



# The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

www.thedailystar.net

Your Right to Know

20 PAGES PRICE: TK 12.00

REGD. NO. DA 781 | VOL. XXV No. 237 | BHADRA 29, 1422 BS | ZILQAD 28, 1436 HIJRI



Our brand new fortnightly publication on real estate  
PAGE B4

## ASIA'S HEALTH SYSTEM

Rebooting it will require new thinking  
PAGE 6

## CORBYN CROWNED

The veteran left winger elected UK Labour leader  
PAGE 8



## ADVANCE EID TICKET VIPs get it just like that

PANKAG KARMAKAR

A chunk of tickets for different modes of transport is kept aside for VIPs ahead of Eid every year, forcing ordinary people to go through untold sufferings to reach home for celebrating the festival with their dear ones.

While thousands of people stand in queues for hours to get tickets, the privileged few simply make phone calls to transport operators and reserve seats in buses, trains and launches.

It has become a practice that a large number of tickets must be set aside for politicians, businessmen, bureaucrats, police officials and other influential people, say transport operators. Seeking anonymity, the managing director of a reputed bus company said 25 percent of its tickets were kept for VIPs.

"We have to meet their demands to maintain good relations with them and run our business smoothly," he said.

The general manager of another company said, "Around a dozen lawmakers phone me or send their representatives for tickets ahead of Eid. If I don't meet their requests, I may face problems in operating the service."

Bus companies started selling advance tickets on Friday in the run-up to the Eid likely on September 25.

Visiting bus counters in the capital's Gabtoli yesterday, the correspondent noticed that many were refused tickets for September 22 and 23.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



A tobacco plantation in Bandarban's Thanchi. Farmers in the hill district are increasingly switching to tobacco cultivation for higher returns.

PHOTO: FILE

## TOBACCO SCOURGE

# Still a long way to go before stubbing it out

MARTIN SWAPAN PANDEY

Successes are many. But Bangladesh still struggles in its fight against tobacco with at least 156 people dying and another 1,095 becoming disabled due to smoking in the country every day.

Tax increase and other government interventions to cut tobacco consumption seem fruitless, as production, export, import and consumption of cigarette and smokeless tobacco are on the rise.

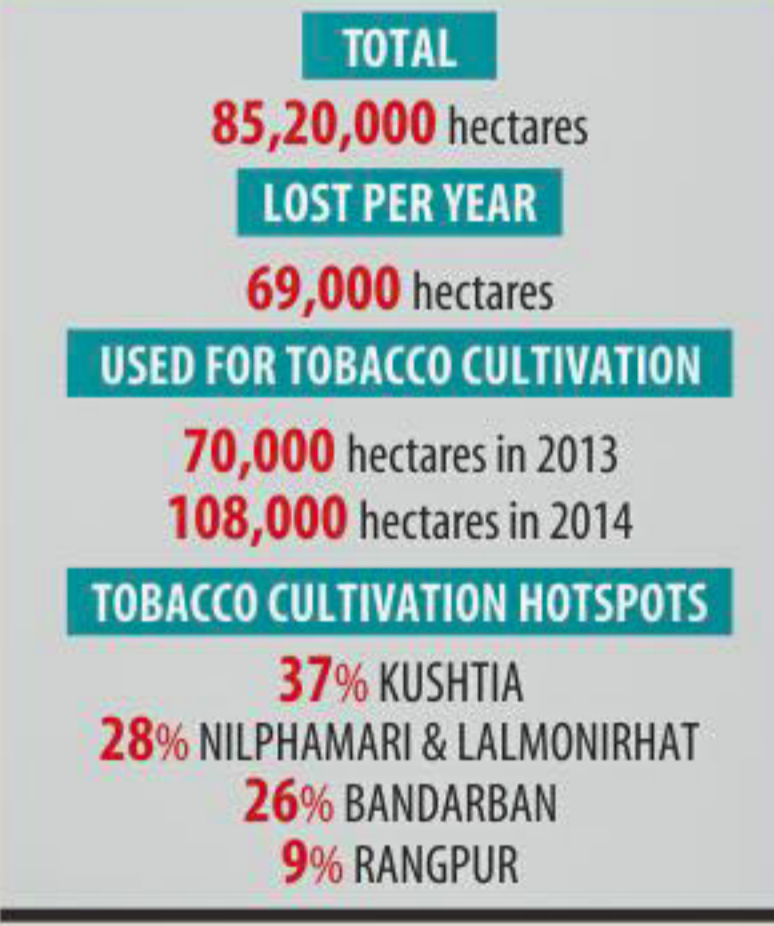
Lured by higher earnings from tobacco production, many farmers are switching from crop cultivation to tobacco farming. Rough estimates show farmers can get up to Tk 2 lakh more by cultivating tobacco in one hectare of land instead of crops.

