

Saiful Islam of Akkelpur in extensive discussion on desert date cultivation

Akkelpur – Dates of Saudi Arabia are being cultivated commercially in Akkelpur soil of Joypurhat. Saiful Islam of Munjia village of Raikali union of Akkelpur upazila created a big surprise in the area by cultivating date palms of the desert country.

Munjia village is on the side of Akambakan Pichdhala road of the village. There is a huge palm garden at the three ends of the village. Which will attract everyone's attention effortlessly. Saiful Islam said that last year in 2019, he saw palm cultivation in his own country on YouTube and he was also encouraged to cultivate it. Finally, he embarked on a campaign to collect saplings. He prepared 70 percent of the land near the house. Surrounded by iron net. He also built a gate with him. First, he collected and planted 60 marjul date palm seedlings from Dhaka. He bought each plant for five hundred rupees. Apart from this he bought 1 tissue culture seedling for ten thousand taka. And from there, he gradually planted four hundred trees from tissue culture on that land and planted palm trees. At present, he has planted seedlings of Ajoya, Mariam, Sukkali, Ambar and Barhi varieties in that garden and from there he is selling each seedling of those varieties at five hundred taka. The sold seedlings are three years old. He said that the saplings will start bearing fruit after 1 year of planting.

Flowers come in February/March at the beginning of the year and from those flowers the fruits come in bunches. But the fruit is available only once a year. Dates start ripening after 5/6 months. Palm fronds are wrapped with polythene to protect them from birds. Insecticides are also used to prevent

insect attacks including mosquitoes. It is possible to lay the fruit on the ground under the tree. At present, several trees in the garden have borne fruit. But after 1 year, all the trees in the garden will have different varieties of fruits. Dates are very tasty to eat. The garden owner is selling dates from the garden after receiving orders. Six hundred rupees per kg of dates. This is the first Saudi palm cultivation in Akkelpur upazila.

Akkelpur Upazila Agriculture Officer Imran Hossain said that watching YouTube increases the enthusiasm of date palm cultivation. Dates are very tasty in the field. We regularly monitor and advise the garden. He also said that if the farmer Saiful is benefited by Islam cultivation, then we will gradually encourage other farmers in the upazila to cultivate dates.