



Two schoolgirls hold their noses as a huge quantity of tobacco leaves hung along a road at Bhadai village in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila spread a bad odour. Below left, children are engaged in processing tobacco leaves at a warehouse at Saralkhan village in the same upazila and right, a farmer couple tend their tobacco field at Karnapir village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

PHOTOS: S DILIP ROY

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY TODAY

# Alarming rise in tobacco farming

25,000 hectares in Lalmonirhat now under its cultivation against 6,500 hectares decade ago

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Although there is no control on cultivation and processing of tobacco, agriculture department of the country claims that they always discouraged the farmers not to grow the poisonous crop.

Framing of tobacco is increasing every year and a vast tracts of fresh fertile lands are being used for tobacco cultivation by tapping the growers with lucrative offers.

Besides, fall of prices of other crops also pushes farmers towards tobacco farming.

According to Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Lalmonirhat, tobacco was cultivated on 25,000 hectares of land this year, which was only 6,500 hectares in 2010.

Farmer Jahangir Hossain, 54, of Sarpukur village in Aditmari upazila, said most to the time they are lured by the tobacco companies to grow tobacco instead of other crops in their fertile land.

"We prefer to grow the poisonous crop with the hope of earning a bit more, but it never happens actually," he said.

"Most of the tobacco companies earn a huge profit, luring the farmers," alleged Tofayel Uddin, 55, a tobacco grower at Saptibari village in Aditmari upazila.

"I was motivated by representative of a tobacco company and forgot about the soil fertility and the surrounding environment," he said.

Farmer Jagadish Chandra Barman, 56, of Bhadai village in the upazila, said tobacco

companies provide them identity cards, seed and even fertilisers free of cost.

"If farmers are not motivated, lured with lucrative offers they would never opted to go for tobacco farming in large scale," he said, adding that they know tobacco is harmful for health but they totally forget that when tobacco company's representatives rattle their brains.

Tah Hiyatul Habib Mridul, president of Lalmonirhat Child and Youth Network, said around 6,000 children are currently engaged in producing bidi and processing tobacco leaves at different factories in the district.

"Although we are trying to motivate them, it brings no result as parents are seen more interested in enjoying their kid's earnings rather sending them to schools," he said.

An official of a tobacco company in Lalmonirhat, seeking anonymity, said the district has a tobacco market worth Tk 500 crore.

Aditmari Upazila Agriculture Officer Ali Noor said farmers always prefer talking to the representatives of the tobacco companies and follow their instructions instead of taking advice from the agriculture officials.

Lalmonirhat Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shaful Arif said if they get any directives from the government they will take necessary steps against the tobacco companies and their representatives working in the field level.

## Elderly man beaten dead

Six arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

An elderly man was beaten to death in Masterdukan area of Kulaura upazila on Wednesday night.

The deceased was Montar Mia, 70, a resident of Gazipur village in the upazila.

The victim's son Jahid Mia said when Lal Mia, Rahman Mia, Pablu Mia, Chalu Mia and Shipper Mia of the same area were collecting mangoes from trees at a local mosque around 7:00pm, his father asked them not to do it.

At the time, they swooped on Montar and beat him mercilessly, leaving him injured.

Critically injured Montar was rushed to the upazila health complex where on-duty doctor declared him dead.

The body was sent to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital for an autopsy, said Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Kulaura Police Station Eardous Hasan.

Six people, including the attackers, were arrested in connection with the incident, said the OC.

## Ex-FMCH principal jailed for embezzling Tk 91,291

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A court here yesterday sentenced a former principal of Faridpur Medical College Hospital (FMCH) to 12 years' imprisonment for misappropriating Tk 91,291 from the college fund during his tenure.

Convict Md Solaiman Sheikh was the principal of FMCH for five years from 1996. He was tried in absentia.

Judge Md Motiur Rahman of the Special Judge Court also fined Solaiman Tk 1,01,291, in default, he is to suffer another one year in jail, said Public Prosecutor Narayan Chandra Das. Sheikh Md Fanafilah, the then deputy director of Faridpur Anti-Corruption Commission, filed a case with Kotwali Police Station against Solaiman on April 15 in 2004.

After examining witnesses and evidence, the judge found him guilty and pronounced the verdict.

## Man killed by brother

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A man was stabbed to death allegedly by his elder brother over a trifle matter in Joypurhat on Wednesday.

The deceased was Harun Ur Rashid, 65, son of late Maser Ali of Ishwarpur village in Sadar upazila.

