



Farmers selling different varieties of bananas at Kutubpur Banana Bazar in Tangail's Sakhipur upazila. The photo was taken a few days ago. PHOTO: STAR

# Good yield, better prices delight Tangail banana growers

MIRZA SHAKIL, *Tangail*

Farmers in different upazilas of Tangail are delighted as the district sees bumper banana yield due to a favourable weather condition this season.

Local banana growers, however, said though prices different varieties of bananas are much better than the last year, they are unable to make much profit from selling their produces due to increasing production costs, especially high labour cost and increase in fertilizer prices.

The verities of banana, grown in different hilly areas the region, include BARI-1, BARI-2, Amritasagar, Mondira, Sagor, Sobri, Chompa, Chini Chompa, Kobri, Him Sagor and Mihir Sagor.

Though bananas produce in the region go to different districts across the country, including the capital, a major portion of the production goes to Chattogram, traders said.

According to Tangail Department of

Agricultural Extension (DAE), this year farmers cultivated different varieties of bananas on 4,677 hectares of land in the hilly areas of Madhupur, Ghatail, Sakhipur and Kalihati upazilas.

Of the land, about 2,355 hectares are in Madhupur and most of the banana orchards are located in Arankhola, Beribaid, Mohishmara, Sholakuri, Kakraid, Kuragachha, Bhabani Teki, Gorom Bazar and Kauchi Bazar areas in the upazila.

During a recent visit to different banana markets, including Jalchhatra Bazar in Madhupur, Garo Bazar in Ghatail and Kutubpur Bazar in Sakhipur upazilas, this correspondent saw huge quantities of bananas were brought to the markets for sale.

Wholesalers from different adjacent districts as well as other parts of the country come here to buy bananas, traders said.

They said more than 100 trucks of bananas are being sold to traders from

different parts of the country during every haat, weekly market, days.

Chan Miah, a banana grower from Jalchhatra area in Madhupur, said he cultivates banana as it requires minimum production costs, but brings more profit than the other crops including paddy.

Chan said he is getting better prices of his bananas this year, compared to the previous years, but not making much profit due to increasing production costs and high wages of labourers.

At least 350 banana trees can be planted in one bigha land, while farmers can sale a cluster, around 100 bananas, at Tk 100 to Tk 400, depending on its size and quality, he added.

Several other banana growers in the area as well as a number of traders at Jalchhatra Bazar echoed the same.

While visiting the 50-year old Kutubpur Banana Bazar in Sakhipur this correspondent saw the entire market area was buzzing with buyers and sellers.

As the year-old banana market is

gradually gaining a good reputation among traders, wholesalers from different areas across the country come to the market to buy quality bananas.

While talking, several members of the market managing committee said currently Kutubpur Bazar is known as one of the largest banana markets in the northern region, where bananas worth about Tk 1 crore are sold every week.

Abdul Kader, joint secretary of Kutubpur Bazar Committee, said traders from different districts come to the market to buy bananas as it is becoming popular day by day due to better communication facilities with all the surrounding districts including Dhaka.

Tangail DAE Deputy Director Ahsanul Bashar said soils of different hilly areas of the district are favourable for banana cultivation.

Moreover, local agriculture department has provided necessary supports to the banana growers, he said.

## Waste dumping poses threat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jhenidah*

The authorities of Kotchandpur municipality have continued dumping huge quantities of waste materials at an open space in the town for long, much to the sufferings of local people, especially teachers and students of a nearby madrasa.

Locals said the municipality authorities have been dumping household garbage at a spot next to Kotchandpur Bahazzel Hossain Mohila Dakhil Madrasa for the last couple of months.

The institution currently has about 250 female students.

Moreover, there are many other establishments, including restaurants and shops, close to the dumping ground.

Meanwhile, due to the mindless dumping of the waste materials students and teachers of the madrasa are not getting respite from the unbearable bad smell emitted from the garbage.

The situation gets more worsen even when it rains a little.

Nusrat Jahan, a Class VIII student at the madrasa, said it is very difficult for them to stay in the classroom due to the bad smell emitting from the garbage.

Another student Tahmid Lithi echoed the same.

Restaurant owner Arif Hasan said he has been struggling to run his business as most of the customers tries to avoid the area, fearing health hazard.

Joynul Abedin, a shopkeeper of the area, said he is also facing the similar situation.

Abul Hasan and Sharafat Hossain, assistant teachers at the madrasa, said the municipality authorities have been dumping the garbage near the institution since the Ramadan vacation.

