

Farmers all smiles in SW dists as jute regains glory

Price more than triples in last three years

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

Jute farmers in 10 southwestern districts are cultivating the cash crop in larger areas of land as it is earning them good profit for the last three years.

Growers had to spend about Tk 12,000 for jute cultivation on a bigha of land that produced 10 to 14 maunds this season and the product, already arriving different markets in the region, is selling at Tk 1,800 to Tk 2,000 per maund, farmers said.

"I have cultivated jute on three bighas of land and made better profit compared to other crops this year," said Abdul Mannan, a farmer of Khoksha upazila in Kushtia district.

Only a couple of years ago, jute sold for Tk 300 to 500 per maund, causing farmers to incur losses.

Farmers have cultivated jute on 2,02,880 hectares of land against the AED target of 1,54,900 hectares in 10 districts in the region this year, said sources at Agricultural Extension Department (AED) offices in the division.

Last year, farmers cultivated jute on 1,15,938 hectares of land against the AED target of 1,24,900 hectares in the region.

Higher average yield of the crop and good market price in the region during the last two to three years helped the farmers get benefited, said AED officials, farmers and market analysts.

This year jute was cultivated on 37,000 hectares of land in Kushtia district while Magura, Jhenidah,

Chuadanga, Jessore, Meherpur, Narail, Satkhira, Khulna and Bagerhat saw jute cultivation on 34120 hectares, 24598 hectares, 24,600 hectares, 24140 hectares, 23950 hectares, 20173 hectares, 9930 hectares, 3081 hectares and 1288 hectares of land.

Farmers prefer tosha (chorchorous olitorius) that was cultivated on some two lakh hectares of land, while a few other varieties, including desh (chorchorous), on the rest of the land.

However, the jute farmers faced some common problems including seed crisis that hampered sowing seeds in time during the sowing

season.

According to officials at Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) and AED, 1704,280 kg of jute seeds were needed for Khulna division this season but the government supplied only 62,478 kg this season.

This forced the farmers to collect seeds from market at higher prices while many farmers were cheated as they bought low quality Indian seeds, farmers said.

Farmers have urged the government to check the flow of low quality seeds and ensure good varieties of jute seeds during the sowing season.



Small farmers selling jute at a market in Khoksha upazila of Kushtia district as the region sees jute cultivation on larger areas and higher yield due to increase in prices.

BDR MUTINY AT SUNAMGANJ

Charges to be pressed against 14 today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Charges will be framed against 14 alleged BDR mutineers of 8 Rifle Battalion, Sunamganj at the special court-3 of Bangladesh Rifles here today.

Commanding Officer of the Battalion Lt. Col Tajul Islam informed this at a press conference at Sylhet headquarters yesterday afternoon.

The then Director General of Bangladesh Rifles Maj Gen Mainul Islam chaired the court on 2 and 3 April and fixed the date while adjourning the trial proceedings till 28 June. The trial process began on 2 April.

Col Tajul told the newsmen

that BDR Director General Maj Gen Rafiqul Islam will chair the panel of judges today.

The 14 BDR jawans would be produced before the special court, set up at Sylhet sector headquarters, he said.

Prosecutor of the case Lt Col Tajul Islam on 3 April submitted a summary of the complaint before the panel. He also separately narrated the role of the 14 accused on the day of mutiny on 26 February last year.

Earlier, Deputy Assistant Director of the Battalion Md Abdul Wahid read out the complaints against the accused.

According to the complaint, Subedar Maj Gouranga

Chandra Das and a few border guards of the battalion revolted and took control of the arsenal on February 26 last year. They also instigated others to join the mutiny.

The accused in the mutiny case are Subedar Ma Gouranga Chandra Das, Nayek Subedar Abdul Hossain, havildars Md Badul Jalil, Md Badul Alam and Md Maniruzzaman, nayeks Md Harun Ur Rashid, Md Abdul Wahid and Md Hiru Ullah Khan, lance nayeks Abdul Rahim, Biplab Kumar Pandit and Umar Faruque Hossain, and sepoy Maniruzzaman Sheikh, Sumon Marma and Toriqual Islam.

3 RU BCL men beaten up

A RU CORRESPONDENT

An unidentified gang yesterday beat up three activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) of Rajshahi University (RU) unit near Binodpur bazar area of the university.

