

Harvest of short duration BRRI Dhan-33 begins in Rangpur

RANGPUR, Oct 6:—Farmers are now very happy as they already started harvesting of the short duration and anti-Monga variety BRRI Dhan-33 (paddy) in greater Rangpur on the eve of holy Eid-ul-Fitr and Durga Puja festivities, reports BSS.

They expressed satisfaction on the excellent yield rates of 4.5 tonnes to 5.0 tonnes paddy per hectares so far though harvesting will get full momentum a few days later, officials in the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) and farmers said.

The farmers of Rangpur, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari and Gaibandha districts cultivated the short duration 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.

Farmer Abdul Rahman of Ganchhara upazila in Rangpur on Saturday got 4.5 tonnes per hectare BRRI Dhan-33 (paddy) after harvesting the same and another farmer Tayebur Rahman will harvest the same in his 82 decimals land there a couple of days later.

A partner NGO, Gramen Atto Ummayan Sangstha (GAUS), involved with BRRI Dhan-33 farming, will organise a two-day fair on

farming success of the short duration paddy in village Laksmichap under Sadar upazila in Nilphamari on October 16-17 next.

The government launched large-scale farming of the short duration paddy this year for the first time as a part of the ongoing comprehensive programmes for eradicating Monga by the year 2013 from poverty-prone Rangpur area.

The short duration paddy has been cultivated at larger scales under the GO-NGO collaborations as a part of its countrywide farming plan to create job opportunities for the farm labourers during the lean period of Aswin and Kartik.

Experts of Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) and DAE today told BSS that plantation of seedlings and sowing seeds of the 115- to 118-day duration BRRI Dhan-33 (paddy) was completed timely using the latest technologies.

Principal Scientific Officer of BRRI and Programme Coordinator of 'BRRI-Model Monga Mitigation Programme for Greater Rangpur'

Dr Abdul Mazid told BSS that the crop grew well and its huge scale harvest will begin a couple of days later.

The farmers planted seedlings and directly sowed seeds of BRRI Dhan-33 using dry and wet Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) methods from the end of June last and its harvesting will be ended by the middle on November next.

The government undertook a 3-year Special Action Plan 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 in Rangpur area, he said.

Practical trainings were provided to the 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 educated 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 this year.

Dr Mazid said over 3.81 lakh farm labourers would now get jobs for 45 days during the Aswin and Kartik months this year in greater Rangpur and the early harvests of the paddy are already at homes during the Eid-ul-Fitr and Durga Puja festivities.

The farmers will get more profits as cultivation of BRRI Dhan-33 would be followed by the relay-method growth of early variety crops like potato, moog, winter 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.

Over 19 lakh farm labourers will get jobs during the Monga by the year 2010 when the targeted lands would be brought under BRRI Dhan-33 farming and 43 NGOs are working with the government departments to make the Special Action Plan a success, Dr Mazid told.