

Bumper year for Boro in Ctg

DWAIPAYAN BARUA

With the harvested paddy giving higher yield than projected ones Chittagong region now expects a bumper production of Boro this year.

The farmers here have already harvested over 10 per cent of the paddy from over 2.30 lakh hectares of land with a target yield of over 8,86,161 tonnes of rice in this region.

Of them, some 12 per cent was harvested in Chittagong, eight per cent in Cox's Bazar, 20 per cent in Noakhali, 14 per cent in Laxmipur as of last Sunday, said the sources at the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) here.

The DAE officials said, Boro harvest is expected to cross the projected production since the reaped paddy of both HYV (high yielding variety) and hybrid variety brought forth yield higher than what was set at the national level.

The harvested paddy of hybrid variety had a yield of six tonnes rice per hectare as against the projected national yield of 4.70 tonnes per hectare.

The harvested BRRI 28 paddy of high yielding variety, commonly known as Uchha Falanshil (Ufshi), also brought higher yield of four tonnes per hectare as against the targeted yield of 3.7 tonnes per hectare.

The production would cross the projected target further when the farmers will start harvesting BRRI 29 of higher yield, DAE officials said.

Sources said the farmers are now busy in harvesting as 24 per cent of the cultivated Boro became matured in Chittagong

district, 65 per cent in Noakhali, 20 per cent on Feni, 20 per cent in Laxmipur and 25 per cent in Cox's Bazar.

However, harvesting paddy of any of the local variety is yet to start, they said.

Good weather and supply of necessary fertilisers, insecticides and pesticides under the close monitoring of the district administration helped the region witness bumper production of Boro, said the DAE officials.

Mentionable, this year Boro was cultivated on over 2.30 lakh hectares of land in five districts including highest 73,065 hectares in Chittagong, 53,138 hectares in Noakhali, 35,820 hectares in Cox's Bazar, 30,853 hectares in Feni and 27,188 hectares in Laxmipur.

Of them, high yielding Ufshi was cultivated on 1,85,000 hectares, Hybrid on 43,080 hectares and local variety on 1983 hectares.

The farmers in different upazilas and unions in Chittagong district are harvesting Boro for the last two weeks.

While visiting Gumaibil under Rangunia upazila, one of the two largest Boro producing areas in Chittagong, on Sunday the farmers were seen all in smile with the bumper harvest.

Ali Akbar, who cultivated over 1 acre of land with a local variety of Boro, said sufficient supply of fertiliser at subsidised rate helped them making good production.

He said it would take two to three weeks to complete the Boro harvest of Gumaibil.

Workers were found busy in husking the paddy at the yard of Maokkarram of Najarettilla village under Rangunia who cultivated BRRI 28 and BRRI 29



Farmers carry harvested Boro paddy in the Gumaibil area under Rangunia upazila. The photo was taken on Sunday.

on his 2 acre of land.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ashraf Shamim hoped that cent per cent harvest could be completed within May 20 if the present favourable weather existed.

"We recruited officials from different government departments like social welfare, food, agriculture to monitor supply of fertiliser at union level under the supervision of local UNOs," the DC said.

The district administration is preparing for procurement of harvested paddy directly from the farmers.

"We have already instructed the concerned government officials and urging the concerned upazila chairmen for arranging transport facilities to bring the rice at government

godowns immediate after collecting those from local markets," DC Ashraf Shamim said.

"We are expecting a bumper production this year if rain or storm doesn't hamper the harvest or damage the standing crops," said DAE Chittagong Additional Director Abul Kalam Azad.

"As such we have advised the farmers to go for harvest if 80 per cent of paddy in a single sheaf is matured," he said.

Though a small quantity of Boro on some 115 hectares in Laxmipur district and some 10 hectares at Mirersarai upazila in Chittagong district were attacked by Bacterial Leaf Blight (BLB) disease it would not have any effect on the production, said Azad.

Plan to build 67 more cyclone shelters in coastal areas

SHAHIDUL ISLAM

To withstand natural calamities like cyclone and tidal upsurge, government will build 67 more cyclone shelter-cum schools in the seven coastal upazilas of Chittagong district.

Sources said the district administration recently sent a list with a proposal for constructing new multipurpose shelters to the ministries concerned.

When constructed, the number of cyclone shelters in the entire district will rise to 470 in 14 upazilas.

They said the cyclone Sidr in mid-November last year had ripped through the southern belt and wrought devastating havoc along the coasts of Barisal, Patuakhali, Bagerhat, Khulna, Barguna and other coastal districts taking away scores of lives of both human and livestock.

At that time, Chittagong was also under great threat of Sidr, albeit escaped the wrath of nature. The administration had toiled hard during its pre-cyclone preparations to evacuate coastal people to safer places because of the inadequate number of shelters and miserable condition of the existing shelters. As emergency measures, the district administration then opened up different schools to provide shelter to the coastal people and that reality prompted them to realise the necessity of many more cyclone shelters in those vulnerable areas.

The upazilas where the proposed shelters will be built are: Anwara, Banskhali, Sitakunda, Mirersarai, Chandanaish, Satkania and Sandwip.