They were admitted to the university medical centre with severe injuries.

The BCL activists are Mahmudul Hasan Sohel, a master's year student of Mass Communication and Journalism department, Golam Mostafa, an MBA student of Marketing and Rony, a final year student of Islamic History and Culture.

Sources said, a gang, wearing masks, severely beat up the three BCL activists while going by motorbike at the campus by 1:00pm.

The injured BCL men alleged that RU unit Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) cadres attacked them with iron rods, hockey sticks and sharp weapons when they were going to see the situation in Binodpur bazar area during the BNP called hartal.

Arafat Reza Ashiq, UR unit JCD convener, however, denied the allegation.

Two youths held on charge of stalking

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Two youths were held on charge of stalking school and college girls in Satkhira and Lalmonirhat yesterday.

Police arrested a youth from Kaliganj upazila town in Satkhira on charge of stalking three schoolgirls at Durgapur yesterday.

Earlier father of a schoolgirl filed a case with Kaliganj police station accusing two youths of teasing three girls.

Arrestee Abul Kashem, 23, is son of Abdul Gafur of village Mahatpur in the same upazila, reports our correspondent.

The other accused, Asanur Rahman, 23, son of Samsur Sheikh of the same village went into hiding soon after filing of the case.

Police said a group of youths used to stalk three class seven students of Kaliganj Model Girls' High School on the way to their school.

The parents of the girls and the headmistress urged the youths to stop stalking but to no effect.

Finding no other alternative, a victim's father filed the case demanding punishment to the culprits.

In Lalmonirhat, a young man was held yesterday on charge of stalking a college girl in Vadai Bazar area of Aditmari upazila.

Arrested Alam Miah, 25, is son of late Arfan Ali of Vadai village under Aditmari upazila and a restaurant worker.

Police said, two girl students of HSC second year at Aditmari Kanteswar Barmon Women's College were coming to their college yesterday. Alam Miah stalked one of the two girl students in Vadai Bazar area. The stalker also took away the scarf of the girl.

At this, the college authorities informed Aditmari police and police arrested Alam from his workplace.

Two housewives murdered, acid attack on another

Husbands accused in all 3 cases

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Uzzal went into hiding again after the incident.

In Netrakona, police arrested a man on charge of killing his wife at Harulia village in Barhatta upazila on Friday.

The arrestee was identified as Delwar Hossain of the village, reports UNB.

Acting on secret information, police arrested Delwar while he was entering his house secretly in the morning.

Police said Delwar borrowed money from several people which became a big worry for him. On Thursday night he sold his cow at Tk 15000 and handed over the money to his wife. Later, an altercation ensued with her when he demanded the money back.

At one stage of brawl, Delwar got furious and strangled his wife. Later, he dumped the body in a septic tank and fled away.

In Chandpur, a housewife received serious burn injuries as her husband allegedly threw acid on her for dowry at Rayerkandi village in Motlob Uttar upazila on Friday night.

The victim, Parveen Akhter, mother of one child, was admitted to a local hospital where her condition was stated to be critical.

Locals said Alam Proddhan of the village married Parveen, daughter of Firoz Mia, of village Goalmani in Daudkandi upazila of Comilla 12 years ago.

Later, Alam went to Saudi Arabia taking Tk 2 lakh loan from his father-in-law and after staying there for seven years he recently returned home.

But without repaying the earlier loan he again started putting pressure on Parveen to bring Tk 50,000 from her father.

Following a quarrel over the issue Alam attacked Parveen with acid at dead of night leaving her critically injured.

Victim's brother Borhanuddin filed a case with Motlob police station and police arrested Alam.

SNIPPETS

Student killed in Bogra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Criminals yesterday morning killed Sanwar Hossain Russell, a student of Islami Bank Institute of Technology. Police recovered his slaughtered body from a banana orchard in Seujgari area in the town. Locals and police said Russell, who hailed from Pukrapur village in Gobindaganj upazila of Gaibandha district, used to stay at a mess in Seujgari area. Police believe Russell was killed sometimes on Friday. However none was arrested in this connection till yesterday noon.

