

Good prospect in commercial net-house gerbera farming

SHYKH SERAJ
A few days back, I watched a movie called 'Tulip Fever'. It showed the history and atmosphere of the Tulip Mania Period that took place in The Netherlands during the 17th century. In the film 'Tulip Fever', I saw the excitement about the varieties of tulips. Tulip tree grows from a tulip bulb, just like an onion tree grows from an onion bulb. Auctions used to take place with tulip bulbs back then. At the auction, flower merchandisers earned a lot in a short time. On the other hand, the common flower farmers gained very little.



Shykh Seraj is Bangladesh's pioneer development journalist. He received country's two highest civilian honours, *Swadhinata Puroshkar* and *Akshoka and Bangla Academy Fellow*. He also received highest award for agricultural journalism from the United Nations, *FAO A.H. Boerma Award*, *Gusi Peace Prize* (Philippines) and many other prestigious accolades at home and abroad. At Channel i, he's the Founder Director and Head of News. He's also Director and Host of Channel i's popular agro-documentary, *Hridoye Mati O Manush*.

I used to write regularly on 'Shaptahik Robbar'. I wrote a feature on the flower market named 'High Court-e Moushumi Fuler Bahar'. Our friend, renowned entertainment journalist Abdur Rahman opened the first commercial flower shop named 'Pushpak' at Motijheel. Abdur Rahman's father, late Ali Ahmed, opened a seed shop named 'Dhaka Seed Store' at Rajuk Avenue of Motijheel, about seventy years ago. It was the first nursery and seed shop in Dhaka city, just for your information.

Later on flower markets started to develop gradually in Shahbagh area. The use of flowers also increased in social events. Bangladesh's then President Hussain Muhammad Ershad is credited with the increase of the use of flowers across the country. He popularised the use of flowers in ceremonies and during exchange of greetings. Along with globalisation, flower is now a part of daily requirements. No festival or celebration is imaginable without flowers. It is also becoming indispensable during exchange of greetings. So flower is now an important agricultural product.

You must remember Sher Ali Sardar. In 1983, Sher Ali Sardar was the first to cultivate tuberose on 30 acres of land at Godkhali, Jhikorgachha upazila of Jessore. Through this, flower cultivation and marketing started commercially in the country. Godkhali is

ries on the spread of flower cultivation at different times. The European flowers such as chrysanthemum, gerbera, carnation and tulip are being cultivated for the first time in Bangladesh. The main person credited for the cultivation and expansion of these flowers is a Belgian development worker John Paul Perin. My friendship with him grew while working with flowers.

Dear readers, you may have watched flower cultivation and its commercial activities from Netherlands' Keukenhof, FloraHolland, Royal Van Zanten on Hridoye Mati O Manush (Soil & People in Heart). Before that, in 2006, from Kunming of China, I presented the cultivation and commercial activities of gerbera flowers to you. I have even shown you the picture of large scale flower production in greenhouse from East African country Uganda. I have shown you Qatar's flower kingdom.

