

# BRRi Dhan-33 grows well, its harvesting soon in Rangpur

RANGPUR, Sept 10: The short duration variety anti-Monga paddy of BRRi Dhan-33 now grows excellent everywhere and its harvesting begins from the first week of October in all five districts of greater Rangpur to combat seasonal Monga this year, officials said here, reports BSS.

The farmers of Monga-prone Rangpur, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari and Gaibandha districts cultivated the paddy in 40,122 hectares land this year, which is 122 hectares higher than that of the fixed target of 40,000 hectares for the area, they added.

They said the government, for the first time, launched the large-scale farming of the short duration paddy this year in the area as a part of the ongoing comprehensive programmes for eradicating Monga from the region by the year 2013.

The short duration paddy is being cultivated at larger scales under the GO-NGO collaborations during this T-Aman season in greater Rangpur to create job opportunities for the farm labourers during the lean period of Aswin and Kartik months.

Senior experts of Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRi) and Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) told BSS that plantation of seedlings and sowing seeds of the BRRi Dhan-33 was completed timely.

Principal Scientific Officer of BRRi and Programme Coordinator of 'BRRi-Model Monga Mitigation Programme for Greater Rangpur' Dr Abdul Mazid told that the crop now grows well and its harvest would begin in the last week of September and will get momentum from the first week of October next.

The farmers started planting seedlings and directly sowing

seeds of BRRi Dhan-33 using dry and wet Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) methods from the third week of June.

The government undertook a three-year Special Action Plan titled 'BRRi-Model Monga Mitigation Programme for Greater Rangpur' to bring 1,07,000 hectares of lands suitable for farming BRRi Dhan-33 under cultivation by the year 2010 to harvest about five lakh tonnes of paddy in only 115 to 118 days, officials said.

Adopting all necessary steps, timely and smooth supply of the seeds, fertilizer, pesticides and other inputs to the farmers was ensured for cultivating the BRRi

Dhan-33 variety paddy smoothly, Deputy Director of DAE, Rangpur, Kamal Shariful Alam said.

To make the farming successful, necessary practical trainings were provided to 440 agriculture officers on the latest technologies of farming the BRRi Dhan-33, using Leaf Colour Charts, Gutti Urea, integrated pests management methods, properly sowing of the seeds and nurturing the fields.

The trained agriculture officers have now been educating over one-lakh farmers at the grassroots level to acquaint them with the technologies of growing this variety of paddy for making the programme a success.

They said a large number of farm labourers would get jobs for 45 days during the peak Monga period of Aswin and Kartik months this year in greater Rangpur and the farmers would get early harvest of the paddy during their Eid-ul-Fitr and Durga Puja festivities.

Harvesting periods of all subsequent crops will be advanced by 40 days to enable the farmers get more profits as cultivation of BRRi Dhan-33 would be followed by the relay-method growth of early variety crops like potato, moog, vegetables, maize and mustard.

The technology, evolved by the BRRi, could also increase overall crop production and reduce risk of natural calamities and substantially save fuel and leave less negative impact on nature because of the new pattern of crop farming throughout the year.

As many as 19 lakh farm labourers will get jobs during the Monga by the year 2010 when the lands earmarked for the cultivation would be brought under BRRi Dhan-33 farming.

A total of 43 NGOs are working with the concerned government departments to make the 3-year term Special Action Plan a success, Dr Mazid said.