Sources said the shelters would be used for multi-purpose, both as cyclone shelter and school.

"Of the 67 shelters, 34 will be used as secondary school and 33 as primary school purposes before or after any natural disaster," said Abdul Halim, district relief and rehabilitation officer.

The shelters will be constructed jointly by ministry of education and relief to be financed by a foreign agency he said without elaboration. He couldn't give details about the budget for the proposed shelters or the name of the foreign agency.

Halim said construction of more shelters are badly needed as Chittagong is under a threat of another cyclone named Nargis predicted on May 2 to hit Bangladesh coast.

The official, however, refused to make any comment on the miserable condition and poor maintenance of the 403 existing shelters in the 14 upazilas of the district.

Sources said 50 per cent of the cyclone shelters require more or less repair work on emergency basis. Otherwise, large scale devastation and casualty are feared to take place in any repetition of the cyclonic storm like that of April 29, 1991.

They said around 64 shelters, out of 90, in the offshore upazila of Sandwip are in a vulnerable condition and requiring urgent repair for keeping them usable for the people of this highly disaster-prone area, which was devastated completely in 1991.

Anwara is another vulnerable upazila where 40, out of 60 shelters, are in very bad shape now, they said.

An additional deputy commissioner of Chittagong, on condition of anonymity, said alongside the construction of new shelters they need steps to repair the existing ones.

He said they will also try to turn some of those existing shelters into multipurpose one.

Jamuna Oil declares 15pc dividend

Jamuna Oil Company Limited declared 15 percent dividend at its 32nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) in the port city on Saturday for its shareholders for the fiscal year 2006-2007.

The company Chairman and Power and Energy Ministry Additional Secretary Mohammad Wahidunnabi Chowdhury presided over the meeting.

Wahidunnabi in his speech said the company earned a profit of Tk 30 crore 26 lakh and 68 thousand this fiscal year excluding income taxes which is 104 percent higher than the previous year.

He also placed future plans for development of the company.

Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation Chairman Anwarul Karim, Energy Ministry Joint Secretary Mohammad Ataur Rahman and Deputy Secretary Syed Matlubur Rahman, the company Managing Director Mohammad Masudur Rahman, Secretary Mohammad Nazmul Haque and corpo-

rate management members also attended the meeting.

Rice distributed among the poor

Katalganj Residential Area Welfare Association distributed rice among the poor people of the area on Monday.

A total of 210 people received five kilograms of rice each from the association.

On the occasion, Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Acting Mayor M Manjur Alam was present as the chief guest with the Association President MDM Jalal Uddin Chowdhury in the chair.

Manjur in his speech assured the association leaders of taking special measures for development of roads and drains of the residential area.

CCC Chief Executive Officer AKM Khairul Alam, Executive Officer Abu Saleh, Chawk Bazar Ward Commissioner Syed Golam Haider Mintu, Association General Secretary Dr MA Mannan and Vice President Mohammad Yasin Chowdhury also spoke.



Visitors admire the photos at a solo photo exhibition titled 'Disastrous April 29' of photojournalist Shisir Barua at Chittagong Press Club on Tuesday.

Professor Moniruzzaman speaks at a function welcoming the Bangla new year at the Bengali Department of City University College on Wednesday.

NDC team meets CCCI leaders

A 45-member team of National Defence College (NDC) visited Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) and exchanged views on different issues relating to trade and commerce with the chamber leaders on Sunday.

The delegation, comprising senior military and civil officials from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, China, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Sudan and the UAE was headed by Lt Gen Abu Tayyab Mohammad Zahurul Alam, the commandant of NDC.

CCCI President Saifuzzaman Chowdhury presided over the view exchange meeting and briefed the NDC delegation about different activities of the chamber.



Participants perform dance at the prize giving ceremony of the talent hunt competition 'Marks all rounder' at Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) Chittagong auditorium on Wednesday.

Samaj Kalyan Samity executives

Annual General Meeting (AGM) and biennial election of Bangladesh Samaj Kalyan Samity, a social welfare association, was held on Monday.

A 17-member executive committee was elected for the year 2008-2009 in the election conducted by Md Fakhruddin and Rafiq Ahmed

Chamber Vice President Mahbubul Alam and directors Mohammad Amirul Haque, Syed Jamal Ahmad Mahfuzul Haque Shah, and Fahim Ahmed Faruk were present among others.

Later, a multimedia documentary on investment prospects in Chittagong was presented before the delegation.

Prof Kamrunnesa adjudged best teacher

Chittagong Divisional Commissioner

Hossain Jamil said a person can shine in his or her life through hard working with devotion.

He was addressing as the chief guest the 'Best teacher' award giving ceremony at Agrabad Women's College in the port city on Saturday.

Prof Begum Kamrunnesa of Physics Department of the college was adjudged the 'best teacher' of the college for the year 2007 at the ceremony held with Secretary General of Agrabad Residential Area Socio Cultural Association (ARASCA) ABM Rezaul Karim in the chair.

Chairman of Chittagong Educational Board Dr Muhammad Yusuf and Director of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Major Md Zulfikar Ali Mazumder were the special guests.

College Principal Anwara Alam urged all the teachers and students to work for upholding the goodwill of the college.

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