



Farmers from 60 upazilas in Mymensingh have successfully cultivated more vibrant varieties of cauliflower. Coming in colours such as green, yellow and purple, these varieties of cauliflower are also more nutritious than their traditional counterpart.

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL, COLLECTED

## Rupali Bank appointed as primary dealer

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The central bank yesterday allowed Rupali Bank Ltd to carry out its operations as a primary dealer regularly, according to a notice yesterday.

In December 2021, the Bangladesh Bank appointed the state-run lender as a primary dealer of government securities for a year.

The BB gave its permission to Rupali Bank to run its operation as a primary dealer on a regular basis after taking into account its activities in the primary and secondary market in the past one year.

There are 24 primary dealer banks in the country. In Bangladesh, tradable securities include Treasury Bills (T-Bills) of 91, 182 and 364-day maturities and Bangladesh Government Treasury Bonds (BGTBs) of 2, 5, 10, 15 and 20-year maturities.

T-Bills and BGTBs are issued through auctions and only primary dealers can submit bids in the auctions. Other institutions and individuals can take part in the auctions but through the dealer banks, according to the BB website.

# Coloured cauliflower showing bright prospects

MIRZA SHAKIL

For the first time in Bangladesh, the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) has succeeded in growing coloured cauliflower on an experimental basis.

And seeing as coloured cauliflower provide good yields while also being slightly more nutritious than the traditional variety, local buyers are showing a keen interest in the crop.

According to sources at the DAE office in Mymensingh, a total of 60 farmers from 60 upazilas across six districts in the region were provided the necessary seedlings, pesticide and advice for cultivating coloured cauliflower.

The eye-catching variety of the crop is not only flying off the shelves in local markets, but buyers are also collecting it directly from the fields, farmers say.

So, farmers in the region are becoming increasingly interested in cultivating coloured cauliflower as it is easy to grow and provides better returns than the white variety.

Red, yellow, pink and purple cauliflower were cultivated in areas under the Crop Intensification Project in greater Mymensingh.

Not only are they beautiful to look at, but coloured cauliflowers are more nutritious compared to the traditional variety as they contain a higher concentration of vitamins A and B and beta carotene.

There is also huge demand for this version of the crop both at home and abroad.

Ziaur Rahman, director of the Crop Intensification Project in Mymensingh, said they first saw that a local nursery in Jamalpur

had cultivated coloured cauliflower using seeds from India while visiting the district back in 2021.

After collecting seedlings from the nursery, Rahman had a farmer in Barhatta upazila of Netrokona cultivate the crop while providing him the necessary support and got good yields.

"This time, by cultivating this type of cauliflower using 60 farmers in 60 upazilas, we made sure that the soil and climate

**A total of 60 farmers from 60 upazilas across six districts in the region were provided with necessary seedlings, pesticide and advice for cultivating coloured cauliflower**

conditions are conducive for producing good yields," he added.

Rahman went on to say that coloured cauliflower is turning heads at the moment as most people are seeing the crop for the first time.

"So, the price is a little high right now but if the crop is grown widely, then buyers would get it at a lower price," he said, adding that coloured cauliflower have high export potential.

With support from the DAE, Arshed Ali, a vegetable grower of Chhabisha village under Bhanpur upazila in Tangail, cultivated yellow and pink varieties of cauliflower and got good yields from his

one bigha farm.

Apart from seedlings, the DAE provided him with the necessary organic fertilisers, pesticides and advice.

"Buyers are paying farmers a good price for coloured cauliflower as they get sold out as soon as they reach the market," Ali said, adding that medium-sized cauliflower are being sold for Tk 50 per piece.

Spurred on by the good results, Ali now plans to expand cultivation next season.

Mohammad Ali, a farmer from the same village, said he took advice from Ali on cultivating coloured cauliflower.

"I hope to grow this crop in the future too," he added.

DAE sources say coloured cauliflower is grown the same way as the traditional variety with the sole caveat being that only organic fertilisers can be used.

The crop can be harvested just two-and-a-half months, or roughly 80 days, after planting the seedlings.

Dr Humayun Kabir, agriculture officer of Bhanpur upazila, said local farmers initially showed little interest when the initiative was taken to grow coloured cauliflower.

Later, when Ali expressed interest, he was assisted by the DAE with the required seedlings, organic fertilisers and necessary advice.

"We wanted to see if the crop was suitable for cultivation in the local soil and climate and we have succeeded in this regard," he added.

Kabir then said this type of cauliflower is eaten as a salad in different countries, including Australia and China.

## Why put all degrees and titles on visiting cards

MAHTAB UDDIN AHMED

Walking back from the corner shop, Mr Chowdhury met a neighbour who inquired about what his sons are doing nowadays.

