in Rajshahi city on Friday.

A victim was identified as Atiqul, 30, while the other one could not be identified.

Injured persons include Sagar, 40, Nasrin, 22, Silva, 33, Hasan, 42, Anwar, 28, Zahid, 32, and Motaleb, 35. They were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH).

According to police, the accident occurred when a Dhaka-bound bus fell into a roadside ditch as its driver lost control over steering while trying to save a child from accident.

Police and Fire Service personnel rushed to the spot and recovered the bodies.

Swadhinata Chikitshak Parishad workers' meeting in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A meeting of Rajshahi divisional workers of Bangladesh Swadhinata Chikishok Parishad was held at Gano Unnyan Granthagar auditorium here on Friday.

Bogra unit of the Parishad organised the meeting where Awami League leader Dr Mostofa Jalal Mohiuddin was present as chief guest. Prof Dr AFM Ruhul Haque and Prof Dr Iqbal Arslan, president and secretary general of the organisation were present as special guests.

The meeting was presided over by Dr Mostofa Alam.

Dr Rokeya Sultana, Jalal Uddin Chowdhury, Tabirur Rahman Sheikh, Boduzzaman Bhuyea Dablu, Ahasun Habib Helal, Sayed Shafiqul Alam, Mohammed Sohel, Hedayetul Islam, SR Talukder, Mohammed Abu Taleb, NC Boro, Masud Biswas, Golam Rabbani and Somir Hossain addressed the meeting.

FALSE DECLARATION Tk 50 lakh goods seized from Bhomra port

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Imported goods including turmeric and green chili worth Tk 50 lakh were seized by BDR and Customs officials jointly from Bhomra Land Port last week.

The goods were imported from India by false declaration, according to Customs and BDR officials.

Messrs Chowdhury Enterprise of Chittagong imported 30 tonnes of turmeric after opening a Letter of Credit (LC) of two tonnes from India and Messrs Sadman traders of Khalishpur, Khulna imported seven tonnes of green chili after opening letter of credit (LC) of two tonnes.

Clearing and forwarding agents Messrs Azmir Traders and Kabir Enterprise (C&F) in connivance with a section of officials and staff of Customs released the goods.

Being informed Captain Zahir of 12 Rifles Battalion raided the loaded trucks and seized imported turmeric and green chili worth Tk 21 lakh.

Meanwhile, Messrs Masud International of Khulna opened

Letter of Credit to import 15 tonnes of potato from India but he imported 15 tonnes of cumin instead of potato.

On suspicion, Customs Superintendent Belal Hossain checked the loaded trucks and found their irregularities.

'Drug lord' beaten by mob

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A 'drug lord' was beaten by mob on Wednesday.

The criminal is Hezal Sarwar, 40. Mob attacked him as soon as he came out of his Sonadanga house.

Later, he was handed over to police before being admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH). Police recovered heroin from his house at the same time. His house also came under attack by mob. Helal is a trader of heroin bought from India, according to Sonadanga Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC).

SNAPS

Bagerhat Shibir leader arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

An Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) leader was arrested from Bagerhat town on Tuesday on charge of demanding extortion and giving death threat to a government official. The arrested person is the secretary of ICS, Bagerhat district unit, Abdur Razzak Chowdhury, 32. He threatened the district education officer (DEO), Mohammad Imran Ali to face death for his failure to pay illegal toll amounting to Tk 20,000. According to Bagerhat Sadar police, the ICS leader was arrested following a general diary (GD) lodged against him by the DEO on Monday. The same night he was sent to district jail.

Tragic!

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

A young woman at Krishnapur village near Benapole committed suicide by taking poison after killing her child last week. The woman is Monjura, 25. She killed her one and a half years old daughter Marjam by feeding pesticide and before committing suicide. The unfortunate incident is a sequel to a quarrel over family affairs with her husband Ayub Hossain. Police recovered the bodies and sent those to Jessore 250-bed hospital morgue for autopsy.


Outlaw nabbed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

An outlaw was arrested from Phullata upazila by the joint forces on Wednesday. The arrested person is an armed cadre of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-Janajuddho), Kamrul Shikder, 28, son of Nawab Ali of Bhabanipur village in Rupsha upazila. According to police, he was involved in killing Nalhati Union Parishad (UP) chairman Golam Faruque, Ghatbhog UP member Ajmal Ali, freedom fighter Abdus Sattar Shikder, Rupsha Police Station Sub-inspector Abu Bakar Siddique and Havelidar Ahsraf Ali. All the murder cases were recorded with Rupsha Police Station from 1999 to 2002. Kamrul is being interrogated.



