

# Dense fog hits production of honey from mustard

*Cultivators demand easy loan, fair price*

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Honey producers here have demanded government support including adequate bank loan facilities and ensuring fair price of the highly nutritious item to help develop the prospective industry.

Around 25,000 cultivators including 1,000 commercial apiculturists in the country produce at least 1500 tonnes of good quality honey a year as many enterprising youths have come forward to honey production recently, they said quoting sources at Bangladesh Institute of Apiculture (BIA) in Dhaka.

The demand of honey in the country, however, is

around 2500 tonnes annually, they said, adding that 70 percent of the requirement is imported from abroad, especially India, Australia, China, and different European countries.

On the other hand, huge quantity of locally produced honey is to be sold at throw-away prices due to lack of marketing facilities.

Consequently, the local producers are losing their interest in apiculture, honey cultivators said.

They sell their produced honey to several local companies and NGOs including Ape, Fame, Basa, Proshika and other individual buyers and honey from mustard is sold for Tk 80 to Tk 100 per

kg, litchi for Tk 110 to Tk 120 and black seed and coriander Tk 140 to Tk 160.

The companies, however, sell the honey for Tk 400 to Tk 600 per kg in local markets after processing the item, the producers said.

Claiming that locally produced honey contains more nutritional value than the imported one, local cultivators also demanded restriction on honey import.

Honey is produced from mustard flowers from first week of December to last week of January while *guji teel* (oil seed), black seed and coriander flowers from last week of January to first week of March, litchi gardens

during March, *keora*, *kholshi* and *bain* flowers during March-April, and from *sada teel* (oil seed) fields from second week of April to second week of June, in different regions of the country, depending on the availability of the items, apiculturists said.

Commercial apiculturists Monir Hossain, Shahid Miah and Joynal Abedin of Gachhbari village under Kaliakair upazila in Gazipur district have set up 66 boxes (a box has three to ten frames, each containing about 3,000 to 4,000 honeybees) at a mustard field of Narandia in Kalihati upazila under Tangail this season

and collected 200 kg of honey in eleven days.

Honey production declined over 50 percent in mustard fields this season due to unfavourable weather marked by dense fog, they said.

The litchi orchards in the district also saw fall in honey production as use of insecticides killed millions of honeybees and there was a drought-like situation last season, they added.

Afsar Ali, a honey producer of Sagardighi in Ghatail upazila of Tangail, also president of Tangail district unit of Bangladesh Apiculturists Welfare Association, said around 60 commercial cultivators of the district produce over 100 tonnes of quality honey a year.

"Two teams from Canada and Denmark, comprising apiculturists and researchers, visited different places of the country including Tangail last year and this year. They told local honey producers that around two lakh tonnes of quality honey can be produced only from the mustard fields in the country," he said.

Mohammad Nurul Islam, director of Bangladesh Institute of Apiculture, said, "The government should extend cooperation for honey cultivation and banks should provide easy loans to the producers to help develop the prospective industry. Besides, the orchard owners should remain careful not to spray insecticide before afternoon as honey bees collect nectar that time."

He also suggested honey producers to use unsold honey to produce different food items.



**PHOTO: STAR**  
**LIFE GOES ON:** A blanket of dense fog continues to hide the sun even at 10:30am in Dinajpur yesterday as the northern districts bear the brunt of the ongoing cold wave. Despite all, two vegetable sellers, urged by the drive to earn, start for the market on a rickshaw van through a road at Kashipur village in Sadar upazila of the district.



**PHOTO: STAR**  
**A commercial apiculturist sets specially prepared honeycomb boxes beside a mustard field at Narandia village in Kalihati upazila of Tangail district during the ongoing season for production of honey from mustard.**

## Fog damaging huge urea

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Around 2,500 tonnes of urea fertiliser allocated for the cultivation of Irri-boro in the upcoming season are kept under the open sky due to space shortage in the godown in Joypurhat district.

As the lone warehouse has storage capacity of 2,500 tonnes of fertiliser, the rest have been kept in the open space in the compound, officials said.

Joypurhat Fertiliser Association sources said huge quantity of fertiliser has to be kept under open sky for shortage of space in the godown.

Joypurhat Fertiliser Association said they need around 43,700 tonnes of urea for the upcoming Irri-boro season. Of the amount, around 5,000 tonnes have

already arrived in the district as part of the ongoing process of fertiliser supply from BCIC.

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## Twin murder in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Two staffs of a shop at Ashuganj River Port in the district were brutally killed by a gang in the early hours of yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Muhammad Hanif Mia, 35, of Mithaman upazila of Kishoreganj district and Awal Hossain, 30, of Shohagpur village under Ashuganj upazila in B'baria.

According to police and hospital sources, after their day's work at Messrs Moloy Enterprise, Hanif, Awal and Jewel went to bed at a room of the shop on Saturday night. But two of them were found murdered in the early morning.

Local people found the bodies of Hanif and Awal lying in a pool of blood on the floor of the room while Jewel remained 'missing'.

Contacted, additional police superintendent Md Zahidul Islam said it was a preplanned murder.

Awal was hit in the head while Hanif was suffocated to death by the gang, he said.

## Arms seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) recovered two hand made arms and four bullets in Lama upazila on Saturday morning.

