

Hog plum yield aplenty in Pirojpur

Traders sending the popular fruit to different districts across the country

HABIBUR RAHMAN, Pirojpur

Growers and wholesalers of hog plum, locally known as *amra*, are passing a busy time with plucking, selling and buying the popular fruit during the ongoing peak season.

This nutritious fruit grows aplenty in Kawkhali, Nesarabad, Nazirpur and Pirojpur Sadar upazilas under the district.

Flowers appear in the trees in the Bangla months of Magh and Falgun (mid-January to mid-February) and the fruit is plucked from Ashar to Ashwin (mid-June

to mid-September).

This year's *amra* yield is higher than last year's, said Mizanur Rahman, a grower of Kawkhali upazila.

Farmers said they sell a sack containing around 1500 pieces of *amra* for Tk 800-900 to the local wholesale buyers and they sell each sack for Tk 1400-1500 to those who bring it to Dhaka and sell for Tk 1800-2000 in the wholesale market there.

It is also sent to other areas of the country including Chittagong and Sylhet by trucks.

"It costs around Tk 200

to transport each sack of *amra* from Kawkhali to Dhaka," said Jahangir Hossain, a wholesale buyer at Kawkhali launch terminal market.

Farmers alleged that most of the profit goes to the middlemen as the fruit is sold three to four times.

Cultivation of *amra*, its plucking, trade and transport also create job opportunity for hundreds of people in the four upazilas.

The trees are planted beside the roads or in orchards.

After planting the trees, flowers appear within five

years and 200-300 kg of fruit can be collected from a mature tree every season.

This fruit, which is rich in Vitamin C, calcium, carotene, sugar and iron, can be naturally preserved for around two weeks.

Most of the growers sell the season's fruit of each garden to wholesalers in advance and the latter get high profit by selling it from there.

According to Department of Agriculture Extension in Pirojpur, there are *amra* orchards on 513 hectares of land in the district.



PHOTO: STAR

A trawler loaded with hog plums reaches Kawkhali launch terminal in Pirojpur district from where huge quantities of the popular fruit are sent to different areas of the country.

Boy abducted from Bogra rescued in Barisal

Kidnapped Jhenidah trader traceless for 52 days

STAR COUNTRY DESK

A three-year-old boy, abducted from Bogra town on February 10, was rescued from Natun Bazar area under Barisal Sadar upazila on Tuesday, according to our correspondent.

The boy was identified as Talha, 3, son of Sajedur Rahman, muazzin of Akashtara Mosque in Bogra town.

Police said the parents of the abducted child saw a boy weeping on the road near their residence. The boy

said his name was Helal Khan, alias Lal Chan, and he was 17 years old. He added that he was from Barisal and that there was no one to care for him.

He was given shelter by the poor parents of Talha. On February 10, he abducted the minor child when there was no one in the house, and took him to Barisal, police added.

Following the missing of Talha, his father lodged a general diary with Sadar Police Station in Bogra on February 11, 2015.

Aslam Hossain, sub-inspector of the police station and the investigating officer (IO), started investigating the matter.

At one stage, Aslam Hossain met some children who had returned from Jessor Children Correction Centre in the first week of July. They told him that a detainee of the centre had come to Bogra and might have committed the crime.

The IO went to the centre in August and found Helal there. He interrogated Helal and took his picture. He

showed the picture to Talha's father, who identified Helal.

Later, on information, police rescued the abducted child from a hotel owner's house at Natun Bazar area under Sadar upazila of Barisal district on Tuesday night.

Away in Jhenidah, a trader, abducted from Harinakundo upazila in Jhenidah 52 days ago, still remains traceless, reports our correspondent.

The victim is Nazir Biswas, 55, of Narayankandi village of the upazila. He is a rice trader.

His son Ashrafur Islam said a land-related case among his family is under trial. He said his father went to Jhenidah for appearing before the court on July 13. He was abducted from near a brick kiln at Chandpur village in the upazila while returning home.

On the same night at around 9:00pm, the abductors phoned Ashrafur and demanded Tk 5 lakh ransom.

As Ashrafur failed to pay Tk 5 lakh the abductors again phoned him on July 14 and handed over the mobile to his father. Ashrafur understood that his father had been tortured for ransom.

When they did not get the money, the abductors told Nazir on July 22 to talk to his son for the last time.

Ashrafur added that he filed a GD on July 13 with Harinakundo Police Station. An abduction case was lodged with the same police station on July 23. A man has been arrested in this connection, but Nazir has not been found as yet.



PHOTO: STAR

Mother holds three-year-old Talha, rescued from Natun Bazar in Barisal Sadar upazila on Tuesday, seven months after his abduction from Bogra town, at the office of Bogra superintendent of police yesterday. Standing beside is the kid's father Sajedur Rahman, muazzin of a mosque in Bogra town.



PHOTO: STAR

A couple carrying their goats start for a safer place from their flooded house at Chandanbaisha village in Sariakandi upazila under Bogra district yesterday.

Flood situation worsens

Over four lakh marooned

STAR COUNTRY DESK

The flood situation in Jamalpur, Gaibandha, Kurigram and Bogra districts worsened further as the rivers were flowing above danger mark yesterday.

