

PADDY ON TOBACCO LAND

Aman output on decline



Farmers harvest Aman paddy from a land, previously used for tobacco cultivation, at Sarpukur village in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, LALMONIRHAT

Farmer Soleman Ali of Baninagar village in Kaliganj upazila has a total 11 bighas of agricultural land. For the last 25 years, the 60-year-old has been cultivating tobacco on eight bighas of land, during the tobacco season, and other crops on the remaining three bighas. But during Aman season, he brings his entire 11 bighas under paddy cultivation. While talking to this correspondent, Soleman said this year he got 44 maunds of Aman paddy from three bighas land, where other crops are grown, while he yielded 81 maunds of paddy from eight the bighas, previously

used for tobacco farming. "Land previously used for tobacco cultivation giving significantly less production, compared to the land that produces other food crops such as paddy, wheat or vegetables round the year," Soleman said. Tobacco plants absorb a lot of nutrients from the soil, hindering its fertility, and hampers production of other crops including paddy and vegetables, he said, adding that it takes at least seven to eight years to improve the soil quality of the land used for tobacco farming. Another farmer Maqbul Hossain of Sarpukur village in Aditmari upazila shared the similar experience and said, "Of my eight bighas land, I brought

five bighas under tobacco farming last season." "Later in the year, I cultivated Aman paddy on entire eight bighas, but compared to the other three bighas of land, I got four maunds less yield from the five bighas used for tobacco cultivation," he added. Echoing the same, Narayan Chandra Barman, another grower of the village, said local farmers opted to grow tobacco instead of other crops as many tobacco companies encourage them with lucrative offers and buy their produces at a fixed price. According to Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), tobacco is being cultivated on about 12,000 to 13,000 hectares of land in all the upazilas of

Lalmonirhat every year, but due to its lucrative profit more farmers are gradually turning towards tobacco cultivation now. Omar Farooq, Aditmari upazila agriculture officer, said usually, farmers get 14 to 15 maunds of paddy from each bigha of land, but the harvest drops to 10 to 11 maunds in terms of the land previously used for tobacco cultivation. Repeated cultivation of tobacco on the same land reduces the soil fertility and become less productive for other food crops like paddy and vegetables, he said, adding that they were trying to discourage farmers from tobacco farming by raising awareness campaigns regarding its harmful aspects.

Major gas price hike

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the average expenditure of the previous three months' total costs -- including operational, transmission and distribution charges -- as well as contributions to gas development, energy security and research funds. A 15 percent VAT would be imposed too. Between July and September 2024, Petrobangla imported a total of 1,726 million cubic meters of LNG for Tk 10,979 crore. The per cubic meter cost of LNG during that period was Tk 63.58, and after including all additional charges, the final cost per unit reached Tk 75.72. The new proposal comes despite the government's earlier announcement that they would not fix the prices arbitrarily bypassing the BERC like the ousted Awami League government used to. The AL government curtailed the BERC's power as regulator and increased the gas price for industries by more than 150 percent by themselves and fixed it at Tk 30 per unit. The gas price for captive users was also increased several times. The move to initiate the gas price hike comes as the ministry looks to narrow the fiscal gap of Tk 16,162 crore this fiscal year. If the price is not increased, the government will have to come up with subsidies, the proposal said. BERC chairman Jalal Ahmed told The Daily Star that they are yet to start work on the proposal. "We will take a decision based on our standard operating procedure," he said.

As per the BERC procedures, they have to announce their decision within the next 90 days. They will also hold public hearings within this time frame. The new gas pricing structure could dampen enthusiasm for establishing new industries as the increased costs may make the ventures less economically viable, according to businesspeople. "If the proposal is accepted, industrialisation will come to a halt," said Mohammad Hatem, president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association, a major industrial gas user. No new investment will come as the new units would not be able to compete with existing establishments with that much higher gas prices, he added.

Economy slows to 1.81%

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"Earlier, it was seen that despite political unrest like hartals and blockades and transport shutdowns, economic growth was shown higher," said Selim Raihan, executive director of the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling, a think-tank. During the quarter, industrial output expanded by only 2.13 percent, a sharp decline from the robust 8.22 percent growth recorded a year earlier. Besides, the services sector grew by 1.54 percent compared with the 5.07 percent recorded for the first quarter of last fiscal year. At least four to five factors were behind the low growth, said Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue. "The student protests and their impact, the floods, entrepreneurs leaving and shutting down factories after August, labour unrest -- all of these

combinedly resulted in low economic output," he added. Political disruption was a major reason behind the tepid GDP growth as it affected all sectors, said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office. Because of industrial unrest in Gazipur, Ashulia and other areas, many garment factories couldn't operate for days, which affected the manufacturing sector. "After the political changeover, many businesspersons left the country, while others got caught up in trouble. Their factories and businesses couldn't function properly." This affected industrial production and business activities. "Political instability, natural disasters, industrial unrest combined with high inflation also led to a problem of reduced demand." High inflation has

14-year-old girl raped in Cox's Bazar

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However, the victim's family kept insisting on returning home, and even though police tried to convince them to stay at the hospital overnight, the victim was taken home yesterday morning, claimed the ASP. Meanwhile, locals accused the police of facilitating the destruction of evidence of rape by allowing the victim to return home before taking her to the one-stop crisis centre. Efforts are underway to bring the victim to the one-stop crisis centre, the ASP

added. No case has been filed over the incident yet, said Chakaria Police OC. **TORCHLIGHT PROCESSION** Protesting the rape incident, leaders and activists of Chhatra Union, Jubo Union, and Udichi brought out a torchlight procession from central Shaheed Minar and marched through the main roads of Cox's Bazar town before gathering at the old Shaheed Minar for a short protest rally. Addressing the rally, Sourav Dev, general secretary of Udichi's

Cox's Bazar district unit, expressed outrage at the incident, saying, "Women are not safe on the roads. How could a woman be subjected to gang rape by 8-10 individuals? We demand the harshest possible punishment for the rapists to prevent such horrific occurrences in the future." Echoing these sentiments, Shahidullah Shahid, president of Jubo Union's district unit, issued a stern warning: "If the rapists are not brought to justice, the Chakaria OC will have to resign."

