



PHOTO: STAR
A litchi orchard at Salimpur village under Ishwardi upazila of Pabna is full of ripe or nearly ripe juicy summer fruits. Farmers in the upazila expect bumper yield of litchi as well as good business this year.

Time for mouthwatering litchis from Ishwardi

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR
TOPU, Pabna

Litchi farmers of Ishwardi upazila under the district expect bumper yield of the popular summer fruit as well as good business if the weather continues to remain favourable and there is no transport problem due to political unrest like hartal.

"May 20 to June 10 is the high time for litchi harvest in Ishwardi from where 80 to 100 truckloads of the fruit are supplied to different places across the country every season. We expect bumper yield if the weather remains well," said Kitab Ali Mondol, a top litchi grower in the area.

"We hope good sale for

fair prices if there is no hartal during these three weeks. Litchi business worth Tk 450 to 500 crore is expected from Ishwardi upazila this season," Kitab Ali, also founder secretary of Ishwardi farmers association, said.

"Of around 3,160 hectares of litchi cultivation area in Pabna district, 2,450 hectares is in Ishwardi upazila. We expect at least 24 thousand tonnes of litchi yield as most of the trees in thousands of orchards are full of ripe or nearly ripe fruit," said ABM Mostafizur Rahman, deputy director of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE).

"The soil of Ishwardi upazila beside the Padma

River is suitable for litchi cultivation. More and more people are engaging in the profitable farming in Pabna district," he said.

Around 30 villages of Salimpur and Shahapur unions of Ishwardi upazila are noted for litchi cultivation.

During recent visits to several villages including Pakshey, Shahapur, Salimpur, Joynagar, Maniknagar, Rooppur and Awtapara in the upazila, this correspondent found the farmers busy in their orchards to process litchis for marketing.

Bumper yield and good prices of litchi inspired the farmers to increase its cultivation gradually, locals said.

Accused in Rekkat murder case held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Detective Branch (DB) of police has arrested a youth in connection with local Swetchsebok League leader Rekkat murder case.

Arrestee Hari Juwel, 30, son of Horipada alias Monoranjan of Malipara area in the town, is one of the main killers of Rekkat.

Mizanur Rhaman, officer in-charge of DB, Bogra, said on secret information, police arrested Hari in the area on Monday evening.

On December 17 last year, Khairul Anam Rekkat, 35, senior joint convener of Bogra town unit Swetchsebok League, was killed by criminals at his business centre in the town.

Rekkat's father Abdul Kaium Ofa then filed a murder case accusing 11 identified and six unidentified people.

With the arrest of Hari, police so far rounded up eleven accused in the case.

Municipality employees in Bogra on strike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Employees of the municipality went on an indefinite work abstention yesterday, protesting 'an intentional action' against a doctor.

On May 2, an altercation took place between ward councillor Aminul Farid and Dr Abdullah Al Mamun of the municipality over a trivial matter.

Following the incident, the authorities put the doctor on force leave for one month and sent a letter to the ministry seeking his transfer on May 16, said the municipality sources.

Protesting the move, three unions of municipality employees at a meeting jointly announced the work abstention programme.

AKM Akil Ahmed, a leader of the employees, said they wrote a letter to the deputy commissioner to cancel the decision taken by the municipality authorities.

Counselor Aminul Farid said the authorities granted the doctor's one month leave for his abnormal behaviour and sent a letter to the ministry, seeking his transfer order.

Contacted, Dr Mamun said he was a victim of conspiracy.

Contacted, mayor of the municipality AKM Mahbubur Rahman said that steps were being taken to resolve the matter.

School pond being filled up to build market

Managing body's 'idea to raise funds'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Authorities of Bidyaganj Rani Rajbala Bahumukhi High School in Mymensingh Sadar upazila are constructing a market on a decades' old pond to increase earning of the school.

During a visit to the spot a couple of days ago, this correspondent found that the construction work was on under the supervision of Ansar Ali, president of local Kushtia union unit of Swetchhasebak League.

Ansar Ali, also a member of the school managing committee, said they are doing it for the sake of development of the school.

In 1946, Jibendra Kishore Acharya Chowdhury, a zamindar of Muktagachha, established the school on 3.78 acres of land that included a huge pond. Now 839 boys and girls in classes VI to X read in the school.

Locals alleged that the school pond is being filled up to financially benefit

a section of people rather than the institution.

The pond requires protection also because it serves as the only water source for nearby Bidyaganj Bazar, they said.

Earlier in 2010 and 2011, the school managing committee constructed 24 shops after taking Tk 1 lakh 30 thousand as advance money against each shop, said Md Manjurul Haque, headmaster of the school.

Around Tk 9,000 is realised as rent from the 24 shops per month and the money is spent for repair work of the school, he added.

Now the construction of 14 shops is going on and those have already been leased out at Tk two lakh each.

"We have to spend additional money to pay several part-time teachers. And so, the market is being constructed to increase the school income," said the headmaster.

He also claimed that they are not

filling up the pond but digging it deeper while the construction of the market will save the pond's bank from collapse in the rainy season.

Md Abdul Azim, assistant director of the Department of Environment, said the school authority cannot fill up the pond as such an act goes against the environment laws.

Rafiqul Islam Bhuiyan, Sadar upazila secondary education officer, said they will investigate the matter soon.

Md Shafiullah, district education officer said, "The school authority cannot fill up the pond. I do not know who gave them permission to do so. I was not informed of the matter earlier."

The Sadar upazila nirbahi officer, Kamaruzzaman Miah said he knew nothing about the matter before.

"I will take proper steps regarding the matter," he said.



PHOTO: STAR
Authorities of Bidyaganj Rani Rajbala Bahumukhi High School in Mymensingh Sadar upazila have continued construction of a market, filling up a good portion of the decades' old pond on the school compound.

Two 'smugglers' killed in 'shootout' with BGB

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Dinajpur

Two alleged smugglers were killed in a 'shootout' between members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and a gang of smugglers at Koya border point in Panchbibi upazila of Joypurhat district early yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Rana Mia, 22, and Shahidul Islam, 22, of Ratanpur-Baidyanathpur village in the upazila.

Lieutenant Colonel Khasru Sabbir, commanding officer of Joypurhat BGB Battalion-3, said on a tip-off that a gang was smuggling in contraband goods from

India through Koya, a team of BGB raided the area around 10.00pm.

When the BGB men, led by Havildar Rafique challenged them, about 100 smugglers, equipped with sharp weapons, swooped on the border guards.

In retaliation, the BGB team fired 12 bullets, leaving Rana and Shahidul critically injured.

They were admitted to Joypurhat Modern Hospital where Rana died at 3:15am and Shahidul at 4:30am yesterday.

The other smugglers fled the scene, leaving 200 bottles of phensidyl on the spot.


Bodies of Rana and Shahidul were handed over to their families in the afternoon.

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