

Agri census report released 17.59m households in country

Staff Correspondent

There are 17.59 million households, of them 11.11 million are farm households having cultivated area of 0.05 acre or more and 6.47 million are non-farm households with less than 0.05 acre in the country.

This was contained in the preliminary results of the agricultural census-1996 released by the Statistical Division, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics at a Press conference at the NEC auditorium at Sher-e-Banglanagar on Wednesday. The press conference was jointly addressed by Agriculture Minister Begum Motia Chowdhury and State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir. Waliul Islam, Secretary Statistical Division was also present at the press conference.

Releasing the results of the agricultural census the minister said that data on land ownership, tenancy, land use, cropping pattern, irrigation facilities, use of chemicals fertilizer, livestock and poultry, farm population, use of agricultural implements, agriculture labour households, rural transport and cottage industries,

have been collected in the census. Large scale sample survey covering details about these aspects as well as farm forestry, fisheries, storage facilities and rural indebtedness has also been completed throughout the rural areas of the country, the minister said. She said the final results of the agricultural census-1996 would be published by the end of the current year.

The census of agriculture was conducted between December 1996 and January 25, 1997 by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics on full count basis. Earlier censuses of agriculture were carried out in 1960 and 1977 on sample basis and in the 1983-84 on full count basis. The agricultural census-1996 was enumerated by 90,000 enumerators and 13,000 supervisors in the field level. The agricultural census excludes all metropolitan and municipal areas of the country.

According to the preliminary results of the agricultural census-1996 the total households in the country

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have increased by 27 per cent over the households in 1983-84 census. The number of households in the rural areas in 1983-84 was 13.82 million and it increased 17.59 million in 1996. Similarly, the number of farm households in 1996 stood at 11.11 million against 10.04 million in 1983-84, up by 11 per cent over the years.

According to the agricultural census-1996, the number of households taken lands from others for cultivation purposes (tenant households) is 5.65 million and the number of agricultural labour households (absolute landless who live on agricultural labour) is 6.73 million. The number of households with no land is 2.18 million.

The preliminary results of the agricultural census did not contain the total cultivable land areas of the country. But the State Minister for Planning on a query by a reporter said that the area of cultivable land is 22.5 million acres which remained unchanged over the years.

The State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir said that the number of absolute landless in the country is 12.5 per cent of the total population. He said that the number of absolute landless has not increased over the years. He said the agricultural census-1996 was conducted at a cost of Taka 20 crore.

Replying to a question, the Planning Minister said that the next agricultural census would be conducted in the year 2002. During the same period, the economic census of the country would also be conducted which was not done before.