Quoting family members, police said when Harun was piling up paddy residue at their yard, his elder brother Salim Uddin asked him not to do it there.

Later, the two siblings locked in an altercation over the issue. At one stage, Salim stabbed his brother, leaving him critically injured. Harun was rushed to Joypurhat Modern Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries, said Muminul Islam, inspector (investigation) of Joypurhat Sadar Police Station.

Police arrested Salim in connection with the incident, said the inspector.

A case was filed.

# Low yield upsets chilli growers in Manikganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Chilli growers are facing huge losses as the yield has drastically fallen due to hot weather and lack of rain.

Chilli is widely cultivated in Shimulia union of Shivalaya upazila and Balla union of Harirampur upazila in Manikganj and Jhitka Bazar in Harirampur and Barangail Bazar in Shivalaya see large-scale buying and selling of chilli.

Famous for its distinct taste and flavour, chilli from the area is sent to different places of the country including Dhaka, Chattogram and Satkhira.

The item is also exported to several East Asian, Middle Eastern and European countries.

"Our chilli plants dried due to excessive heat and lack of rain this season. In a normal situation, 10 to 15 maunds (a maund = 40kg) of chilli is grown on one bigha of land. But now I am getting less than two maunds," Riaz Uddin, 70, said during this correspondent's visit to Shimulia village in Shivalaya a few days ago.

It is difficult to recover even the cultivation cost although the chilli price has risen to about Tk 30 per kg, from Tk 15 in last season, he said.



As in many other areas of Manikganj, chilli plants at a field of Shimulia village in Shivalaya upazila gives much less than expected yield this season, as the region famous for high quality chilli witnessed a hot and dry weather.

PHOTO: STAR

Many other farmers of the village echoed the same.

Wholesalers are also frustrated due to the low yield of chilli this year.

Md Taj Uddin, a wholesaler at Barangail Bazar, said, "I have been exporting chilli of this region to

Dubai, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Singapore and different European countries for the last 25 years. But this season I am frustrated due to low yield and price rise of the item in the local market.

Habibur Rahman Chowdhury, deputy director of the Department of Agricultural Extension in Manikganj, said the yield has fallen this year as the weather was unusually hot and there was lack of rain this season.

## Home rush picks up momentum

FROM PAGE 16

Chattrala Express and Rajshahi-bound Silk City Express were delayed by more than an hour.

An official of Bangladesh Railway said most of the 68 trains which will leave or have left Kamalapur will be on schedule, but a few inter-city trains had failed to do so.

He said a huge number of people came to the station after 3:00pm.

Sabuj Hossain, a worker of a textile mill in Narayanganj, said their owner had given them 15 days leave from yesterday due to huge amount of textile stock remaining unsold, which allowed Sabuj to take his wife and daughter to Chatmohol of Rajshahi to celebrate Eid.

"I am very happy as I have got a long vacation but I am still worried as I am not sure whether I will get salary for the full 15 days after eid," said Sabuj, who gets a salary twice a month, after every half an month.

In the afternoon, passengers' presence at Gabtoli Inter-district Bus Terminal was usual with transport workers saying they expected a rush from today.

Most tickets for the day had been sold, while buses departed and reached the terminal on time, said workers at different counters. They also said passengers' rush might increase in the evening and night.

Suvenker Ghosh Rakesh, managing director of Shyamoli NR Travels, told this newspaper that the pressure of home-goers began yesterday and was expected to reach pick on June 3.

He said the situation in the highways was better than before and the authority should take necessary steps to cope with the increased pressure two or three days ahead of Eid.

Meanwhile, some passengers alleged ticket price was higher than

usual at some of the counters, which transport workers denied.

Abdul Wahed, a government service holder, said he would go to Jashore to celebrate Eid with family members.

"I checked at a couple of counters for a ticket but they asked for an additional Tk 120 to Tk 150 for it," he said, adding the usual ticket price from Dhaka to Jashore was Tk 480.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority has set up a "vigilance team" at a booth in the Gabtoli terminal to ensure hassle-free Eid journey for home-goers.

The team would work based on complaints from passengers, said BRTA Inspector Rasheduzzaman there. Police and Rab also set up separate control rooms there.

Besides, the transport ministry set up a monitoring room at BRTA headquarters in the capital's Banani to take necessary steps in case any problems arise on the roads.

Hamjalal Sheikh, joint convener of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority, said, "70-80 launches are operational on 43 waterways on a regular basis. Now, as the holidays have approached, 120 launches are operational just today [yesterday]. The rush has already begun and this will continue until Eid."

