

Last 2 years' losses still haunt jute growers

KONGKON KARMAKAR,
Dinajpur

Jute growers of Dinajpur and Joypurhat districts have started harvesting the cash crop but they are worried about its market prices, especially against the backdrop of huge losses in last two seasons.

This year the area of jute cultivation has increased although the growers have been feeling insecurity due to losses since 2009, said Md Anwarul Alam, deputy director of Dinajpur DAE.

The rise of jute cultivation area and its better production rather poses a challenge as the country's jute market is shrinking, DAE officials observed.

At least 10,467 hectares of land was brought under jute cultivation in Dinajpur district while the target was 7,724 hectares, said sources of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE).

Around 1,00,483 bales of jute production is expected in Dinajpur.

In Joypurhat, 3,450 hectares of land was brought under jute farming with production target of 41,400 bales.

In 2009, the area of jute cultivation in Dinajpur and Joypurhat districts was only 4,578 and 2,095 hectares respectively, DAE sources said, adding that the two districts now see jute farming in much larger areas of land.

But the jute growers have been incurring losses due to its low prices since 2009, said Md Anamul Haque, a member of Business Management Organisation in Parbatipur upazila of Dinajpur.

This year farmers of these districts cultivated high yielding 'Tosha' and local varieties of jute and got bumper production, DAE officials said.

The production of Tosha variety would be 10 to 11



PHOTO: STAR

Harvested jute is kept for rotting in a water body at Kachiniya of Khansama upazila in Dinajpur district that sees good yield of the cash crop this year.

bales per hectare and local variety 8 to 9 bales per hectare, said field level agricultural staff and farmers.

During the last two seasons, farmers faced trouble to rot jute due to shortage of water but this year farmers are not facing the problem.

"But we are worried about the market price. The jute price was around Tk 800 and 600 per maund

in 2010 and 2011 while the production cost was around 1,000 per maund," said Md Abdus Salam, a farmer of Khansama upazila in Dinajpur.

"Production and labour costs have gone up further. Jute farming will be profitable this year if the price remains Tk 1300 to 1400 per maund," said Md Abdul Hannan, another farmer of the same upazila.

2 housewives murdered

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Two housewives were killed allegedly by their husbands for dowry in Jessor and Dinajpur districts on Friday and Wednesday.

In Jessor, a housewife was beaten to death allegedly by her husband and in-laws for dowry at Batbila village in Monirampur upazila on Friday night, reports our Benapole correspondent.

The victim was identified as Jahanara Khatun, 22, daughter of Zakir Hossain of Narikelbaria village in the upazila.

OC (Investigation) of Monirampur PS Azmal Huda said Jalil Gazi used to torture his wife Jahanara for dowry since their marriage about six years ago.

On the fateful night, Jalil picked up a quarrel with Jahanara over the issue and at one stage beat her mercilessly, leaving her dead on the spot.

In Dinajpur, a housewife was murdered allegedly by her husband for dowry in Khansama upazila on Wednesday night.

The victim, Morsalina Begum, 20, daughter of Md Mozaffar Hossain of Newla in the upazila, was six-month pregnant reports our correspondent.

Family sources said, Morsalina married Faridul Islam, son of Md Akibul Islam of Telipara early this year.

Since the marriage, Faridul and his family members used to torture her for dowry.

On July 18, an altercation took place between the couple as Morsalina failed to bring a motorbike from her father demanded by Faridul.

At one stage, Faridul tortured her, leaving her critically injured.

She was rushed to the upazila health complex where the doctors declared her dead.

IT PAYS TO WORK TOGETHER



PHOTO: STAR

Work to repair four-kilometre road from Chandra to Munshirhat in Faridganj upazila of Chandpur district continues as owners and workers of CNG-run three-wheelers took the initiative through voluntary service and own financial contribution to make the road fit for vehicular movement. Earlier appeal by locals fell into deaf ears as Roads and Highways Department left the road in awful condition for the last four years.

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