At least 1.46 lakh people in five upazilas of Jamalpur remained marooned as the Jamuna was flowing 39 centimetres above the danger mark around 12 noon, reports our correspondent.

The upazilas are Islampur, Dewanganj, Bakshiganj, Madarganj, and Sarisabari, said local Water Development Board (WDB) sources.

Of the areas, Islampur and Dewanganj were affected badly, said Nayan Ali, chief assistant of District Relief and Rehabilitation

office.

About 50 tonnes of rice have been allocated for the flood victims in the upazilas, he said.

According to Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), about 9302 hectares of cropland have been damaged due to the floods.

Our Kurigram correspondent reports: Nine more upazilas went under water as flood situation in the district turned grim.

Over one lakh and 50 thousand people in the areas remained marooned, said WDB sources.

The Dharla and Brahmaputra were flowing 48 and 13 cm above the danger level yesterday. However, the Teesta and Dudhkumar were flowing below danger mark.

The flood-hit people are facing acute crisis of shelter, food, fuel for cooking and fodder.

The district administration distributed 250 tonnes of rice and Tk 2.50 lakh among the marooned people.

In Gaibandha, flood situation in the district worsened due to unceasing heavy downpour and onrush of water from the upstream yesterday, reports our correspondent.

According to WDB, the Brahmaputra and Ghatot were flowing 26 and three cm above the danger mark, inundating seven upazilas.

The affected upazilas are Sundarganj, Sadar, Fulchhari, Saghata, Sadullapur, Palashbari and Gobindaganj.

About 39,448 hectares of farmland went under floodwater, said local DAE sources.

As heavy shower continued for the last three days, at least three bridges in Mohimaganj union under Gobindaganj upazila collapsed, snapping road communications.

According to our Bogra correspondent, over one lakh people in five upazilas of the district have been marooned as the Jamuna and Bangalee were flowing 52 and 33 cm above the danger mark at Shariakandi point in the last three days.

The upazilas are Sonatola, Shariakandi, Dhunat, Shibganj and Adamdighi, said district administration sources.

Jubo League leader murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

A Jubo League leader was stabbed to death in Basabati area of the town on Wednesday night.

The deceased, Sohag Sheikh, 25, was general secretary of Ward No 8 unit of Awami League's youth front.

Quoting locals, police said an unidentified gang stabbed Sohag in bus terminal area at around 8:15pm, leaving him critically injured.

Being informed by locals, police went to the spot and took Sohag to Bagerhat Sadar Hospital where he died at around 9:45pm.

After post-mortem examination at Bagerhat Sadar Hospital, police handed over the body of the Jubo League leader to his family.

Tozammel Haque, officer-in-charge of Bagerhat Model Police Station, said law enforcers are raiding different areas to arrest the killers.

A youth named Dulal Akan was picked up from Harikhali area in the town yesterday for interrogation, the OC added.

Madrasa boy electrocuted

UNB, Chapainawabganj

A madrasa student died from electrocution at Rehaichal in Sadar upazila yesterday morning.

The deceased was identified as Mizanur Rahman, 14, student of Sangkarbati Hifjul Madrasa, and son of Anwarul Islam, a resident of Haripur Dewan Para of the area.

Officer-in-Charge of Sadar Police Station Golam Martuza said Mizanur came in contact with a live electric wire while he was collecting leaves from a jackfruit tree in the area around 7:00am. He died on the spot.



PHOTO: STAR

The potholed road in front of the post office in Jhalakathi town remains a nuisance for vehicles and pedestrians.

Jhalakathi town's main road in awful state

Numerous potholes cause trouble for vehicles, pedestrians

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhalakathi

The main road in Jhalakathi town stretching from Sadhanar More to Petrol Pump More has become unfit for vehicular movement due to numerous potholes, much to the sufferings of the townspeople.

"We cannot ply rickshaws on the road as the wheels fall into the holes," said Shahed Ali, a rickshaw puller. Three or four accidents occur every day, he added.

Dibash, a road-side shopkeeper, said the road becomes a trap at night because there is not enough light on the street.

Authorickshaws often get overturned when they fall into a pothole, causing injuries to passengers, he added.

"It is very difficult to walk to school as the road is water-logged in most areas," said Shahin, a student of Jhalakathi Government High School.

Travelling on the road is very painful for patients who come to Jhalakathi Sadar Hospital and other clinics that are beside the road.

Roads and Highways Department and the Jhalakathi Municipality are responsible for maintaining the road.

"We have called a tender for repairing different roads

in Jhalakathi, and it will be repaired after the rainy season," said A K M Hamidur Rahman, executive engineer of Roads and Highways Department of Jhalakathi.

"The road has not been repaired after 2012, but we try to keep it usable by laying bricks," said Md Abu Hanif, executive engineer of the municipality.

"It is a problem for the city dwellers because the road has not been repaired as yet. We have sent a letter to the ministry concerned, seeking fund for repairing the road," said Afzal Hossen Rana, the municipal mayor of Jhalakathi municipality.