Abdur Rouf, who was going home on a launch with his family for Eid, said, "I came early today [yesterday] so that I don't have to face the crowd. I did not know the crowd had already begun. If I hadn't reached the terminal early, I probably would not be able to board my luggage."

### QUADER SEEKS COMMITMENT OF RHD ENGINEERS

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday urged the Roads and Highways Department

engineers to work at night during the Eid holiday or on Eid day, if necessary, to ensure smooth journey of holidaymakers.

"It is a matter of commitment. I don't want to cancel the vacation. However, I am urging the engineers to make this sacrifice [for the sake of people]," the minister said during a pre-Eid preparation meeting of Roads and Highways Department (RHD) at its head office in Tejgaon area of the capital.

This year, there will be no public suffering as the roads are in good condition, he said, adding that if there happened to be any problems then those would be due to the lack of discipline of the drivers on the highways.

Quader requested the owners and drivers of motor vehicles to obey the traffic rules for a smooth Eid journey.


## 877 bags of rice for poor seized, 2 held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, PABNA

A mobile court in a drive on Tuesday seized 877 sacks of rice meant for Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) programme from a godown in Mirpur area in Sirajganj Sadar upazila.

During the drive the court also detained two rice traders for their alleged involvement in selling the smuggled rice meant for the poor.

The arrestees—Abu Siddique, 49, son of Abdul Jalil, and Abdus Salam, 45, son of Abdul Karim, of the area—were produced before a Sirajganj court that sent them to jail yesterday.



**বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান মেরিটাইম ইউনিভার্সিটি, বাংলাদেশ**  
 ১৪/০৬-১৪/২৩, পল্লবী, মিরপুর-১২, ঢাকা-১২১৬  
 ওয়েব: [www.bsrmru.edu.bd](http://www.bsrmru.edu.bd)

### Invitation for Tenders

Date: 31 May 2019

No. BSMR MU Permanent Campus/Procurement-004/OTM/01					
Ministry/Division	Ministry of Education.				
Procuring entity name	Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University (BSMRMU) Permanent Campus.				
Procuring entity district	Dhaka, Bangladesh.				
Tender Invitation for	Procurement of Computers & Computer Accessories.				
Invitation Reference No.	BSMRMU Open Tender No. 01/2018-2019				
Date	31 May, 2019				
<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>					
Procurement method	Open Tender Method (National).				
<b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>					
Budget and source of funds	Government of Bangladesh.				
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>					
Tender last selling date and time	15 June 2019, 12:00 Noon.				
Tender submission date and time	16 June 2019, 12:00 Noon.				
Tender opening date and time	16 June 2019, 12:15pm.				
<b>INFORMATION FOR TENDERER</b>					
Eligibility of tenderer	1. Manufacturers or their authorized distributors or agents having office establishment, repairing/servicing workshop, manpower, logistic support, qualification and experience of supplying brand new original and good quality computers & office Equipments to various reputed organization within assigned time (Details in STD). 2. The tenderer should have a valid trade licence, updated VAT and tax certificate, up-to-date bank solvency and other document as per tender schedule.				
Brief description of goods					
Lot No.	Identification of lot	Qty	Location	Tender security money	Completion time
01	a) Laptop Computer	As per STD	BSMRMU	20,000/-	60 days from the signature of contract
	b) Desktop Computer				
02	a) Toner Cartridge (PPC)	As per STD	BSMRMU	5,000/-	50 days from the signature of contract
	b) Toner Cartridge (Printer)				
Tender document price			Lot No. 01 Tk 750.00, Lot No-02 Tk 150.00, (non refundable) in the form of Pay Order/Bank Draft from any scheduled bank of Bangladesh in favour of "BSMRMU Permanent Campus Establishment".		
<b>PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS</b>					
Name, designation of official inviting tender			Project Director, BSMR MU Permanent Campus Establishment Project.		
Address of official inviting tender			Office of the Project Director, BSMR MU, Plot No. 14/06-14/23, Pallabi, Mirpur-12, Dhaka-1216.		
Contact details of official inviting tender		Tel No. 01769721010	Fax No. 02-58051010	Web: <a href="http://www.bsrmru.edu.bd">www.bsrmru.edu.bd</a> e-mail: <a href="mailto:pdoffice@bsrmru.edu.bd">pdoffice@bsrmru.edu.bd</a>	
The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason.					

MNG Mukhtar  
Project Director  
BSMRMU Permanent Campus  
Establishment Project

GD-1048