

Sharp fall in onion price discourages growers

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Prices of onion have fallen to below Tk 100 per maund (40 kg) in the district against last years' price of around Tk 2,000.

Bumper yield of kondo (tuber) variety of onions coupled with earlier import of Indian onions has led to drastic fall of its prices and this in turn has made onion saplings awfully cheap as frustrated farmers have become reluctant to cultivate the vegetable, said farmers and agriculture officials.

During visit to the highest onion producing Puthia and Durgapur upazilas in the district on Thursday, this correspondent saw many farmers leaving their onion saplings to wither away at lands.

They said they are not harvesting the saplings, fearing that they would not get back even the labour cost for the purpose.

Onion saplings that sold for around Tk 150 per maund last week is now selling for Tk 80 to 90 at different markets including Baneshwar.

Only best quality saplings are selling at Tk 300 per maund, growers and market sources said.

Onion sold for around Tk 2000 per maund last year and it encouraged farmers to cultivate the vegetable on



PHOTO: STAR

Growers sell onion saplings at awfully cheap rates at Baneshwar Bazar in Rajshahi yesterday. Saplings that sold for around Tk 150 last week are now selling for Tk 80 to 90 per maund.

more areas of land this year. But the drastic price fall dashed all their hopes.

Emdadul Haque, an onion farmer was found carrying onion saplings in a rickshaw-van for cultivation on his land at Chitol Pukur village in Puthia.

"I prepared onion saplings on 10 kathas of land and it was sufficient for cultivating at least seven

bighas of land. But I will harvest only the amount needed to cultivate on three bighas this season and leave the rest at the land," he said.

"How can I let all the saplings rot?" said a frustrated Emdadul.

Emdadul's brother Nazrul Islam said he already spent over Tk 3000 for preparing saplings on five kathas of land. "Now I am

anxious whether I should invest Tk 1000 more on labours to reap the saplings."

At current market price, he apprehends the price of his five maunds of saplings would not be even Tk 750.

Sanwar Hossain at Chalk Dhadash village said he cultivated onion on his own land last year.

"My production cost

per bigha stood around Tk 20,000 and I got a good yield of highest 80 maunds per bigha. Now if I sell my produce at current market price, I would get only Tk 12,000, which is Tk 8000 less than the production cost."

He said the price of saplings reduced after the prices of onion fell following huge production and import of Indian onions.

Abdul Latif was seen cutting phulka (scallions) at his kondo (tuber) variety of onion field at Chalk Dhadash village. "I am cutting these scallions for feeding my cattle and goats as these have no demand now. The scallions sold at Tk 20 per kg last year," he said.

Amirul Islam, an agriculture officer of the Department of Agriculture Extension in Rajshahi, said the farmers' frustration is reflected in official data on cultivation.

"Although the December-January cultivation period is nearing end, the target of onion cultivation on 14,750 hectares of land is still to be achieved. Onion has been cultivated on only 11,025 hectares of land so far. Some 14,540 hectares of land were brought under onion cultivation last year and the production rate was nine tonnes per hectares," he said.

Colleagues protest attack on doctor at hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Doctors, nurses and employees of Chapainawabganj Adhunik Sadar Hospital yesterday formed human chain and held a rally in front of the hospital demanding punishment to a culprit who beat up an on-duty doctor of emergency department on Saturday.

Wearing black badges, they also observed work abstention for half an hour from 11:30am to 12:00pm.

Speakers at the protest rally said that doctors and staffs came to the hospital from different areas for treatment of the patients. But a few people are creating chaos at the hospital without any reason.

They demanded exemplary punishment to the culprit who beat up their colleague Dr. Shafiqul Islam severely.

Critically injured Dr. Shafiqul Islam, medical officer of the hospital, is now under treatment at the hospital, they said. They also vowed to take up tougher agitation programme if the offender goes unpunished.

Dr. Abdus Salam, president of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), Chapainawabganj district unit, Dr. Asit Sarkar, Residential Medical Officer (RMO), Dr. Rabiul Alam, Rebeka Sultan, nursing supervisor, employees of the hospital Ekramul Haque and Rezaul Karim spoke at the rally.

Hospital and police sources said, one Azizur Rahman, 40, of Masjidpara area in the town came to the hospital emergency on Saturday at about 6:30pm for treatment of diarrhoea. Dr. Shafiqul Islam suggested him to take admission at the hospital.

But the man went out of the hospital and returned a few minutes later bringing charges of laxness against Shafiqul. At one stage, he hit the doctor with a stool injuring him seriously. Angry locals and staff of the hospital caught Azizur and later the hospital authorities handed him over to Sadar police.

Dr. Motiur Rahman, acting civil surgeon of Chapainawabganj, filed a case against Azizur with Sadar police station on Saturday night.



PHOTO: STAR

Doctors, nurses and general employees of Chapainawaganj Sadar Hospital form a human chain in front of the hospital yesterday protesting the alleged attack on an on-duty doctor by a patient at the emergency department on Saturday.

Five firearms seized, four arrested

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Law enforces in separate drives have arrested four people in three districts and recovered five arms from their possession.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-9) in Srimongal of Moulvibazar in a drive yesterday recovered two foreign revolvers, two bullets, a motorbike and arrested a man in this connection from Karimpur village in Sarkar Bazaar area.