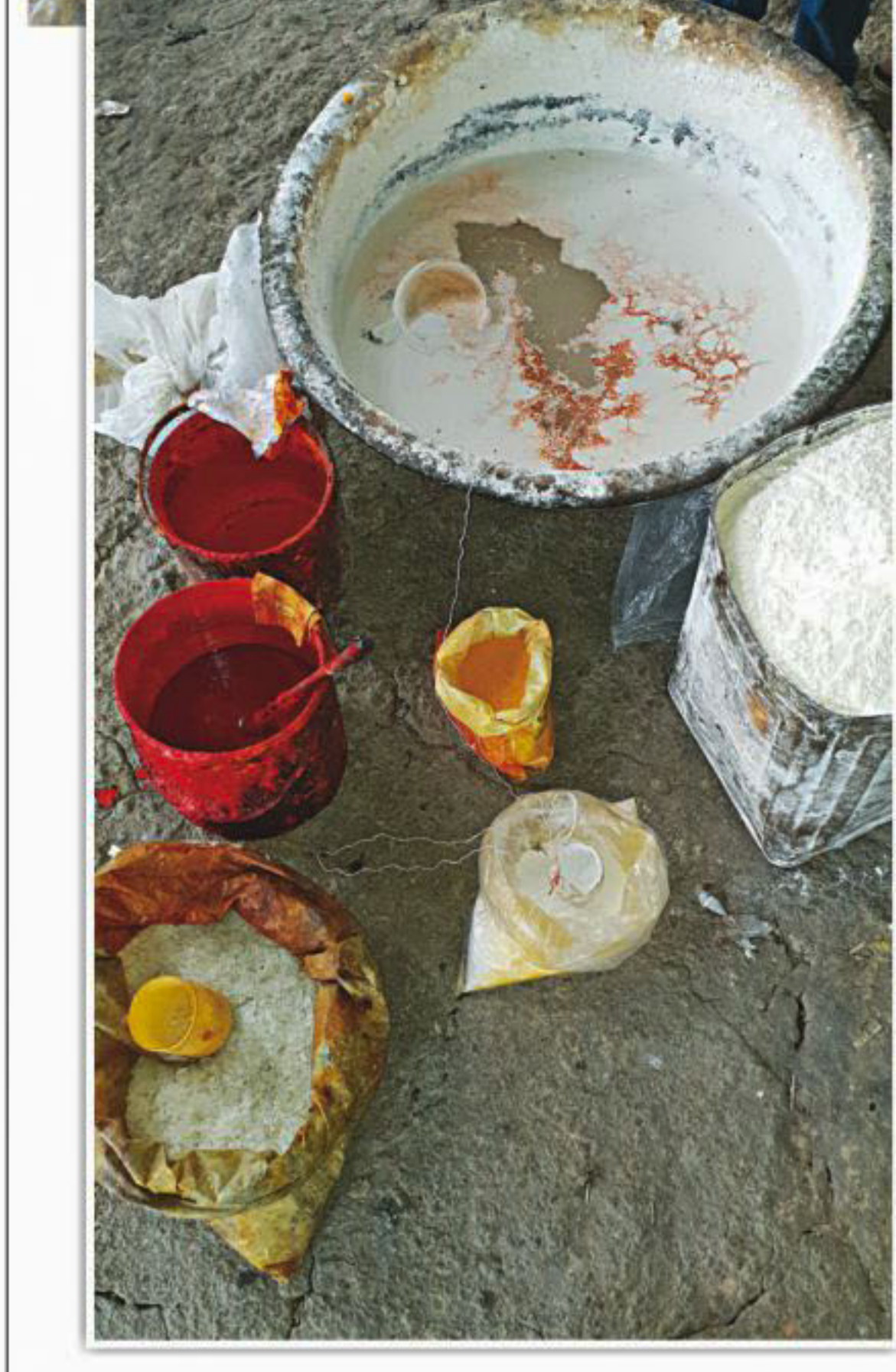
After all these years I have seen the reflection of these success stories at Nishinda village of Mymensingh's Bhaluka. New Asia Group is cultivating gerbera flower in poly net house. I was impressed to see the huge flower cultivation in the net house at the village. It is very different from Godkhali's flower cultivation method. Farmers of Godkhali are cultivating flowers by adapting the technology of developed countries in their method

system to create steam with water. Even though it is a tropical area, modern gerbera field has been established very nicely here. The overall activities of this farm are being monitored by some excellent young people. After completing their studies, they are supervising this modern farm as corporate jobs.

After planning proper soil management, beds for flower cultivation have been prepared. There are 164 beds in each shed. Eye-catching gerbera of different colours are blossoming in each bed. If gerbera is cultivated under proper management, it yields in a few days. Here, after three months of greenhouse construction and planting, flower marketing started. Now, 11/12 thousand gerberas are going to the capital's Agargaon and Shahbagh flower markets every day. Mehedi Hasan, an executive of this organisation, says that the gerberas have stopped coming from China.

Greenhouse flower cultivation is new in this area. Even to local farmers and farm workers, it is a wonder. Local farmers are delighted to be involved in harvesting and marketing the flowers in three months of planned cultivation. They feel oneness with the flowers' fragrance. Alongside harvesting the flowers, modern packaging system is also important. Local women are involved with this work. They find it a great employment opportunity.

I am well aware that agriculture is changing worldwide. This change is happening in technology as well



FACTORY OF ADULTERATED MOLASSES

A mobile court led by the upazila nirbahi officer yesterday raided five factories making adulterated molasses in Rahimpur and Udanpara villages in Lalpur upazila of Natore and fined five traders a total of Tk 2 lakh. The court aided by Rapid Action Battalion also seized and destroyed 1980 kg of adulterated molasses and the ingredients for making it. *Inset: Seized ingredients for making adulterated molasses.*

PHOTO: STAR

Since the Tulip Mania, people started trying to invent new varieties of tulip. In 2015, I visited the flower kingdom of The Netherlands, Keukenhof (kitchen garden). It is also known as the Garden of Europe and is world's one of the largest flower gardens, located in Lisse, South Holland. Approximately seven million flower bulbs are planted annually in the park on 32 hectares of land. I saw how flowers have changed their economy. How their lives have become colourful with the colours of flowers. Even now, almost 300 years after the Tulip Mania, plenty of research is being done on tulips.

The history of commercial flower cultivation in Bangladesh is not very old. The revolution that began in Jhikorgachha of Jessore in the 80s, has now spread across the country. Earlier, neighbouring country India dominated the flower market.