On the other hand, young consumers are being targeted by some local and multinational cigarette companies with clever campaigns through distribution of T-shirts, caps and even free cigarettes

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



## USE OF CULTIVABLE LAND IN BANGLADESH



SOURCE: DAE, UNFAO

# Hajj to go ahead

Makkah crane collapse toll 107; one of the 40 wounded Bangladeshis still in hospital with head injuries

STAR REPORT

This year's hajj pilgrimage will go ahead despite a crane collapse that killed 107 people at Makkah's Grand Mosque, said a Saudi official.

"It definitely will not affect the hajj this season, and the affected part will probably be fixed in a few days," said the official, who declined to be named.

Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims had already arrived in Makkah for the annual pilgrimage expected to start on September 21.

Parts of the Grand Mosque, one of Islam's holiest sites, remained sealed off yesterday around the toppled crane, which also injured around 238 people when it fell into a courtyard.

The nationalities of the dead and injured pilgrims are yet to be announced, reports Saudi Gazette. Consuls general of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh told the daily that

so far there were no confirmed reports of death among their pilgrims.

Indonesians and Indians were among those killed, while the injured included Malaysians, Egyptians and Iranians, AFP writes.

So far, no Bangladeshi has been reported dead in the incident, Bangladesh Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Golam Moshit told The Daily Star last night.

The foreign ministry also issued a press release saying there has been no report of death of any Bangladeshi -- pilgrim or worker -- in the disaster.

In reply to a question, Golam Moshit, however, said, "Our officials are at the mortuary and we will come to know if any Bangladeshi is among the dead."

The incident left at least 40 Bangladeshis injured and they were hospitalised, mostly with minor injuries. Most of them were hurt

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

# Demo continues, stays peaceful

NBR issues fresh clarification on VAT; students want it gone altogether, to hold agitation today

STAR REPORT

Private university students yesterday blocked the Dhaka-Aricha highway in Savar for over an hour on the first day of their three-day strike, demanding withdrawal of 7.5 percent VAT slapped on their "tuition fees".

Creating a seven kilometre-long tailback, about 500 students of Gono Bishwabidyalay took part in the demonstration in Bishmail area on the outskirts of the capital.

Students also held demonstrations at several places in the capital and in Chittagong, Sylhet and Rajshahi.

However, there was no report of any untoward incident.

Witnesses said that in Savar students of Gono Bishwabidyalay took to the street around 11:45am and continued the agitation till 1:00pm. They said vehicular movement came to normalcy around 3:30pm.

Chanting slogans against the government decision, the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



TOP!  
QUOTE

"Delay makes justice expensive and instigates people to resort to extra-judicial means of dispute resolution."

CHIEF JUSTICE  
SURENDRA KUMAR SINHA  
ADDRESSING A SEMINAR AT  
DHAKA JUDGES' COURT



MTB is the  
DHL-The Daily Star  
Bangladesh Business Award Winner  
as the Best Financial Institution of 2014

MTB has been chosen for the award on account of its high standards of corporate governance, inspirational Board, strong leadership and management, exceptional innovation, diverse array of products and services, asset quality, financial performance and service to the community. We are grateful to our much valued customers, regulators, shareholders, well-wishers and all citizens of the country. On this auspicious occasion, we reiterate our commitment to strive even harder to serve Bangladesh and our fellow citizens, in the exciting times ahead.



মিউচুয়াল ট্রাস্ট ব্যাংক লিমিটেড  
Mutual Trust Bank Ltd.

you can bank on us