Arrestee Akhil Chandra Dhar, 40, is son of Nalini Chandra Dhar of the village. A Japan made revolver, an India made revolver and two bullets were

seized, police told our correspondent.

In Rajbari, police arrested two alleged criminals along with a pistol and two bullets from a primary school premises in Pangsha upazila on Saturday night, reports our correspondent.

The arrestees are Kafil Uddin, 22, alias Kopo, son of Abdul Kader Mondal and Ashrafal Sheikh, 20, son of late Jalal Molla of Kutimaliat village in the upazila.

Office in-charge of Pangsha PS Abdul Khaleq said they arrested the duo around 10.00pm while they were taking preparation for committing robbery in the area.

A case was filed against them under Arms Act.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police in separate drives in Meherpur recovered two firearms and four bombs in Gangni upazila early Saturday, reports our Kushtia correspondent.

According to Lieutenant Sazzad Hossain Raihan of Rab-6 in Meherpur, acting on a tip off, they raided Motmura village in Gangni upazila at about 5:30am and arrested a top cadre of Lal Pataka faction of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-ML) and recovered a shutter gun and six bullets from his possession.

Arrestee Abu Bakkar alias Lalon, 39, was involved in extortion and other crimes, Rab said.

The brick kiln owners recently lodged a written allegation of extortion against the outlaw, Sazzad said.

In another drive, a Gangni police team recovered four bombs near a rice mill in Sholodhaka village.

"We recovered the bombs in an abandoned state," said Golam Mustafa, OC of Gangni police station.

Besides, a team of Detective Branch (DB) of police in Meherpur raided Nawadapara intersection in Gangni upazila and recovered a pistol and six bullets from a garden.

THE DAILY STAR-ROBI ENGLISH FAIRS



PHOTO: STAR

Prize-winning students of Nawab Institute and Collegiate School in Dhanbari upazila of Tangail district pose for the camera at the end of the English language fair held at the auditorium of Nawab Institute yesterday.

300 from two Tangail schools take part

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Young learners took part in amusing interactions at English language fair held at Nawab Institute in Dhanbari upazila of Tangail district yesterday.

Under English in Schools (EIS) programme, The Daily Star and mobile operator Robi jointly organised the fair in coordination with the education ministry to encourage English learning among secondary school students.

Adcomm Ltd is the creative and event partner of the fair.

Around 300 students of two schools--Nawab Institute and Collegiate



School--took part in joyful activities at the language fair at the auditorium of Nawab Institute.

SM Keramat Ali, headmaster of Nawab Institute, inaugurated the fair at 1:00pm. Assistant teachers Moshir Rahman, Kamrunnahar, Mohammad Asaduzzaman, Badal Hossain and Abdul Alim of the school, and assistant teachers Al Imran Bakul and

Mohammad Rashiduzzaman of Collegiate School addressed the inaugural function.

Following screening of Lion King, a globally renowned movie, the students of the two schools participated in spot quiz, vocabulary test, one word question and quick questions--all based on the movie.

Selected students also took part in extempore speech on different topics and role-play. Prizes were distributed among the winners of different events at the end of the programme.

The students also formed English language club at their respective schools.

LEAKING OF QUESTION PAPERS

8 arrested in Kurigram produced in court

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram

Eight people, arrested on charge of leaking question papers of recruitment tests for the posts of assistant sub-food inspector and office assistant-cum-computer operator at the food department on Friday, were produced in a court here yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, the Detective Branch (DB) police raided a house at Chatura village in Rajarhat upazila of the district in the morning and arrested them while they were selling leaked question papers for Tk 20,000Tk.30,000.

The arrestees are Abdul Jalil Sarkar, 66, his son Mahfujar Rahman, 33, of Chatura village, Abdul Hai Jhunu, 22, son of late Solaiman Ali of Chandamari village, Ruhul Amin, 45, son of late Badiuzzaman of Thanapara, Mostafijur Rahman, 30, son of late Khaibor Ali of Bakshipara village, Lutfar

Rahman Litan, 33, son of Mahbub Rahman Dilip of Krisnapur village under Rajarhat upazila, Ashaduzzaman, 18, son of Abul Kashem of Shanyashi village under Kurigram Sadar upazila, and Hasan Basunia, 22, son of Gulzer Basunia of Manorum village under Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

However, the written tests for candidates of Kurigram and Lalmonirhat districts were held at Kurigram Sadar upazila headquarters on Friday.

The DB men produced the eight in the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court, Kurigram, seeking a seven-day remand, but the court fixed February 2 for hearing on the remand prayer.

DB Inspector Md Rezaul Karim said they have got some important information from the arrestees during primary interrogations, but he did not disclose those for the sake of proper investigation into the case.

ডেল্টা লাইফ - এর

২৬ বছর

পূর্তি উপলক্ষে

সম্মানিত বীমাগ্রাহক, শেয়ারহোল্ডার, পৃষ্ঠপোষক ও শুভানুধ্যায়ীসহ সকলকে

আমাদের আন্তরিক কৃতজ্ঞতা ও প্রাণঢালা শুভেচ্ছা

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ডেল্টা লাইফ

ডেল্টা লাইফ ইনসিওরেন্স কোম্পানী লিঃ

(বৃহত্তম বাংলাদেশী বীমা প্রতিষ্ঠান)

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