

# 4 fruits of foreign varieties to earn forex, meet local demand

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) Germ Plasm Centre, second largest fruit repository in the world, has a great potentiality of developing fruits of foreign varieties, enriched with nutritional value.

One of the largest such repository can be seen in Miami, USA, according to researchers here.

In recent years, the BAU centre has released four new varieties of foreign fruits for the farmers. These varieties - Santol from Thailand, Rambutan from Indonesia, Dragon Fruit from Vietnam and Persimmon from Japan -- have added extra attractions to the huge garden.

The centre now draws the attention of a large number of local and foreign visitors. The scientists hope that these four foreign varieties of fruits will soon be commercially cultivated in the country.

Rambutan, a South-East Asian fruit, (grown mostly in Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand) has huge demand all over the world and it will be the main fruit item for export to those three countries, sources said.

These four foreign varieties are harvested between May and November when local fruits are rarely available in the market.

The demand for the foreign variety fruits is also high in the capital city and district towns as well, said Prof. Dr. Md. Abdur Rahim, director of the centre.

"Our rich soil is perfect for cultivation of these varieties to ease pressure on imported fruits," he said.

"To meet local nutritional demand and earn foreign exchange, the production of these fruits could be of great help," the director went on.

The centre collected the four foreign varieties in 1999 and started producing saplings in 2007, said Dr. Rahim.



Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) scientists have distributed saplings of four foreign fruits, from left clockwise, dragon fruit, santol, persimmon and rambutan - to farmers for their cultivation in the country.

It has also produced 10,000 saplings of the varieties and most of them have been given to the farmers through distribution channels since 2007, he added.

The Dragon Flower has become popular, especially among the farmers of Chittagong and Mongla areas, as it also grows well in saline soil.

The centre started its journey with 74 fruit trees of 10 varieties in 1991. It is now furnished with over 11,000 fruit trees of 700 varieties, including 50 foreign varieties from 44 countries of the world. Dr. Rahim was appointed as an 'investigator' at the centre at its inception, sources said.

Nearly extinct 63 varieties like boichi, dumur, dewa, panwala, betul, gaab, chalta and arboroi has also given the germ plasm centre further variation. Over, 10,000 farmers of different districts have been trained on country and foreign varieties of fruits since 2007, they said.

Dr. Md. Shamsul Alam

Mithu, Senior Research Associate, said that if the foreign varieties are enriched properly and cultivated widely, fruits will be available round the year to meet up the nutritional demand.

The centre needs adequate financial support from the government for more research work, he said.



Visually impaired candidates appear at yesterday's HSC examination at Pabna Government Women's College centre with the help of persons writing the answer scripts from dictation.

## Defeating the barriers of visual impairment

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

Visually impaired since birth, four underprivileged youths are attending the ongoing HSC examinations at Pabna Government Women's College centre as private candidates, thanks to their determination and initiative of humanitarian organisation Manob Kalyan Trust.

The four examinees are Shaheb Ali of Char Malshapara village in Sirajganj, Moniruzzaman of Brammanpara village in Narshindi, Md Monsur Ali of Rajabari village in Godagari of Rajshahi and Alhaz Uddin of Kuthibari village in Khoksha of Kushtia.

"With special permission from the education board they are appearing at the examinations, being aided by persons who write answer scripts as per dictation. A special room has been allotted for them," said Md. Shafikul Islam, acting principal of Pabna

Government Women's College.

Shaheb Ali passed the SSC in 1999, Moniruzzaman and Md Monsur Ali in 2008 and Alhaz Uddin in 2011 but they discontinued study due to family hardship, said Prof. Md. Abul Hossain, chairman of Manob Kalyan Trust.

"In last year our organisation arranged their boarding and facilities for resumption of study here. And we have succeeded in helping them appear at this year's HSC examinations with private registration. We are hopeful about their good results and success in life," he said.

