

The Smile of Home:

Lal Mia's Journey from Saudi Arabia to the Papaya Fields of Badiakhali Gaibandha District, Bangladesh —

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In the quiet village of Badiakhali, where morning light rolls across emerald fields and the air carries the scent of earth and ripening fruit, 55-year-old Lal Mia tends to the papaya plants that now define his days. His story spans continents, hardship, and homecoming — a journey from two decades of labor in Saudi Arabia to a life of renewed purpose in the soil of his homeland.



Lal Mia, Posing with Wife by their “Pepe” plantation

Born and raised in Badiakhali, Lal Mia left Bangladesh nearly twenty years ago to work grueling construction jobs under the scorching Gulf sun. The long hours and relentless labor were endured for one reason: to secure a future for his family, including funding his son's education. But when his son chose to return to Bangladesh, seeking a life rooted in home rather than abroad, Lal Mia made the life-changing decision to return as well.



Proud and Happy Grandfather

Back in Badiakhali, he found new purpose when introduced to a local family seeking someone to manage their farmland. Lal Mia embraced the land as though greeting an old friend. He began cultivating papaya — known locally as “pepe” — transforming empty plots into rows of thriving fruit trees that glow gold and





green under the Bangladesh sun. Each plant, each leaf, each carefully harvested fruit speaks to his patience and resilience.

A Simpler Life, A Fuller Heart Though he once earned ten times more in Saudi Arabia, Lal Mia says he has never felt richer than he does now. “Money cannot buy peace,” he says, smiling with the

quiet confidence of a man who has rediscovered himself. “Here, with my family and my land, I have everything I need.”

His home — a humble cluster of huts forming a shaded quadrangle — radiates warmth and hospitality.

Visitors are welcomed with tea, conversation, and the simple joy of being invited into a world where life is uncomplicated yet deeply fulfilling.



Children play in the dust; chickens wander freely; and laughter drifts through the open air.

At the Gaibandha market, Lal Mia moves among fellow farmers with baskets of papaya balanced on his hip. Each sale is more than a transaction — it is a celebration of his return, of roots restored, and of a man choosing happiness over hardship. His story is a testament to the universal truth that home is not merely a place, but a feeling.

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