

**Metropolitan**

**'Ekota' to run daily from Sept 1**

The intercity 'Ekota' express between Dhaka and Dinajpur will run everyday from Sept 1, a press release of Bangladesh Railway said yesterday, reports BSS.

**PM condoles deaths in Manikganj bus accident**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock at the death of 14 bus passengers in a road accident near Uthuli in Shibalaya thana of Manikganj district on Friday, reports UNB.

terday, she conveyed her deep sympathies to bereaved family members and prayed for early recovery of the injured people. Fourteen people were killed and many injured when a minibus fell into river Isamati, breaking the railing of a bridge

on the Dhaka-Aricha highway. In another message, the Prime Minister condoled the death of film actress Shama, who, along with two of her relatives, was killed as a truck crashed into their car on Tongi Diverson road early Friday.

**Premium Bus Service to operate in Motijheel-Mirpur route from Sept 7**

By Shehab Ahmed

The Premium Bus Service, which introduced the comfort of air-conditioned travel at a reasonable rate since it opened the first service in Uttara-Motijheel route in January 12, is planning to open its third run in Motijheel-Mirpur route via Farm Gate on September 7.

The fare in the Motijheel-Mirpur route will be Tk 20. Company sources said that after its initial success, it is running the Motijheel-Narayanganj route and exploring

**Panel of chairmen for JS session announced**

Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury yesterday announced a five-member panel of chairmen for the sixth session of the seventh parliament, reports BSS.

The panel members are Col (ret'd) Shukat Ali (AL-Shariatpur), Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf (BNP-Faridpur), Prof Ali Ashraf (AL-Comilla), Rabeya Bhuiyan (JP-Dhaka-mohila) and Dharendra Nath Saha (AL-Narail).

They will preside over the session according to the order of the panel in absence of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

**President, PM greet Malaysian King, PM**

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday felicitated the King of Malaysia, Tuanku Ja'afar ibni Al-Marhum Tuanku Abdul Rahman on the occasion of the National Day of his country, reports BSS.

The President in a message to the king expressed his confidence that the existing fraternal relations between the two countries would be further strengthened and consolidated in the years to come.

In a separate message, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina greeted the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohamad, on the occasion of the National Day of his country.

The Prime Minister in a message to Dr. Mahathir expressed her hope that the close bonds of friendship, mutual understanding and fruitful co-operation between the two countries will acquire greater depth and dimension in the years ahead for the mutual benefit of the two peoples.

the possibility of operating a service between Uttara to Malabagh railway crossing via Gulshan Circle 1 and 2, US Embassy and Rampura TV Centre on the weekends only.

Since it started the service it received good response from passengers and its fleet is one short of 100.

Passengers who avail the service are mainly from the middle-income group. They are disciplined and patient. But they forced the company to keep fares down when it added Tk five to the regular fare between Uttara and Motijheel in the wake of rise in oil prices last week. After a day, the company is now charging the normal fare Tk 20.

A company spokesman, however, denied they ever raised it. Since introduction in January this year, the Premium Service now covers the Motijheel-Narayanganj route, where it recently cut its fare from Tk 20 to Tk 15 because of intense competition from non-air-conditioned buses.

The Premium Bus Service is a World Bank financed project in the private sector.

But passengers have started complaining that quality of its service has declined. Spraying of air fresheners has become a rarity. The stoppages are tiny, providing very little cover to the people queuing during rain or heat. The starting point at Uttara and its next stoppage are full of slime. The inside of the buses are seldom cleaned.

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