

Farm sector

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dance with the drumbeats to celebrate the beginning of Boro harvest. Fakhruddin Ahmed in his speech expressed satisfaction that the farmers have achieved a bumper Boro production this season and the grand rally was organised to honour the farmers.

He called around two crore farmers "national heroes" who have contributed to the building of a food security blanket. He also congratulated agriculture scientists and agriculture officials at the grassroots level.

He called upon the farmers to continue the pace of their success with bumper production of Aush, Aman and other crops also.

He said the country's farmers have produced at least 1.75 crore tonnes of rice this year by cultivating about 45 lakh hectares of land, which is much better than what the authorities had anticipated.

The government is purchasing rice from farmers at Tk 28 per kg this year while the rate was Tk 18 last year, he said, adding that the farmers will get Tk 17,500 crore by selling Boro rice to the government this year.

He suggested that the farmers use guano urea, a homemade urea fertiliser, instead of imported urea to reduce the import cost and pressure on the government that is giving a subsidy of at least Tk 1,300 a bag.

The government has also given direct fuel subsidy to ensure farmers' financial security, he added.

Fakhruddin admitted that the people of the country, especially the middleclass, are facing difficulties for the soaring prices of essentials. The price of rice on the global market increased two or three folds and its impact was eventually felt on the domestic market. "Only the farmers of the country can ensure food security for the entire nation by producing crops like rice, wheat and maize if they are given proper input security," the chief adviser said.

He added that rice prices are getting down compared to previous months with the start of Boro harvesting across the country.

Fakhruddin expressed deep concern at the decreasing water table of the district despite having several rivers. To mitigate the farmers' sufferings and ease irrigation, he urged the ministry concerned to take necessary steps to restore water flow of the Punarhabba river. Two successful farmers from the district-Md Motiur Rahman of Biral upazila and Md Abdul Hossain of sader upazila-also spoke at the grand rally. The chief adviser congratulated Motiur for achieving 80 maunds of rice in an acre of land.

Agriculture Adviser CS Karim, who also attended the rally, said this year the government has disbursed Tk 3,900 crore to 67 lakh farmers as fuel subsidy.

Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) Managing Director Md Shamsul Alam, Asian Development Bank (ADB) Resident Representative Huu Da and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Country Representative Adrianus Spijkers also attended the rally. Md Nabiul Haque Molla, deputy commissioner of Dinajpur, presided over the meeting.

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AP, Yangon

visited several litchi orchards and enquired the farmers about the business. The farmers urged him to set up a litchi processing centre in the district.

Fakhruddin also inspected the state-run Boro procurement drive at the Pulhat LSD godown in sader upazila.

After spending some time at the Dinajpur Circuit House, the chief adviser left Dinajpur at 1:20pm for Dhaka by an air force helicopter.

15 hurt

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On May 12, the youths caught Shah Alam and handed him over to the local UP chairman. On Wednesday night, Chakaria police sat in a meeting to resolve the matter.

Locals alleged that SI Hafiz beat up the two youths at one stage of altercation at the meeting. As Sirajul Islam stood in protest, the SI also beat up him, they said.

SI Hafiz was first taken to Chakaria Hospital. He succumbed to injuries while being shifted to Chittagong.

Sirajul's son Mohammad Kalu later filed a murder case with Chakaria judicial court against the officer-in-charge of Chakaria Police Station Rubul Amin Siddique, SI Hafiz and manpower agent Shah Alam.

When contacted, Cox's Bazar Additional Police Superintendent Imam Hossain said the allegation of death of the farmer in police beating is false as there was no mark of injuries in his body as per the autopsy report.

Accounts

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delivers a verdict," he said adding, "In our investigation we found that crores of taka was transferred through their accounts with the help of the TT system for heroin smuggling purposes."

Sources said the DNC took the steps to facilitate the ongoing investigations into several heroin smuggling cases filed against the suspects with Benapole, Sharsha and Kotwali police stations.

According to sources, the DNC requested the banks to freeze bank accounts of the following Jahangir Alam, Abdur Rahim, Anisur Rahman, Tofazzal Hossain Tufan, Samir Roy, Shahidul Islam, Nazma Begum, Asrafur Alam, Tarok Nath and Nada from Sadipur, Tarigul Islam and his brother Rafigul Islam.

All the 12 were arrested by the DNC on charge of heroin smuggling. During interrogation, they admitted that they are members of an international heroin smuggling ring and they smuggled in and out heroin worth several crores of taka everyday across the border, sources said.

They also admitted that they transferred the money for heroin smuggling purposes through the TT system, intelligence sources said.

Sources said the drug smugglers had been conducting their business using different businesses as cover-ups.

The DNC in different drives this year recovered 6.5 kilograms of heroin, 3 kg of potassium and made several arrests.

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The government has also given direct fuel subsidy to ensure farmers' financial security, he added.

Fakhruddin admitted that the people of the country, especially the middleclass, are facing difficulties for the soaring prices of essentials. The price of rice on the global market increased two or three folds and its impact was eventually felt on the domestic market. "Only the farmers of the country can ensure food security for the entire nation by producing crops like rice, wheat and maize if they are given proper input security," the chief adviser said.

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