



PHOTO: STAR

Women labourers are separating maize from chaff before transporting it to markets for sale on the premises of a farmer's house at Nargoon village in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila. Although several districts saw bumper yield of the item this year, farmers are not getting fair price for their produce.

Farmers unhappy for too low prices of maize

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Despite bumper production of maize in several districts, farmers are frustrated due to its drastic fall of prices in the local markets.

Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources told our Thakurgaon correspondent that maize was cultivated on 21,860 hectares of land against the target of 21,498 hectares while 1,62,733 tonnes were harvested against a production target of 1,55,864 tonnes in the district.

In Panchagarh, farmers cultivated maize on 14,620 hectares of land against the target of 14,201 hectares with a production target of 1,02,960 tonnes in the Rabi season and produced 1,22,995 tonnes.

Maize cultivation had been gaining popularity due to its lower production cost, easy cultivation process and favourable weather and soil condition in the areas and farmers had been getting good return on its cultivation for the last several years.

But maize farmers saw unusual fall in prices of maize this season.

Each maund (37.3242 kg) of maize is selling between Tk 300 and Tk 350 in the village markets whereas it was sold at Tk 450 to Tk 500 during the last

year's harvesting season.

Despite fall of prices there was poor number of buyers in the local markets.

Belal Hossain of Shingpara village under Sadar upazila of Thakurgaon told this correspondent that he cultivated maize on three bighas (.3306 acre) of land taking lease from a land owner of the village and produced 105 maunds of maize.

He sold his produces at Tk. 350 per maund and got Tk. 36,750. He was unable to make profit this season. Last year, he had made a profit of about Tk. 20,000 by cultivating the same land.

Shamsuzzoha, 55, of Sakoya village in Boda upazila of Panchagarh told this correspondent he cultivated maize on three bighas of land. He incurred losses as he sold his produces at low prices in the local market. His maize was also infected with fungus due to frequent rainfall and lack of sunny weather.

Deputy Director (DD) of Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Thakurgaon Bhupesh Kumar Mondal said that the prices of maize are a little low this year as the farmers cultivated it exceeding the targets.

Our Lalmonirhat correspondent says, farmers of five upazilas in the district are worried because of low prices of maize in local markets.

Farmers at different villages said that the prices of the grain fell by Tk 250 to Tk 300 per maund compared to last year's prices.

In the previous year, the price range was Tk 550 to Tk 600 a maund at the markets in the district, they said adding they were frustrated over the maize rate this year.

Asadul Islam Bapari, a farmer at Dahagram-Angarpota enclave of Patgram upazila said, he took some 40 maunds of maize to a weekly market but he could not sell it as the buyers offered only Tk 300 to 330 a maund. He said that his production cost was more than Tk 350 a maund.

"I cultivated maize on two acres of land and spent Tk 55,000 taking loan from Krishi Bank," he said.

"Most farmers had to sale maize at low prices as we have no godown to preserve it. Besides we have to repay loan taken from bank and NGOs", said maize grower Meher Ali at Bhotmari village of Kaliganj upazila.

According to sources in the agriculture extension department in Lalmonirhat, maize was cultivated on a total of 25,650 hectares of land against the target 15,100 hectares this year.

Only 8,500 hectares of land were cultivated for maize last year, they said.

Transport strike postponed

RU CORRESPONDENT

Transport owners and workers postponed their indefinite strike six hours into its enforcement in Rajshahi district yesterday.

The decision to postpone the strike came after a meeting between the transport owners and divisional administration at 12:00noon where the later assured the owners of meeting their demands soon.

Transport owners and workers association at a rally on Tuesday afternoon, called an indefinite transport strike for yesterday in all routes to and from the district, demanding a ban on plying of unauthorised vehicles on highways.

The other demands includes, immediate steps to stop illegal toll collection and alleged harassments by police on highways.

Police yet to rescue four abducted in Matiranga

UPDF, PBCP blame each other

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Four construction workers, abducted from Bangmara area under Matiranga upazila of the district on Sunday night, still remain untraced.

Enayet Hossain Manna, additional superintendent of police (ASP), Kagrachhari, said army and police personnel are conducting drives at different places to rescue the abducted construction workers.

Family members of the victims and the construction firm didn't file any case with the police station concerned as of yesterday.

On other hand, Parbatya Bangalee Chhatra Parishad (PBCP) has blamed United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) for abduction of the workers.

Refuting the allegation, Niron Chakma, press and information secretary of UPDF Khagrachhari unit, said PBCP has brought false allegation against their party men, who in no way were involved with the abduction of the four workers.

PBCP will hold a press conference in the district town today as its 48 hours ultimatum issued to the local administration to rescue the workers ended yesterday.

Four construction

workers were abducted from a bridge construction site in Bangmara area of the upazila allegedly by the armed cadres of UPDF for extortion at around 11.00pm on Sunday.

They are Faruk Hossain, Mohammad Raju, Mohammad Hasan and Liyakat Ali.

Police said the criminals might have kidnapped the workers, failing to get extortion money from the bridge contractor.

The bridge is being built on the Khagrachhari-Chittagong highway by the Roads and Highways Department under the Eastern Bridge Investment Project.



PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Abdul Karim Mia Road in Jheeltuli area of Faridpur town has become unfit for use only a few days after construction, causing serious trouble for vehicles as well as pedestrians.

স্পেলিং এন্ড খেলা জমতে এটার এই জন স্পেলারদের নিয়ে

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