



Farmers clear weeds from their Boro paddy field. After sowing Boro seeds, if the weeds are regularly removed, it helps the plant grow faster and improves the yield. The photo was taken at Beel Pabla in Dumuria, Khulna recently.

Miscreants cut Jubo Dal leader's tendons

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Benapole*

Miscreants cut the tendons of hands and legs of a Jubo Dal leader in Abhaynagar, Jashore on Thursday night.

Enam Gazi, 27, from Ektar Pur, was seriously injured in the attack at Nawapara Kacha Bazar.

Locals said Enam went there to sell vegetables. The miscreants also stabbed him in the abdomen.

He was taken to a Khulna Hospital.

Abhaynagar BNP President Faraji Matiar Rahman said Enam, a joint convener of the Nawapara Municipal Jubo Dal, had an enmity with an opposing group.

Abhaynagar Police Station OC Mohammad Alim said legal action will be taken if a complaint is filed.

CTG ABDUCTION Four SAD coordinator imposters arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Police have arrested four persons -- who falsely identified themselves as coordinators of Students Against Discrimination (SAD) -- in connection with the kidnapping of Abedin Al Mamun, assistant general manager (AGM) of Pacific Jeans.

The arrestees are Nazmul Abedin, Naimul Amin Emon, 22, Arafat Hossain Fahim, 22, and Risthi Bin Yusuf, 23, said a press release of Chattogram Metropolitan Police.

Mamun was kidnapped from his residence in the Colonel Hat area on Thursday evening by some people who identified themselves as coordinators of SAD, said the release.

The kidnappers drove him to several locations using Mamun's car. His driver, Jewel, was also held hostage.

While moving

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Favourable weather boosts lichi yield hopes

KONGKON KARMAKER, *Dinajpur*

Dinajpur, widely known as the "Land of Lichis", is experiencing a promising season, with thousands of trees across the district adorned in golden blossoms.

Farmers and agricultural officials are optimistic about a bumper harvest this year, thanks to favourable weather conditions and advanced cultivation practices.

Beyond Dinajpur, lichi is also cultivated in Thakurgaon, Panchagarh, and Rangpur districts, contributing significantly to the region's agricultural economy.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Dinajpur, the flowering season typically begins at the end of February. A timely shower during this period has been beneficial, though the rising temperature remains a concern for optimal fruit yield.

With spring in full bloom, the sweet aroma of lichi blossoms fills the air across Dinajpur's 5,418 orchards, spanning all 13 upazilas of the district. Most of them are located in Dinajpur Sadar, Chirirbandar, Khansama, and Birganj upazilas.

Popular varieties such as China-1, China-2, China-3, Bedana, Bombay, Madrazi, and Kathali dominate these orchards, showing healthy blossom retention. Farmers are investing in irrigation, pesticide application, and fertilisation to safeguard their crops.

Md Nuruzzaman, deputy director of Dinajpur's DAE, expressed confidence in this year's yield, saying, "The weather has been ideal so far. If no natural disasters strike in the coming days, we anticipate a record-breaking harvest."

The high demand for Dinajpur's lichis is already evident, with traders from Rajshahi, Rangpur, Chattogram, and Dhaka visiting orchards to book orders

in advance. Given the fruit's premium quality and popularity nationwide, early negotiations between farmers and buyers have begun.

Last year, lichi cultivation in Dinajpur covered 5,787 hectares, yielding approximately 42,000 metric tonnes of fruit worth over Tk 800 crore, according to DAE officials. This year, authorities are determined to surpass these figures by providing farmers with real-time guidance on pest control, irrigation, and climate-resilient practices.

Lichi remains one of Dinajpur's most lucrative seasonal cash crops, supplying markets across the country. While its exceptional sweetness has previously opened export opportunities -- once even reaching the Middle East -- the fruit's perishable nature and the lack of proper processing facilities have hindered sustained domestic and international trade.

Farmers are urging the government to establish cold storage and processing units to extend the fruit's shelf life and unlock global market potential.

Bablu Mia, a lichi grower from Chirirbandar upazila, emphasised the need for infrastructure, saying, "With cold storage and processing plants, we can produce value-added products like juices and preserves, making our litchis export-ready."

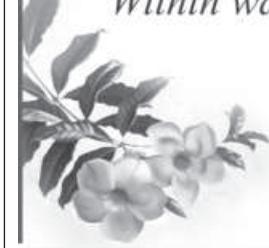
Last year, lichi prices ranged from Tk 3 to Tk 18 per piece, translating to Tk 300 to Tk 1,800 per 100-piece bunch. Farmers remain cautious about price fluctuations, as market conditions and transportation costs significantly impact their profitability.

"A single storm or pest outbreak can wipe out months of effort," said Abdur Razzak, a lichi farmer from Khansama upazila.

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(Md. Abu Sufian)
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