

Flash flood dashes hopes of kidney bean farmers

Half of the pulse cultivated on around 60,000 hectares totally damaged in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Flooding due to untimely downpour from April 9 to 11 destroyed kidney bean plants on around 44 per cent of the cultivated lands in the district, much to the frustration of farmers.

In the district, 58,253 hectares of land was brought under kidney bean cultivation with a target to produce 43,690 tonnes this year, said sources of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Patuakhali.

But kidney beans on 25,660 hectares of land have been totally damaged due to flooding by the rain and so, the production is not likely to exceed about 25,000 tonnes, sources added.

In the district, Galachipa upazila sees the highest damage of kidney bean fields on 12,400 hectares of land, followed by 10,500 hectares in Baufal upazila.

Besides, the flooding damaged kidney bean plants on 2,760 hectares of land in five other upazilas under the district.

Of the land cultivated with kidney beans, 6,840 hectares of land is in Patuakhali Sadar upazila, 15,000 hectares in Baufal, 22,000 hectares in Galachipa, 7,700 hectares in Dashmina, 2,013 hectares in Kalapara, 2,200 hectares in Mirzaganj and 2,500 hectares in Dumki upazila, sources of DAE said.

The district sees large scale cultivation of kidney

bean as the nutritious pulse brings much profit to the farmers, said AZM Momtazul Karim, deputy director of DAE in Patuakhali.

Kidney bean farming, which requires very little care, is less expensive and more profitable than other pulses, said Abdul Awal, deputy assistant agriculture officer of DAE.

But the untimely rain has frustrated the farmers this season.

"I cultivated kidney bean on my three acres of land this year at a cost of Tk 14,000 but all the plants have rotten due to flooding by rain water," Abdul Khaleq Matobbar, 52, of Dashpara village under Baufal upazila, said.

"I planned to send money, after selling kidney

bean, to my son who is a final year student of diploma engineering course in Patuakhali. Now I am thinking of selling my cow to manage the money," he said.

"After meeting my family demand last year, I earned Tk 25,000 by selling kidney bean that sold for Tk 2,400 to 2,800 per maund," Khaleq added.

Abdur Rahman Howlader, 60, of Khajurbaria village in the same upazila, who earned Tk 20,000 by selling the kidney bean last year, said, "Plants of kidney bean grew well this year due to favourable weather and I hoped to earn more by selling it this year but untimely rain has dashed all my hopes."



PHOTO: STAR

Sudden flood due to heavy downpour for three days about three weeks ago totally damaged nearly half of the kidney bean plants cultivated in six upazilas of Patuakhali district.



PHOTO: STAR

People of Ishwardi upazila in Pabna accorded a grand reception to Nurunnahar Begum and Habibur Rahman yesterday for receiving the Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award 2012 on Sunday.

Extreme case of stalkers' audacity

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Criminals, angered by protest against stalking of a madrasa girl, made computer designed obscene posters involving her and pasted its copies at different places in Nawabganj upazila under the district.

Father of the victim girl (name not mentioned) on April 27 filed a case with the local police station accusing four people -- Shamim Hossain, 18, his parents Nurunnabi, 52, and Anwara Begum, 41, and friend Anaj Ali, 18, of Monjupara village in Nawabganj upazila. The four accused fled their home after the case.

The obscene posters were made by a commercial computer designer by setting the girl's face with nude photographs of different girls collected from the Internet, police said.

Shamim started stalking the girl, a class nine student of a local madrasa, about six months ago, said her parents.

Shamim and his friend Anaj Ali tried to molest the girl on her way to the madrasa on February 13 this year when locals came to her rescue and detained the two culprits, they said.

At a local arbitration,

Shamim promised not to stalk the girl again while his parents pledged to see the matter.

As Shamim continued irritating the girl and also threatened her family of dire consequences for arranging the arbitration, her parents sent her to a relatives' house in Phulbari upazila.

Recently the girl returned home and started attending her classes at the madrasa.

On April 26 morning, students and teachers of the madrasa and the locals were shocked to see that hundreds of obscene posters with bad remarks about the girl were pasted at different places.

Seeing the matter, the girl's father, a local rickshaw-van puller, fainted.

Demanding exemplary punishment to the offenders, Wahedul Islam, a former UP member of the area, said, "The previous night, I saw Shamim along with others pasting some posters. Then I could not understand that they were doing such a heinous act."

"In village arbitrations, Shamim had promised not to stalk the girl while his parents Nurunnabi and Anwara Begum said they would keep their son under

control," said Sirajul Islam, an UP member of the area.

"They ruined my daughter's life," said the victim's father.

"I dreamt of getting higher education to bring solvency to my parents. But now I can't show my face in

public," said the victim.

Md Anisur Rahman, investigation officer of the case, said he seized huge posters of the girl but nobody could be arrested in this connection as the accused went into hiding.

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Two mugged inside bank

UNB, Jessore

Criminals took away Tk 27 lakh from Pubali Bank branch counter at MK Road in the district town on Sunday.

Moshiur Rahman, assistant general manager of Karim Group at Bakchar in the town said he along with his colleague Mohammad Ali went to the Pubali Bank branch to deposit Tk 27 lakh at about 11:15 am.

Suddenly a gang of armed muggers numbering 5-6 took away the bag containing the money from them at gunpoint. The muggers exploded a hand bomb creating panic and fled the scene by two motorbikes.

Prisoner dies at hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole, Jessore

A convicted prisoner of the district jail died while undergoing treatment at Jessore Medical College Hospital on Sunday night.

The deceased was identified as Rahmat Ali, 30, son of Jamat Ali of Shankarpur area of the district town.

Jailer Masud Pervez said when Rahmat fell seriously ill in Jessore jail on Sunday night he was taken to Jessore Medical College Hospital where he died after admission.

Rahmat was jailed for six months imprisonment by a mobile court for selling drug on April 22.

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