"I had to discontinue study in 1999 due to poverty but now I am attending the HSC with good preparation. I have a dream to be a lawyer," said Md. Shaheb Ali, one of the four examinees.

The three others also expressed their vision of success through education.

BGB member, 2 policemen buried

STAR NATIONAL DESK

A member of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), killed in a clash with Hefajat-e Islam activists at Kanchpur in Narayanganj district on Monday, was laid to rest at a graveyard in Tangail yesterday afternoon, reports our correspondent.

Earlier, the body of nayek subedar Shah Alam, 51, was taken to Kumudini Hospital ground in Mirzapur upazila by a helicopter at around 11:00am after holding his first namaz-e-janaza at the BGB headquarters in Dhaka.

He was then buried at Shovulla graveyard with state honour, said family members.

Among others, local lawmaker Ekabar Hossain and UNO Afroza Akter Chowdhury, were present.

Shah Alam, who joined BGB in 1981, left a son and a daughter to mourn his death.

In Gopalganj, the namaz-e-janaza of two policemen, killed in a clash with Hefajat at the same place, were held at Police Lines ground Monday night.

The deceased are nayek Feroj Ahmed Khan of Faridpur district and constable Mohammad Zakaria of Gopalganj, reports a correspondent.

Among others, deputy commissioner Md Khalilur Rahman, police superintendent Md Mizanur Rahman, ASP Md Asraf Azim and officer in-charge of Sadar police station Zakir Hossain, were present at the janaza on Monday night.

The duo were laid to rest at their family graveyards yesterday morning.

## Man killed by his son

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A man was killed allegedly by his son at Uttar Kholey-Hajipara village in Gangachara upazila yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Abdul Hanif, 55. He was a day labourer.

Police and locals said Hanif rebuked his second wife Rabeya Khatun following an altercation over preparing his meal at around 2:30pm.

Angered by the incident, Rezaul Karim, son of Rabeya, hit Hanif with a bamboo stick, leaving him dead on the spot.

The body was sent to Rangpur Medical College and Hospital morgue for autopsy, said officer in-charge Pritthis Kumar Sarker.

Robul Islam, son of Hanif's first wife, filed a murder case against his stepmother Rabeya and brother Rezaul Karim in this connection.

Police already arrested Rabeya and Rezaul Karim in connection with the killing, said the OC.

## Announcement

### Written Test for the posts of Junior Officer & Junior Officer (Cash)

The written test for the posts of Junior Officer & Junior Officer (Cash) against our recent advertisement will be held on **17 May 2013, Friday 09:00 AM to 11:00 AM (02 hours)**.

The candidates are requested to download and print their Admit Card for written test from the Bank's website:

[www.publibangla.com/career.asp](http://www.publibangla.com/career.asp)

Admit Card will be available at the website only for the selected candidates. The candidates who submitted incomplete application or are not selected will get appropriate message.

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HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION, 26, DILKU SHA C/A, HEAD OFFICE, DHAKA.

## SNIPPETS

### Three kids drown

A CORRESPONDENT, Daudkandi, Comilla

Three kids including two cousins drowned in villages under Daudkandi upazila yesterday. They are Siam Hossain, 5, son of Khalil Ullah and his cousin Aman Ullah, 3, son of Oli Ullah of Tamta village and two and a half year old Arif, son of Abdur Rahim of Maligaon village. Family sources said Siam and Aman drowned while they were playing beside a ditch adjacent to their residence. Meanwhile, family members found Arif's body floating in a pond near their house around 6:00pm.

### New VC at JKNU

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Prof. Khondakar Ashraf Hossain has joined as the new vice chancellor of Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University (JKNU) in Trishal on Monday. He has been appointed as the third VC of the university on a four-year term, university sources said. Earlier, Prof. Dr. Syed Giasuddin Ahmed, the outgoing vice chancellor, completed his term on April 22. Prof. Ashraf served as teacher at English Department of Dhaka University for nearly four decades. During his career, he held many important positions including the posts of head of the English department and hall provost at Dhaka University.

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