Headteacher Ismail Hossain said he has urged the authorities concerned to stop the malpractice, but they are yet to take any step in this regard.

Kotchandpur Municipality Mayor Sahiduzzaman Selim said he knows it is harmful for health, but it will take some time to relocate the garbage dumping spot.



This spot in Jhenidah's Kotchandpur municipality has turned into a dumping ground as the authorities are yet to set up a designated spot for waste disposal. PHOTO: STAR

## Nigerian state imposes curfew to curtail looting

AFP, *Kano*

Authorities in Nigeria's northeastern Adamawa state on Sunday imposed a statewide round-the-clock curfew to stop widespread looting of food stores in the state capital Yola.

The looting saw hundreds of residents break into public and private warehouses storing grains and other commodities and cart them away.

"The Governor of Adamawa State... Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri has declared a 24-hour curfew on the state, effective immediately Sunday 30th July, 2023," Humwashi Wonosikou, the governor's spokesman, said in a statement.

Yahaya Nguroje, Adamawa state police spokesman, said security personnel had been deployed to enforce the curfew.

Last month Nigeria -- the most populous country in Africa and the continent's largest economy -- ended a fuel subsidy regime, leading to petrol prices quadrupling and food prices soaring.

## Emperor Nero

FROM PAGE 16  
remnants of costumes and backdrops used in Nero's theatrical productions.

The dig is part of a renovation project of the Palazzo della Rovere on the Via Della Conciliazione, which leads to St. Peter's Square.

The project will turn part of the Renaissance-era building into a Four Seasons hotel, set to open in 2025 -- in time for Rome's Jubilee year celebrations, which are expected to draw millions of people to the city.

Superintendent Porro said in a press statement that the "exceptional" findings provide a rare glimpse of the period beginning with Nero's reign through to the 15th century. Some of the later artifacts bear witness to the site's use as a theatre, including remnants of costumes, as well as more recent pottery and cooking utensils.

## Delay in test reports as patients swarm labs

FROM PAGE 1

HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, where the situation at the lab is similar to Mugda's, said CBC is a vital part of dengue treatment and patients in shock need to get them twice daily.

"It is very important to get a CBC test report by the evening if the sample is given in the morning, but unfortunately we are not getting them as lab officials are struggling to cope with the rush of people coming in for tests."

Observing the hematocrits (red blood cell ratio) is imperative while giving patients fluid treatment, he said, adding that CBC tests are the way to do it.

"Getting quick test results is important to make quick decisions.

And when they [doctors] don't get them [the results], they have to continue treatment based on their clinical judgements," Nazmul said.

Sharmin Akhtar's 14-month-old had been suffering from a fever since Friday, which prompted her to get the child tested for dengue.

She provided the infant's blood sample to the Mugda Medical College Hospital pathology lab at 5:00pm on Sunday.

However, she was not able to get the result before yesterday noon, as labs in hospitals across the city are swamped with samples.

Her child's result came dengue-negative.

"But I'm going to have to get my child tested again as per the doctor's advice as many results are showing false negatives."

## There's nothing wrong

FROM PAGE 16

Quader made the remarks a day after Gayeshwar said the video and photo of his lunch at the office of Detective Branch of police were circulated to mislead people. Spreading videos and photos of the incident on social media was a low-taste joke and a very shameful and hateful act, he said.

A video of Gayeshwar having lunch at the DB office with its chief Harun-Or-Rashid went viral on Saturday. The BNP leader, who was picked up from Dholaikhal area during a clash between police and BNP activists, was brought to the DB office.

Quader said as the BNP's agitation programme blocking the entrances to the capital is an obstacle to a free and fair election, the new US visa policy should apply to the BNP, reports BSS.

"The day after the rally, the BNP held sit-ins at the entrances to Dhaka. What programme was it? What kind of democracy was it to block the roads of Dhaka-Chattogram, Dhaka North Bengal

and Dhaka Mymensingh? The visa policy is applicable for those who launch such programme ahead of the election as it is a hindrance to fair polls," he said.

After failing in Golapbagh, the BNP went to the Suhrawardy Udyan, he said, adding, "Where is their courage? They said that they will not take permission from police. But they had to take permission. Is politics so simple?"

The AL wants a peaceful environment before and after the election, Quader said, adding that the BNP wants to oust Hasina from power at any cost. "We will not get engaged in conflicts. We will remain vigilant until the election."