No more

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officers must strictly adhere to the law and should not act on orders that violate legal boundaries, even if they come from him. The term "Bhater Hotel" gained traction on social media after former DB additional commissioner H a r u n - O r - R a s h i d introduced the practice of serving meals to detainees or visitors and shared the photos online. He also said there were no irregularities in the recently-concluded sub-inspector recruitment tests, adding, "Even if I ever engage in corruption, expose me publicly but ensure the news is fact-based."

Hamas, Israel

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injured in a shooting attack on a car and bus near the town of Kedumim in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Israel's national ambulance service Magen David Adom (MDA) said. Israeli Army Radio said the military had imposed a cordon around all villages in the area to search for the suspects, who it believes fled to a nearby Palestinian village. Separately, two Palestinians, including a 17-year-old boy, were killed by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank on Sunday, according to the Palestinian Fatah party and the Palestinian Health Ministry.

Probe allegations against some SC judges

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SC premises on October 16 last year, demanding the removal of the "pro-Awami League fascist judges". On that day, SC Registrar General Aziz Ahmed told the protesters that 12 judges would not be assigned benches. Following this statement, the agitating

students postponed their demonstrations. Eleven HC judges -- Justice Md Ataur Rahman Khan, Justice Naima Haider, Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif, Justice Muhammad Khurshid Alam Sarkar, Justice Ashish Ranjan Das, Justice Khizir Hayat, Justice SM Maniruzzaman, Justice

Khandaker Diliruzzaman, Justice Md Akhtaruzzaman, Justice Shahed Nuruddin, Justice Md Aminul Islam, and Justice SM Masud Hossain Dolon -- have not been given judicial duties since then. Justice Md Ataur Rahman Khan has already retired.

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Memo No. 13(27)

Date: 02/01/2025

e-Tender Notice (Opening Tendering Method)

This is to notify all concerned that the following tender have published through e-GP Portal.

ID & Package No.	Name of works	Publishing date/ closing date
ID No. 1056477 14/e- GP/EE/GRD/Rev/ 2024-2025	Repair with Carpeting. Seal Coat work at ch: 17th (P), 18th (P), 20th & 23th (P)Km of Gaibandha-Fulchari-Bharatkali-Shaghata Road (Z-5552) under Road Division, Gaibandha during the year 2024-2025	01-Jan-2025: 16:00 23-Jan-2025: 12:40
ID No. 10 15/e- GP/EE/GRD/Rev/ 2024-2025	Repair with Carpeting. Seal Coat work at ch: 2nd (P) & 3rd (P)Km of Gaibandha-Fulchari-Bharatkali-Shaghata Road (Z-5552) under Road Division, Gaibandha during the year 2024-2025	02-Jan-2025: 12:00 23-Jan-2025: 12:00

The interested firms/person may visit the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd to get the details of the tender. This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Invitation no: UHC/AKKELPUR/2024-2025/12

Date: 06-01-2025

e-Tender Notice

This is an Online tender For **MSR items (FY 2024-25)** where only e-tenders will be accepted in the e-GP portal No offline/Hard copies will be accepted. To submit an e-tender please register on the e-GP Web portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd/>) For more details please contact Support desk contact number. e-Tenders are invited in the e-GP system portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd/>) by Dr. Md. Abu Shafi Mahmud, UH&FPO, Akkelpur, Upazila Health Complex, Joypurhat for the Procurement of the following Tender ID:

Sl No	Tender ID	Name of Goods	Tender Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time	Tender Opening Date & Time
1	1052191	Procurement of MSR Medicine NON EDCL	20-Jan-2025 14:00	21-Jan-2025 11:30	21-Jan-2025 11:30
2	1052192	Procurement of MSR Surgical Instruments	20-Jan-2025 14:00	21-Jan-2025 11:30	21-Jan-2025 11:30
3	1052193	Procurement of MSR Linen Items	20-Jan-2025 14:00	21-Jan-2025 11:30	21-Jan-2025 11:30
4	1052194	Procurement of MSR Gauge, Bandage and Cotton.	20-Jan-2025 14:00	21-Jan-2025 11:30	21-Jan-2025 11:30
5	1052195	Procurement of MSR Chemical Reagent and X ray film	20-Jan-2025 14:00	21-Jan-2025 11:30	21-Jan-2025 11:30
6	1052196	Procurement of MSR Furniture Items.	20-Jan-2025 14:00	21-Jan-2025 11:30	21-Jan-2025 11:30

(Dr. Md. Abu Shafi Mahmud)
Upazila Health & Family Planning officer
Upazila Health Complex, Akkelpur, Joypurhat.

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