

**ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY
9 firms join
the race**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Nine local and international firms yesterday submitted their documents to qualify for the 32 kilometres Dhaka Elevated Expressway project. The firms submitted their documents on the last date for submission of pre-qualification statement for the project, a press release of Bridge Division said. The government has taken an initiative to build the elevated expressway in Dhaka under the public-private

**Invective-hurling
MPs lambasted**

Speaker terms behaviour of some lawmakers shameful for entire nation; vows not to allow expletives at JS anymore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Speaker Abdul Hamid yesterday decried the unruly behaviour of some lawmakers and use of indecent and vulgar words on the floor Wednesday and termed the incident unfortunate and shameful for the nation.

"Microphones will be switched off as soon as one uses unparliamentary and aggressive words while speaking," Hamid issued a note of caution. "The nation expects a lot from you. Lakhs of people elected you and they cannot accept the behaviour you displayed and the language you used in parliament [on

Wednesday].
 "For God's sake, please act in such a way so that the parliament can be effective and people's desire are fulfilled," urged the speaker, who was not in the chair on Wednesday when the shocking event took place.

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**PM banks on
info tech for
transparency**

Asks govt officials, service providers to use ICT for people's benefit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 The government wants to ensure transparency and accountability in the administration to establish good governance and end corruption with a greater use of information and communication technology, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said yesterday.

She was speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the first ever Digital Innovation Fair 2010 at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novo Theatre in the capital.

The premier asked the public servants and service providers to take their services to people's doorsteps.

Hasina urged them to change their mindset to provide services to people with the use of ICT.

She said the ruling party has taken information technology as a means to achieve "the charter for change" and is working hard to fulfil its electoral pledge.

"We don't want people to approach the administration for services, rather we want them to get it on the doorstep," she said.

"Those working in the public administration and service sector have to think anew. They have to find out a way through which the government can provide services to 15 crore people."

Hasina said to move towards a "Digital Bangladesh", her government has put emphasis on four elements -- human resource development through IT, involvement of people in government activities, taking services to people's doorstep and increasing productivity through IT.

The premier said the government will include ICT in the

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MORE STORIES IN STAR BUSINESS

**Railway gets
e-ticketing**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Railway is going to launch electronic ticketing service to ease the sufferings of passengers.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday unveiled the service at the Railway stall in the Digital Innovation Fair at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novo Theatre in the capital.

Using Grameenphone's "Mobitaka" service, rail passengers will be able to book or purchase electronic railway tickets 10 days prior to their travel using mobile phones.

To buy an e-ticket a customer will have to press *133# in his mobile phone and enter a menu. The menu will generate windows where the customer has to furnish necessary travel information following instruction.

After the input, the customer will have the option to either book tickets or purchase them instantly, subject to availability of tickets.

An SMS notification with ticket numbers will be sent to the customer which will be required to collect paper tickets from the train station at least an hour prior to departure.

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Extortionists on rampage

Goldsmith shot dead for reporting to police after Tk 35 lakh toll demand; muggers shot industry staff in Narsingdi, take away Tk 69 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of extortionists shot dead a jewellery shop owner in front of police near Victoria Park in Dhaka's Sutrapur yesterday morning after he filed a general diary against them.

Meanwhile, armed muggers shot and wounded three employees of a business group and snatched Tk 69



Prem Krishno Roy

lakh at Itakhula of Shibpur in Narsingdi. Goldsmith Prem Krishno Roy of Kailash Ghosh Lane in Kotwali had received threats from the gang for the last three to four weeks.

Prem's wife, Swapna Rani, said the gang first demanded Tk 25 lakh but raised the amount to Tk 35 lakh when her husband refused to pay the sum.

Four days after receiving the first threat, Prem filed a general diary regarding the matter with Kotwali police station.

When the extortionists learnt that Prem had sought police help, they told him he would be killed in front of police at the earliest opportunity.

Prem was gunned down around 8:00am while returning home after dropping his two nieces at their school at Laxmibazar in Sutrapur.

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**RMG INDUSTRY
Govt forms 8
committees to
check unrest**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday decided to form eight committees immediately to reduce frequent labour unrest in the country's readymade garment factories.

The committees -- two in Narayanjanj, two in Gazipur, and one each at Ashulia, Tongi, Savar and EPZ area --

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**Mega plan to
attain food
autarky**

Coastal belt to be country's rice bowl, northern region a high-value crops zone

PORIMOL PALMA

The government is designing a long-term strategic plan to turn the southern coastal belt into a major rice producing region, and the water-scarce northern districts into high value crops zone during dry season to achieve food autarky despite the challenges of climate change.