Dr Mostofa Jalal Mohiuddin addressing the Rajshahi Divisional Workers' Meeting-2004 of Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad held at Gano Unnyan Granthagar auditorium in Bogra recently.



পাওয়ার গ্রীড কোম্পানী অব বাংলাদেশ লিঃ

POWER GRID COMPANY OF BANGLADESH LTD.

(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

Red Crescent Concord Tower Tower, 17, Mohakhali C/A, 6th Floor, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh.

No. 01/PGCB/Sec/04/3491

Date: December 15, 2004

INVITATION FOR BIDS

BANGLADESH NATIONAL LOAD DISPATCH CENTRE PROJECT

ADB LOAN NO. 2039-BAN

1. The People's Republic of Bangladesh has applied for a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) towards the cost of Power Sector Development Program (Loan 2039-BAN) and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for Design Build and Turnkey Contract for Construction of the National Load Dispatch Centre (NLDC). Bidding is open to bidders from eligible source countries of the Asian Development Bank.
2. The Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Limited ("the Employer") invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for design-build and completion of the National Load Dispatch Centre (NLDC) including the site survey, design, manufacture, transportation, supply, erection, testing and commissioning of Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA), Energy Management System (EMS) and Communications System, the NLDC building and minor civil works ("the Works"). It will include the installation of approximately 100 RTUs at substations and power stations and approximately 1,450 km of fibre optic cable on HV transmission lines throughout Bangladesh. The Bid Document shall require that the Bidders meet the following minimum experience and capability requirements:
 - a) To have successfully project managed and executed at least three (3) similar turnkey projects of a similar nature and complexity within the last 10 fiscal years, incorporating SCADA, EMS, RTUs and communications systems for a power utility; each project with a value of at least USD10M. At least one of these projects will have been executed outside the bidders own country;
 - b) To have successfully executed, including design, assembly, supply, installation and commissioning, at least three (3) communications projects of a similar scope, nature and complexity incorporating SDH communications networks on fibre optic cable based communications systems within the last 10 years. Each with a value of at least USD10M.
 - c) To have successfully installed and commissioned at least 500km of fibre optic cable under HV live line conditions within the last 10 fiscal years;
 - d) The bidders must have experience of interfacing Fibre Optic System with Substation equipment such as SCADA/RTUs, Protection Relays, Breakers & Protection Signaling Equipment. The bidders must have successfully installed and commissioned at least three (3) such projects where integration of Fibre Optic System with High Voltage Equipment in Substations of 220KV and above were required.
 - e) The bidders must have capabilities in integrating differing types of communication systems such as Power Line Carrier, Fibre Optic, Microwave, and Telephony in a Utility environment.
3. Bidders may obtain further information from, and inspect and acquire the bidding documents, at :
The Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Limited
7th Floor Red Crescent Concord Tower
17 Mohakhali Commercial Area
Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh, Fax +880-2-9888501
4. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders on submission of a written application to the above office, and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of USD400.00 (United States Dollars Four Hundred only) or Tk. 24,000.00 (Taka Twenty Four Thousand only) in the form of a Pay Order/Demand Draft in favour of the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Ltd.
5. A two-stage, two-envelope bidding procedure will be adopted. Bidders are to submit simultaneously two sealed envelopes, one containing the technical proposal and one containing the price proposal. Initially only the technical proposals which are submitted by non-qualified bidders or which are not substantially responsive are rejected. The substantially responsive technical proposals which have been submitted by qualified bidders are discussed with the bidders and bidders are requested to adjust their proposals to reflect the changes and amendments requested by the Employer. The bidders are further requested to submit a supplementary price proposal which contains the changes in price resulting from the discussed changes in technical proposals. The original price proposal and the supplementary price proposal are opened simultaneously in public.
6. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of United States Dollars one million (USD 1,000,000) or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency, and must be delivered to:
The Company Secretary
The Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Limited
7th Floor Red Crescent Concord Tower
17, Mohakhali Commercial Area, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh
at or before 10:00 am (BST) on 20 March 2005. The bid security must be included with the technical proposal.
7. The technical proposals will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
8. The price proposals and supplementary price proposals, if provided, of the bidders whose technical proposal is considered responsive will be opened in the presence of the bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the time and date and at the address to be advised by the Employer after approval of the ADB of the evaluation of the technical proposals.
9. In the comparison of bids, the employer will grant a margin of preference to eligible goods manufactured in the Employer's country in accordance with the procedures outline in the bidding documents.
10. PGCB will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by bidders in connection with the preparation or delivery of bids including costs and expenses related to visits to the sites of installation of the Works.

(Mohammed Salim)
Company Secretary