I want to share a personal story with you. When I was getting married, my friend Nannu was an engineer at Bangladesh Biman. He used to regularly work on Dhaka-Calcutta flights. During that time, business of Hindi movies on VCRs was booming. In the movies, every wedding scene must have the bride and groom wearing flower garlands of tuberose and rose. Everyone loved this scene. And in our country, embroidered beads were exchanged. I told Nannu to bring two tuberose garlands from Calcutta for me and my wife. And so he did. With those two garlands, my wife and I did our exchange of garlands.

Forty years ago, flower cultivation was unbelievable in this country. In luxury, elite families used to keep flower trees in their courtyard or orchard. Some used to sell flowers in front of the High Court's main entry, near Curzon Hall. You could say that was the first flower market in Bangladesh. I remember,



Shykh Seraj with happy gerbera farmers in Mymensingh's Bhaluka.

PHOTO: HRIDOYE MATI O MANUSH

now called 'The capital of flowers'. Field after field, there are many varieties of colourful flowers. According to Bangladesh Flower Society, five thousand farmers from 75 villages of Godkhali, are involved in flower production and marketing in Bangladesh. Flowers are grown commercially on about 12 thousand acres of land in 24 districts around the country. Nearly two million people are involved directly or indirectly with flower cultivation and business. Around 200 crore taka (23.5 million US\$) yearly flower market has been created in the country. Apart from Jessore, flowers are cultivated commercially in Savar, Gazipur, Narayanganj, Narsingdi, Satkhira, Cumilla and areas around Dhaka city.

I have seen this revolution of farmers in flower cultivation very closely. From BTV's 'Mati O Manush' (Soil & People), I have been making featured documenta-

with limited expenditure. But flower cultivation in Nishinda village fully follows the technology of developed countries with big investments. India is providing technical support for the flower production activities in the poly net house. Ten varieties of world famous gerbera are being cultivated in the net house. A modern agricultural donor agency from India is also supplying seedlings.

In August 2017, the construction of the net houses began. And already, each poly net house is filled with gerberas. They have already started marketing. This is not much different from Europe's well-planned and cool weather-adjustable poly net or greenhouse. However, it is more specialised and durable compared to the greenhouse made with local equipment in Bangladesh's flower capital, Godkhali, Jessore. There is the method of reducing temperatures in the net house. Similarly, there is a

as in investment and business. Keeping pace with the developed world, industrial entrepreneurs are craving for expansion of commercial agriculture. These farm-fans have already made successful examples. This practice will expand in days to come. Through this, demand for chemical-free crops will be met. At the same time, export market will be created while meeting our own demand. We have already decreased our dependency on imported flowers. May be in a short time, we will be able to proceed towards making flowers a profitable export item. In this race of changed and the most advanced farming scenario, retaining the participation of the farmers and rural populace is the biggest challenge. We need to think about these matters from this very moment. Considering farmer's interest, the government and the organisations concerned should come forward and make a concrete future plan for flower farmers.



Gaibandha Deputy Commissioner Gautum Chandra Pal yesterday hands over allocation letter and cheque for Tk 2.50 lakh to Pricilla Murmu, headmaster of Shyamol-Mongal-Romesh Smriti Bidya Niketan at Madarpur Santal village in Gobindaganj and gave Tk 5,000 to each teacher of the school, where Santal children can learn in their mother language.

PHOTO: STAR

Dev scheme for Santals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

The district administration has undertaken various development programmes for ethnic Santal community in Gobindaganj upazila.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Gautum Chandra Pal yesterday gave a grant of Tk 2.50 lakh to Shyamol-Mongal-Romesh Smriti Bidya Niketan at Madarpur Santal village, named after Shyamol, Mongal and Romesh, who died in a clash with police during an eviction drive in Sahebganj sugarcane farm area on November 6, 2016.

"We are arranging allocation of khash land for landless Santal families, job opportunities, widow and elderly allowance, and renovation of ramshackle huts for them," he said.

Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation				
BSC Bhaban, Saltgola Road, Chattogram				
Ref No: 28.03.0000.055.04.003.18/IBFPL-LA/		Date: 24/09/2018		
Expression of Interest (EOI) for appointment of consulting firm for carrying out land acquisition and requisition related all activities along the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline (IBFPL) route across Panchagarh, Nilphamari and Dinajpur districts in Bangladesh.				
1	Ministry/division	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/Energy & Mineral Resources Division.		
2	Agency	Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation.		
3	Procuring entity name	Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation.		
4	Procuring entity district	Chattogram		
5	Expression of Interest for	Expression of Interest (EOI) for appointment of consulting firm for carrying out land acquisition and requisition related all activities along the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline (IBFPL) route across Panchagarh, Nilphamari and Dinajpur districts.		
6	EOI Ref. No.	28.03.0000.055.04.003.18/IBFPL-LA/		
7	Date	24-09-2018		
KEY INFORMATION				
8	Procurement method	Quality & Cost Based Selection (QCBS) Method, NCT.		
FUNDING INFORMATION				
9	Budget & source of fund	Own fund of BPC.		
10	Development partners	Not applicable.		
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
11	Project/program name	Construction of India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline (IBFPL) for transportation of diesel from Siliguri Marketing Terminal (SMT), India to Parbotpur Depot, Dinajpur, Bangladesh.		
12	EOI publication date	25 September, 2018.		
13	EOI last selling date	N/A		
14	EOI closing date & time	10 October, 2018 Time: 14:30 hrs.		
15	EOI opening date & time	10 October, 2018 Time: 15:00 hrs.		
16	Name & address of the office	Selling EOI documents: N/A Receiving EOI documents: Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation, BSC Bhaban, Saltgola Road, Chattogram. Opening EOI documents: Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation, BSC Bhaban, Saltgola Road, Chattogram.		
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT				
17	Brief description of the assignment	Scope of work of the firm for Consultancy services for carrying out land Acquisition & Requisition related all activities: (1) Checking/Review of 'Cha' form, 'Uma' form, Field book ('Gha' form) and Land Schedule and collection of khatians Nos., name and case Nos. if any missing along the pipeline route and filling the same from missing khatians. (2) Rerouting of the pipeline route, if necessary, collection, checking/review of the cadastral & Mouza maps (RS and BS) and collection of the same if missing. (3) Preparation of Route in tracing clothes (at least seven sets) showing relevant installations along the route. (4) Announcement and Publication of banner. (5) Taking still picture and video of the land along the pipeline route in consultation with DC and other offices. (6) Preparation of layout plan with appropriate scale if required. (7) Taking approval of relevant local authorities if required. (8) Preparation of documents in land acquisition and requisition related activities as per Act 2017. (9) Preparation of all notices (section 4, 7, 8 for acquisition and 20 (i) and 8 for requisition). (10) List of standing crops owner. (11) To survey the land along the Right of Way of the pipeline with representatives of DC offices to determine the actual quantity of the lands, status of the land including listing of land owners etc. (12) Participation in land acquisition and requisition activities with respective DC offices. (13) In addition to above, preparation of other documents if required as per Immoveable Land Acquisition and Requisition Act 2017, DC office and Land Ministry. (14) Collection of Land Rate, structure Rate and crops Rate etc. (15) Assisting in above matters up to completion of the project. (16) Preparation of estimates in respect of compensation, land, standing crops, trees, structure, forest etc. (17) Resolve of dispute, arbitration (if any). (18) Submission of Report for and DLAC" DC and others.		
18	Experience, resources & delivery capacity required	The EOI would be evaluated on the basis of the following information of the firm such as (i) Copies of registration certificates up-to-date TIN, VAT (ii) Having experience in Checking/Reviewing Cha form, Uma form, Field book (Gha form), Land schedule, collection of Khatian No., name, case No. & other related service for acquisition & requisition of land considering Petroleum Safety Rule & Land Acquisition and Requisition of Immoveable Property Ordinance 1982 in Govt./Semi-Govt./Autonomous bodies, financial institutions and private sectors of Bangladesh during last 10 years (iii) Turnover (Last Five Years) (iv) Three Years Financial Report (Balance sheet, Cash flow & Income Statement) (v) Support service of the consulting firms (vi) Availability of key professional staffs with the experience of similar works/assignments.		
19	Other details	Interested parties will be required to submit the EOI (1 (one) original & 2 (two) copies) to the address below before the EOI closing date & time. EOIs will be opened in presence of the representative of the participating parties, if any, at 15:00 hrs pm (BST) on 10 October, 2018. In case of any unavoidable circumstances EOIs will be opened on next working day at same time. Upon receipt of EOIs, the interested parties those are deemed best suited to perform the assignment will be shortlisted parties. Therefore, Request for Proposal (RFP) documents will be issued to the short-listed parties. The party will be selected based on Quality & Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method in accordance with the procedures set out in the PPA-2006 and PPR-2008 of GOB.		
20	Price of the EOI documents	Not applicable.		
21	Ref. No.	Phasing of service	Location	Indicative start date (month/yr)
		Not applicable	Panchagarh, Nilphamari, Rangpur and Dinajpur districts	November 2018
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS				
22	Name of official inviting EOI		Mustafa Qudrat-El-Elahi.	
23	Designation of official inviting EOI		General Manager (Planning & Development), BPC.	
24	Address of official inviting EOI		Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation, BSC Bhaban, Saltgola Road, Chattogram.	
25	Contact details of official inviting EOI		Cell No: 01755587628, 0177774693, 01711308367, bpcplanning@gmail.com	
26	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs without assigning any reason whatsoever.			
GD-2261				