In formulating the plan, the authorities are considering the issues of increasing salinity in the southern coastal districts that might take a serious turn due to sea level rise in future, and fall of underground water table in the northern region during dry season, agriculture ministry officials said.

Due to the rising salinity and other climatic disruptions, crop intensity in the southern coastal region is only 120 percent, while it is 300 percent in the north because of adequate irrigation facilities, they said.

The country has 82.9 lakh hectares of cultivated land, and 3.23 lakh hectares of arable land remain fallow round the year.

A study by Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council on the coastal districts of Barguna, Patuakhali, Bagerhat, Bhola, Pirojpur, Jhalakathi and Barisal in 2008 found that of the 9.62 lakh hectares of cultivable land in these districts, 5.13 lakh hectares lie fallow during April-June, 57,290 hectares during July-September and 3.31 lakh hectares during December-March period.

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**রেডি হচ্ছে
বাংলাদেশ**
খাঁটি দুধের অঙ্গীকার নিয়ে রেডি আমরাও

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**Reach for the green,
reach for your dream...**



Planning for a weekend trip? Why not set off to the green hills of Srimangal?

It takes only around 5 hours to reach the hilly tea gardens. As you start your journey from the Kamalapur Railway station and leave behind the urban sights, you're all set on your way to enjoy the soothing greenery of the countryside. The farther east you go, the more dramatically the landscape changes. You'll feel like completely getting lost in the green.

The green tea estates are spread all across the eastern regions of Bangladesh. While still on the train, you can

start enjoying the scenery right through the window. You'll see the native tribal workers, carrying their shoulder baskets, passionately collecting tea leaves. In the evening, you'll see them coming down the serpentine hilly trails. The twittering birds will compose you an unique melody in the twilight. As the night falls, the flames of fire made at the distant tribal villages seem to glow like festive fireflies, creating a captivating surreal sight. Once you reach there, you'll surely like to take a walk along the hilly trails. As it rains there all throughout the year, a variety of plants grow in these hills. Birds, squirrels and chimps reign these forests. Transparent water-streams running into springs look just amazing. As chunks of aerial fog wander



around the hills, mild spells of rain might shower upon you any time, and the moment sun will shine back. Trees here are not very tall except some in the Lawachara Rain Forest. You might see some lizards and mongoose taking sneak peeks at you, but you need not be scared since most of these creatures are harmless. As you keep on moving, you'll see small springs flowing relentlessly. Despite their small size, their very sights are quite refreshing. The views of numerous birds flying over the lakes in the valleys are really enjoyable. The most thrilling experience is witnessing the kites prey on fishes nosediving into the lake's water. Remember to carry your lunch with you as you set out for a day long trekking, since food may not easily be available around. However, sometimes food is delivered at specified spots form the local cottages if arranged beforehand. It could make a wonderful experience cooking your food in the nature, while at the same time you get the feel of having a

singing and dancing around. And, isn't it a perfect occasion for a barbecue? Just imagine that mouth-watering burnt smell in that dark night with the hills surrounding you! Wouldn't that be awesome? So, be wise to keep necessary barbecue ingredients handy. For those who never had been there before, it a completely new experience to spend nights in those wooden cottages, leaving behind monotonous city life in the concrete-jungle.

once made on raised platforms to keep out of reach of wild creatures, these wild creatures are hardly seen these days. Rather, you'll

howling afar. Or you might fantasize to be scared by the owl

also like to taste their native preparation of juicy betel leaves with exotic ingredients and betel nuts.

You can visit the Madhabkunda waterfalls at any time of the day. There are special transport arrangements to reach the falls. The bumpy roads farther add to the adventure. You can take a shower in the water of the falls. It's quite mind refreshing. So, carry spare clothes with you so that later you don't have to regret the shower. However, just beware of the leeches that are often found in the crude waters. So, it's better to keep your shower short. On your way back, you can taste the special three- or seven-layer-tea. The preparation of such layered tea without using any chemical is a local secret. So, set out by train for a great trip and bring home some dreamy experiences.

To know the most updated time schedule of available train services from Dhaka or other places to Srimangal, you can visit: www.railway.gov.bd

Want to reach for your dream...

faster?

enjoy the jackals and wild cats

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