About foreigners' activity centring the upcoming general election, the AL general secretary said, "There is a limit to their activities in Bangladesh or any other country in the world. There is the Vienna Convention. If they follow this, we will have nothing to say. Will we get engaged in conflict with them?"

Sharmin will once again have to wait to know if her baby has dengue or not.

Describing the rush at the Suhrawardy hospital lab, Nazmul Ahsan said, "They are now sometimes even running out of reagents [a component needed for the tests] or the papers used to apply the reagent."

Prof Md Niyatuzzaman, acting director of Mugda hospital, said the hospital lab has the capacity to conduct tests on 300 patients per day. "But we are now handling 1,200 patients every day.

"To manage the situation, we have now introduced two shifts -- 8:30pm to 3:00pm for inpatients, who will get the reports by 9:00pm to 10:30pm, and 2:30pm to 8:00pm will be for outpatients, who will get their reports around 9:00am the next day."

## 14-party decides to face BNP on streets

FROM PAGE 1

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon said he heard from somewhere that Gonoforum President Dr Kamal Hossain said if the government sincerely handles the BNP, it will participate in the next national election.

Before the last national polls, a political alliance with opposition parties, including BNP, was floated under the leadership of Dr Kamal, but the alliance was dissolved after the polls.

At the meeting, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haq Inu said during their recent visit to China, at the invitation of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese government assured them that China's support will be with incumbent Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the country also wants an election within the framework of the constitution.

A 12-member delegation, led by Rashed Khan Menon, returned home on Sunday after a weeklong visit. Inu and Samyabadi Dal General Secretary Dilip Barua were among the other delegation members.

## PMO orders

FROM PAGE 1

"This time, we would be preparing the report just a few months before the general election," he said on the condition of anonymity to speak candidly on the matter.

The instruction comes at a time when the ruling Awami League is making all-out efforts to make a compelling case for economic progress ahead of the polls, expected to take place at the end of December or in early January next year.

AL is gunning for a fourth consecutive term in office.

In September, AL will conduct a month-long programme to highlight the government's "successes and achievements" in the last fourteen and a half years before people.

And over the next 2-3 months, a dozen mega projects are set to open either fully or partially to the public.

At least eight major projects in the transport sector will open to the public in September and October, giving a big boost to the country's connectivity.

The projects include the country's first underwater tunnel, the Dhaka elevated expressway, the second phase of metro rail line-6 (from Agargaon to Motiheel) and the Dhaka-Bhanga, Khulna-Mongla, Akhaura-Agartala and Chattogram-Cox's Bazar rail lines.

In October, the third terminal of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport is expected to be open to the public in some capacity.

Besides, several other projects including the second unit of Rampal power plant, Purbachal expressway are expected to be opened before the general election.

## 8 special trains

FROM PAGE 16

PM's visit."

Tushar Kanti Mondal, former general secretary of Rangpur city AL, said they are expecting a gathering of a million people at the PM's meeting. Arrangement for special trains is one of the steps to ensure a large gathering, he said.

Ahead of the PM's visit, the Rangpur city and other places wore a colourful look. Several ministers and senior AL leaders already visited Rangpur to oversee the preparation work for the rally.

## Russian air strikes

FROM PAGE 16

a military conference Ukraine was "desperately hurling new forces" into attacks on Russian positions, but had failed to advance and was wasting billions of dollars of Western weaponry.

Two more civilians were reported killed in the southern Ukrainian city of Kherson, now on the front line after being recaptured from Russian forces in November.

In Ukraine's Russian-occupied eastern Donetsk region, the Russian-installed governor said two people had been killed and four injured in Ukrainian shelling of what he said was a civilian bus in Donetsk city, the regional capital.

Meanwhile, a Ukrainian drone hit a police station overnight in the frontier Russian region of Briansk but there were no victims, the regional governor said yesterday.

"Ukrainian forces attacked the district of Trubchevsky at night," Alexander Bogomaz said on Telegram. "A drone hit the police station in this district. No victims" but the windows and roof were damaged, he added.

Russian forces have levelled residential areas across eastern and southern Ukraine since they invaded more than 17 months ago. They conducted systematic strikes on Ukraine's power grid over the winter and this month started knocking out its grain export facilities.

Moscow says it does not target civilians in what it calls a special military operation to denazify and demilitarise its neighbour, portraying Ukraine's moves away from Russia's orbit towards the European Union and Nato as an existential threat.

Russian territory has been largely untouched by the conflict, beyond sporadic drone and missile strikes on oil and military infrastructure that Moscow has blamed on Ukraine, and brief incursions across one part of their common border.