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## President's anti-smoking campaign

President Shahabuddin Ahmed has said that a programme should be taken for gradual transformation of the existing cigarette companies into other productive industries eschewing retrenchment of workers, reports UNB.

"The land used for production of tobacco can be used for other agricultural products," he said when a 10-member delegation of Adhunik, an anti-smoking organisation, called on him at Bangabhaban yesterday.

Emphasising the need for building a strong public opinion against smoking, President Shahabuddin appreciated the efforts of Adhunik for prevention of smoking in the country and said there is no difference of opinion on the question of prevention of this ill habit.

"Anti-smoking advertisements should be telecast on Bangladesh Television at prime time," he said.

The delegation members, led by National Professor and Founder President of Adhunik (Amra Dhunpan Nibaran Kori) Dr Nurul Islam, apprised the President of the serious health hazards of both the smokers and non-smokers due to smoking.

They said the expenditure for treatment of smoking related diseases is many times higher than the excise duty received by the government from the cigarette companies and bidi factories every year.

They suggested that the excise duty on cigarettes and bidis should be increased with a view to discouraging the smokers to continue their bad habit.

**Work stoppage at Bangabandhu Hospital**

By Staff Correspondent

Normal activities at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSSMUH) were severely disrupted due to a 24-hour work stoppage that began at 6 a.m. yesterday.

A large number of patients who came to hospital were seen going back without having treatment due to the work stoppage enforced by Sarkari Karmachari Samannaya Parishad of the BSSMUH.

Only emergency cases and surgeries were taken care of during the strike hours. Some of the scheduled operations were also cancelled.

The work abstention ends at 7 a.m. today.

No routine activities were performed at the X-ray department and no medicines were supplied from the hospital drug store. Nurses abstained from their duties and sweepers did not clean bathrooms and corridors either.

However, an emergency

See Page 12 Col 7

## Renewal of registration 20pc garment units forged documents

By Rafiq Hasan

At least 20 per cent garment factories submitted false documents about bonded warehouse and forged fire licence to the Export Promotion Bureau this year for renewal of registration. EPB investigation has found.

These are among the 1995 factories which got their registration renewed till April this year. There are 3600 registered garment factories in the country.

A three-member committee headed by EPB Director Kazi Hamid Uddin detected the forgery during a two-month in-

vestigation. The committee is likely to submit report next week to the commerce ministry which ordered the probe.

The forgery was done to get free quota allotment for garment export, sources in the committee said.

As many as 2629 exporters had applied for free quota this year. Of those, 281 were rejected and 2348 got allotment for exporting garments to the US and Canada.

Allotment of free quota for the current year has been completed and the system will be

abolished next year.

The forgery was detected by checking documents with the customs department which gives certificate about bonded warehouse and monitors their use, he said. The forged fire licences were detected by checking with the Fire Service and Civil Defence Department.

The list of the factories which provided false and forged documents will be published and stern action will be taken against those, the sources said.

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See Page 12 Col 7

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