They also arrested one Nizam Uddin, 40, son of Hasan Ali of the upazila, in this connection.

Acting on a tip-off, a team raided a rubber garden and seized the arms and ammunition, said Subader Abdul Hamid, in-charge of Deba BGB camp.

## Just a good intention can be of great help to others

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A private firm official has set a laudable example of helping poor cold-hit rural students by using social networking site Facebook.

Masud Karim Tamal, 45, commercial officer of Impress Wear Ltd, Dhaka, got good response from several kind-hearted people after he asked for help to provide warm clothes to poor rural students in cold-hit Thakurgaon district, through a Facebook page titled 'Third eyes'.

With Tk 30 thousand received from them, he distributed 220 pieces of blankets among the students of Gobindanagar Government Primary School under Thakurgaon Sadar upazila yesterday.

"I know the sufferings of poor people in the northern districts due to biting cold during winter as Thakurgaon is my home district," Masud told this correspondent.

"But I have to pass busy time for official purpose and I don't have the financial ability to arrange warm clothes for the sufferers. Early this winter I made an appeal to people through Facebook and some kind-hearted people including several of my school friends sent a total of Tk 30,000 for the purpose."

"I bought 220 pieces of blankets from Gulistan in the capital and distributed those among the poor cold-hit students of Gobindanagar Government Primary School. I hope different organisations and individuals will come forward to mitigate sufferings of the poor cold-hit people," said.

Talking to this correspondent, Afroza Begum, headmistress of Gobindanagar Government Primary School, and Arfan Ali, chairman of the school managing committee, appreciated Masud's initiative for helping people in the poverty-stricken area.

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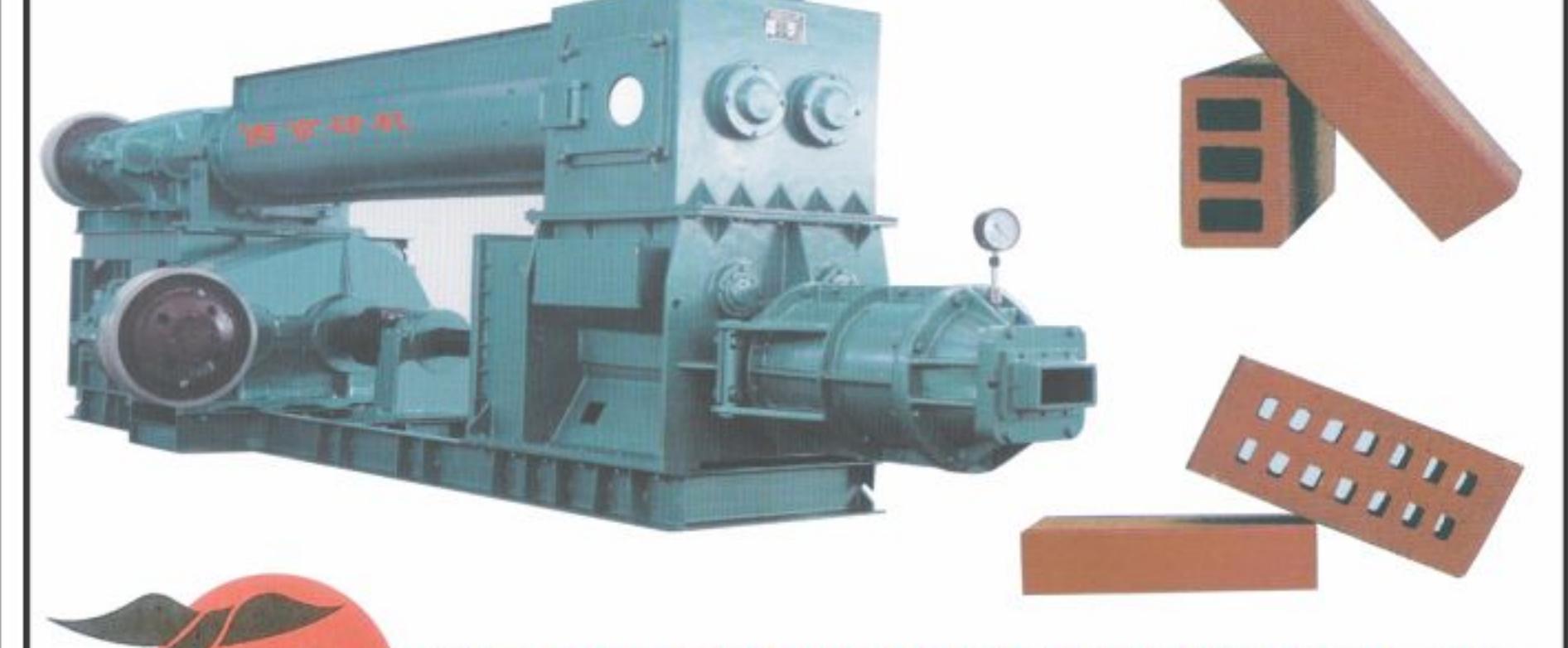
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**PHOTO: STAR**  
**Huge quantity of urea fertiliser supplied to meet the demand of the upcoming Irri-boro season has been kept under the open sky at Joypurhat due to lack of sufficient space in the district's lone warehouse.**