



## Farmers come to our rescue, yet again

PINAKI ROY, SOHEL PARVEZ and MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

When Abdul Haque woke up at dawn yesterday, not even the bone-chilling cold or the fog could stop him from getting out onto the field. The 46-year-old, like the past couple of days, rushed out to his field in Barishal's Bakerganj to harvest the Aman paddy he had planted during the monsoon.

"It's so foggy that I couldn't even see the farmers right next to me," he said after returning from gathering crops at noon.

For many years, Abdul has been cultivating Aman, the second biggest crop after Boro, on nearly six acres of land, a portion of which he had rented out from other landowners.

The yield, a part of which he stores for his family, was satisfactory, validating his hard work through the sun, rain and cold.

Like Abdul, farmers across the country could be seen on the fields from dawn to dusk, working tirelessly to produce food for the nation.

They do all this without even the assurance of profitable prices or an improvement of their living standards.

Throughout the year 2022, they have remained on the fields to produce food - rice, vegetables, oilseeds, pulses, maize, and more - to keep the nation from depending on the global market, as the prices there have increased to unprecedented levels due to the Russia-Ukraine war and the Covid-19 pandemic fallout.

Their efforts to grow food continued at a time when Bangladesh economy faced myriad challenges -- the dollar crisis resulting from higher import bills than export and remittance earnings; and high prices of fuel, fertiliser, food commodities.

Despite repeated natural calamities, namely flood and scanty rainfall, a high amount of Aman is being harvested in many parts of the country.

Crop production estimates by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the national statistical agency, are yet to be available.

However, Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) estimates 2022's Aman rice production at 1.63 crore tonnes, which is a record high.

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**In the year 2020, when Covid-19 had the world in its deadly grip, forcing the country to opt for lockdown and bringing the economy to a standstill, it was the farmers who still went out to their fields and worked relentlessly to keep the flow of food steady for the nation.**



CROPS OF GOLD ... A farmer smiles ear to ear, evidently ecstatic with his Aman yield this year in Tentultala beel of Khulna's Batiaghata upazila. Farmers across the upazila have been busy gathering the crop and till yesterday, at least 70% of all the Aman paddy on 93,185 hectares of agricultural fields in Khulna has already been harvested.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

We made no compromise on textbooks

Says PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said although the government has imposed austerity measures to save public money amid the global crisis due to the coronavirus and the Russia-Ukraine war, it did not compromise on printing free textbooks for children.

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## New curriculum rolls out, preparations not enough

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The new curriculum that takes effect today might be off to a haphazard start as the teachers have not been brought up to speed with the vastly different programme.

With a view to better preparing children for the challenges of the modern world, the government has overhauled the curriculum to enable students to acquire competencies like communication, listening, and analytical and problem-solving skills. Students of classes 1, 6 and 7 will get books

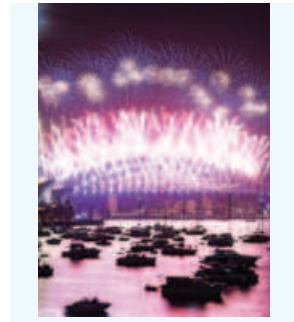
based on the new curriculum from today. For students of classes 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9, the new curriculum will take effect in 2024. Class 5 and 10 students will get new books in January 2025.



Before a curriculum takes effect, teachers are given training and provided with a guide to equip themselves to effectively deliver the syllabus.

But the new curriculum, which aims to wean off students from rote memorisation, has not been piloted at the primary level due to delayed release of funds.

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The Daily Star

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**A VERY HAPPY 2023**

Jamaat looks to rear its head again

RASHIDUL HASAN

Jamaat-e-Islami sees the simultaneous movement with BNP and other like-minded political parties as a chance to revive itself and return to politics at a time when many want it banned for opposing the country's independence in 1971.

Pro-liberation organisations have long demanded that the religious extremist group

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