Hospitals fined in B'baria

UNB, Brahmanbaria

A mobile court fined three private hospitals and a diagnostic centre Tk 1.15 lakh for various irregularities in the district town on Friday. Sources said the mobile court led by executive magistrate Helal Uddin raided Moulavipara area in the morning. They realised the fine from New Modern Hospital, Samarita Hospital, Titas General Hospital and Model Diagnostic Centre for lack of necessary doctors, nurses, technicians and medical equipment and for absence of waste-disposal arrangement.

Youth murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Criminals killed a youth and injured a woman at Hariপুর in the town early Saturday. The victim was identified as Muntasir Mamun Sohel, 28, son of Asraf Ali of Hariপুর Moholla under Chapainawabganj municipal area. Dipak Kumar, Sub Inspector (SI) of Sadar police station and victim's relatives said, Sohel along with neighbour Nasrin were going to Hariপুর by a rickshaw from the town at 11:00pm. When their rickshaw reached Hariপুর area, Nasrin's husband Iqbal and his men attacked them with sticks and iron rod. Later, the criminals dragged them to a mango orchard and beat them up indiscriminately. Being informed, police rushed to the spot, rescued them and sent them to Adhunik Sadar Hospital, where Sohel succumbed to his injury at 1:35am. Seriously injured Nasrin is undergoing treatment at Sadar hospital. Police said, earlier Nasrin filed a case against her husband Iqbal following a family feud. At that time Nasrin's neighbour Sohel helped her which angered Iqbal.

50 hurt, 20 shops vandalised in fierce B'baria clash

23 injured in Narail clash

UNB, Brahmanbaria

At least 50 people were injured and 20 shops vandalised in a fierce clash between the supporters of a sitting and a former UP chairmen at Isapur union in Bijoynagar upazila on Friday afternoon.

Police and locals said, there was a longstanding conflict between sitting UP chairman Akhter Hossain and former UP chairman Ziaul Huq Bakul over establishing supremacy in the upazila. A fierce clash took place between their supporters at Khadurail village on Tuesday that left several people injured.

As a sequel to the incident, Mahfuz Miah, follower of Akhter Hossain and Shajahan, supporter of Ziaul Huq, locked in an altercation at Ariyal Bazaar of the union at about 4:00pm.

Later, both the groups, equipped with lethal weapons and sticks, attacked each other leaving at least 50 people injured from both sides. The feuding groups also vandalised and looted 20 shops of the bazaar.

On information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control after charging batons and firing 30 rounds of rubber bullet.

In Narail, at least 23 people were injured, four seriously, in a fierce clash between two rival groups at Pakkhirara village in Kalia upazila on Friday noon.

Seriously injured Aminul Islam, 25, Lovlu Khan, 35, Yar Ali, 40, and Bablu Khan, 38, were rushed to Gopalganj Hospital and while others to the Kalia Upazila Health Complex.

Locals said, there was a longstanding dispute between Azizul Khan, son of Halim Khan, and Azizar Khan, son of Moktar Ali Khan of the village over purchasing of a house in the village.

Following purchase when Azizur tried to take possession of the house, his rival Azizul obstructed him that led to the fierce clash.



Loading and unloading of goods at Benapole land port resume yesterday after suspension of export and import through the port due to a daylong strike in West Bengal the day before.

Teacher stabbed to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A school teacher was stabbed to death by his younger brother at village Goira in Kalaroa upazila Friday night. Victim Shah Alam, 38, was son of Azizur Rahman of the village and an assistant teacher at Hijaldhi High School in the same upazila. Quoting locals police said Nazmul Alam who was abroad, came to his village home recently. He locked in an altercation with his father over the money he sent from abroad Friday evening. Elder brother Shah Alam protested this and rebuked Nazmul. Angry Nazmul stabbed his elder brother leaving him seriously injured. Alam succumbed to his injuries on way to Kalaroa hospital at about 11:15pm.

Body recovered

UNB, Sherpur

Police recovered the body of an unidentified young man from Kurshabadagoir area of Nakla upazila on Friday morning. Locals found the body of the youth, aged about 30, beside Sherpur-Mymensingh road in the morning and informed the police. Later, police rushed to the spot and sent the body to Sadar hospital morgue for autopsy. Police suspected that the criminals murdered the youth elsewhere and left the body beside the road late at night.

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