

BIRRI develops high yielding quick rice

Staff Correspondent

The BIRRI dhan75, a potential short-duration and early maturity variety of Aman, may open new doors of timely cultivation of rabi crops such as wheat, lentil, mustard, maize, and other winter crops across the country. Harvesting of the rice started on the trial plot on October 6 this year in Jhenaidah.

Under the USAID-funded project 'Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA III)', Rice Farming Systems Division of

Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BIRRI) implemented an on-farm experiment with the collaboration of International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the field of farmer Liakat Ali at Fulhori village in Jhenaidah district.

Dr Mahbubur Rahman, in charge, BIRRI Regional Station, Kushtia said, "From the trial, we have seen that in just 105 days of using 20 days old seedlings, BIRRI dhan75 yielded more than 5 tonnes per hectare. The seedbed can be sown from June 20 to the first

week of July."

Dr Amina Khatun, Principal Scientific Officer, Rice Farming Systems division, BIRRI and Principal Investigator of the project explained, "BIRRI recommends to sow this variety between July 20 and August 20 to get the best yield. However, we have found excellent results by sowing the rice at the end of June and early July, resulting in a harvest of the crop by the first week of October with very good yield."

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She also mentioned that this particular rice variety can produce a higher yield in advance than other high-yielding long duration varieties. Also, due to the early maturity, farmers can cultivate lentil, mustard, maize, or other high-value winter crops in mid-October after harvesting this variety easily. Hence, it can contribute to increasing the national cropping intensity.

Farmer of the trial field Liakat Ali said, "We are very happy to see the early harvest and yield of BRRI dhan75. He also said it will greatly help

the farmers to get a higher price from selling rice as well as selling straw."

IRRI Senior-Specialist Dr Sharif Ahmed said, "For the last three years we are working for expansion, market development, linkage and brand building of this variety under the CSISA project. Farmers of this region (Jashore, Jhenaidah, Chuadanga, Meherpur) have started to adopt this variety on a large scale. The grain size of the variety is long and slender. Also, one can sense a light aroma in the cooking process of the rice. Due to the long and slender grain, farm-

ers are getting a higher price by selling it. This is why they are very eager to cultivate this variety on a larger scale."

He also added, "We are also working with the local seed companies and leading farmers to make its seed so that it can be found easily at the local level. We have collaborated with three auto rice mills and they have already agreed to brand this variety of rice as Premium Rice BRRI dhan75 after the completion of the ongoing harvesting process. We are hopeful that by early November, consumers will be able to procure the rice for

the first time in the country.

Dr Shahjahan Kabir, Director-General, Bangladesh Rice Research Institute said, "The short growth duration with a high yielding potential of this variety would open the doors for farmers to cultivate one more crop after harvesting. This is a good option for farmers to get a higher price by harvesting crops early and make a profit by planting subsequent rabi crops timely. I hope this variety would bring blessings to the farmers by increasing cropping intensity all over the country."