Mr Chowdhury explained that his eldest son completed his Master's in Economics, the middle son has a PhD in Artificial Intelligence, and the youngest one is a politician.

The neighbour was impressed by the older two, but about the youngest, he said, "I would have thrown him out of the house."

Chowdhury quickly responded, saying: "But he is the only one earning money. The rest are unemployed."

The moral of the story: a degree is not everything in one's career.

I had earned my certified management accountant degree well before I joined Unilever and was excited to add it to my visiting card. But then I observed that others in the office did not mention their degrees in their cards, no matter how prestigious it was.

Perplexed, I asked the head of HR, who confirmed that there is an unwritten policy of not mentioning degrees on the card because your work is more important than your degrees and that it may be taken as an attempt on your part to imply that you are superior to those with whom you share the card. That was a well learnt lesson at the start of my career, a lesson that I try to impart whenever I am handed a card filled with such details.



I was under the spotlight recently when I ran an election campaign for a professional body. My followers urged me to have my professional degrees on my card, arguing that it would not be advantageous if I didn't. But I refused to budge despite the highlighted risks and the positive election results proved such efforts' futility.

The benefits of tertiary and professional qualifications lie in the edge they give you in terms of increased knowledge and expertise, career advancement, networking, and relatively speedier personal growth during the early stage of your career.

While listing degrees and certifications on a visiting card can indicate a person's education and professional qualifications, it does not necessarily make one superior if that is the intent of the exercise. Many factors, including work experience, skills, and accomplishments, primarily measure professional capabilities.

Additionally, some may have relevant knowledge and experience that can't be gauged by formal education or certifications. Therefore, displaying degrees on the card does not serve the intended purpose; instead, it may indicate vanity and frivolity.

Another perspective we often tend to miss is that multiple degrees also come with a cost, not only in terms of financial investment but also the time invested. It also highlights if the investment would pay off in the long run and how far it would correlate to a real-world experience.

I have yet to see a direct relationship between the number of degrees and career progression. Rather many promising corporate individuals have lagged because of their passion for acquiring new degrees. Undoubtedly, a good degree helps get a suitable designation and good pay at the initial stage of one's career. But after that, an employee is judged primarily on his or her job performance.

Certification courses to improve individual or organisational productivity are crucial, but not necessarily academic or professional degrees. If the available time is shared between the job and degrees compared to someone who primarily focuses on the job is likely to succeed as a corporate leader.

Do we need a visiting card in the current digital era? Wouldn't a bar code on your mobile phone suffice, not to mention how eco- and people-friendly it would be?

The author is a telecom and management expert.

## Global economic view downgraded for this year

REUTERS, Bengaluru

Global economic growth is forecast to barely clear 2 per cent this year, according to a Reuters poll of economists who said the greater risk was a further downgrade to their view, at odds with widespread optimism in markets since the start of the year.

Falling energy prices, a slowdown in inflation in most economies from multi-decade highs, an unexpectedly resilient euro zone economy and China's economic reopening have led traders to speculate the downturn will be more mild.

That has driven MSCI's all-country world index of shares up nearly 20 per cent from October lows, hitting a five-month closing high on Wednesday, despite the greater risk central banks keep interest rates higher for longer rather than cut them.

But economists as a whole were much less upbeat, paring back growth forecasts for this year and next from 2.3 per cent and 3.0 per cent, respectively, in an October 2022 poll to 2.1 per cent and 2.8 per cent. Their more dour mood flew in the face of some notable upgrades by banks in recent weeks.

However, some of Wall Street's biggest names have thrown cold water on expectations the US economy will scrape through 2023 without a recession.

The 2023 growth forecast is well behind an International Monetary Fund forecast of 2.7 per cent that was issued in October and is due to be updated next week. The latest

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Employees work on a production line manufacturing mechanical parts at a factory of SMC Corporation in Beijing, China on January 10. China's economic reopening and other factors have led traders to speculate that the global downturn will be milder.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Bangladesh Building Systems' profit plunges 97%

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh Building Systems Ltd (BBS) reported more than 97 per cent decline in profit in the second quarter of the current financial year, owing to a fall in non-operating incomes.

The manufacturer of pre-engineered steel buildings posted earnings per share (EPS) of Tk 0.02 in October-December against Tk 0.93 in the same quarter of 2021-22.

The EPS was Tk 0.04 in July-December of 2022-23, down more than 95 per cent from Tk 0.96 in the first half of 2021-22.

The EPS decreased due to a fall in non-operating incomes, said BBS in a filing on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE).

The net operating cash flow per share (NOCFPS) was Tk 0.55 in the first half of FY23. It was Tk 0.56 in the same half of FY22.

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