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4 of a family killed in road accident

Elderly relative dies after getting tragic news

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

After four members of a family lost their lives in a road accident in Mymensingh yesterday, tragedy struck the family once again when an elderly relative, whom the victims were travelling to visit, passed away after getting the devastating news.

The accident occurred around 7:30am when a CNG-run autorickshaw carrying the victims collided head-on with a truck on the Mymensingh-Netrakona road in Tarakanda upazila.

Bidya Miya, 42, and his wife Laboni Akter, 18, died on the spot, said Md Shafiqul Islam Khan, officer-in-charge (OC) of Mymensingh Kotwali Police Station.

Bidya's sister Bakul Begum, 45, and her husband Abdur Rashid, 55, who were also travelling in the autorickshaw, succumbed to their injuries at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, he added.

The victims, residents of Bahadurpur village in Netrakona Sadar upazila, had started from Gazipur to visit Bidya's ailing father, Khorshed Ali, 85. Tragically, Khorshed Ali, who had been suffering from old-age complications, passed away

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Law and order hasn't worsened statistically

Says Army HQ, acknowledges many 'incidents' taking place

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The law and order situation in the country has not statistically deteriorated, but many incidents are taking place, the Army Headquarters said yesterday.

Colonel Intekhab Haider Khan, colonel staff of the Directorate of Military Operations at the Army Headquarters, made the remarks while giving updates on the efforts to maintain law and order over the past four weeks at a press conference.

Facing a reporter's query, Col Intekhab said that along with the police, the army's patrols, and different camp officials are working on law and order.

Area-based cells at different levels were formed for coordination among the police, army, and other law enforcement agencies, he said.

"This coordination is done at the Army Headquarters and the adviser level. All types of law and order issues and the threats to the country are discussed, and decisions about the next course of action are taken."

He said the law enforcement agencies and the army conduct two types of operations. The first is targeted and the second type of operations are conducted immediately after receiving information about any incident.

"We are trying. It may not be possible to keep [law and order] under complete

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26 killed in Israeli strikes on Gaza

Five journalists from Al-Quds Today channel among dead

REUTERS, Cairo

Gaza authorities said an Israeli airstrike killed five Palestinian journalists outside a hospital yesterday, though Israel's army said it had attacked a vehicle carrying Islamic Jihad fighters.

Medics said the five were among at least 26 people killed in Israeli air assaults across the enclave before dawn, as Hamas and Israel traded blame over delays in reaching a ceasefire deal after more than 14 months of fighting.

The Palestinian Journalists Union said one strike killed five journalists from the Al-Quds Today channel who were in a broadcast vehicle in front of Al-Awda Hospital in the Al-Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza.

Video from the scene showed the twisted wreckage of a white van with what appeared to be the remnants of the word "PRESS" in red on the back doors.

The union said more than 190 Palestinian journalists have been killed by Israeli fire since the war began in October 2023.

The Gaza-based channel called the strike a massacre and said in a statement on Telegram the five "were killed as they carried out their media and humanitarian duty".

The Israeli military said it "conducted a precise strike on a vehicle with an Islamic Jihad terrorist cell inside in the area of Nuseirat."

Medics in the enclave said eight other people were killed and 20 wounded in an Israeli airstrike on a house in Gaza City's Zeitoun neighbourhood. The death toll could rise as many people were trapped under the rubble, they added.

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'State intelligence agency helping certain quarters form king's party'

Alleges Rizvi, voices worry over new cyber security law

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi has accused a state intelligence agency of attempting to create a "king's party" ahead of the next general election.

He claimed that intelligence personnel are actively mobilising members for this political party, terming the move "unacceptable."



"If the state intelligence decides who will be elected, then what was the point of such a sacrifice?"

Rizvi expressed his concerns at a discussion meeting organised by a Rajshahi University alumni association at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) yesterday.

"The people of this country will not accept this. Those who want to form a political party should do so independently, without any directives, threats, or state interference."

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Mourners pray beside the bodies during the funeral of Palestinian journalists from Al-Quds Al-Youm television channel who were killed in Israeli airstrikes. The photo was taken at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Textbook distribution runs into a snag

Only one-third of 40cr books to be handed out to primary, secondary students on Jan 1

ARAFAT RAHMAN

No secondary school student will get full sets of textbooks on the first day of the next academic year. At the primary level, only about half of the students will get the full sets on January 1.

Top officials of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) said they would try to provide around 13.5 crore of 40 crore free textbooks by the first day of the new year.

These include around 6.5 crore textbooks out of 28 crore for the secondary level students and 7 crore out of 12 crore for the primary level.

They said students of classes 4 to 9 will only get Bangla, English, and mathematics books on the first day of the academic year.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, NCTB Chairman AKM Reazul Hassan hoped they would be able to provide all the textbooks by January 20.

But printing industry insiders hinted that it would take at least until the first week of March for them to deliver all the textbooks.

Officials and printing press owners said besides the closure during the July-August political changeover and the subsequent decision to return to the old curriculum, various other factors like a delay in re-tendering and a paper shortage caused the hold-up.

Approximately 40 crore books are being printed this year for over 4.4 crore students of the pre-primary level to class 10. Of these, 12 crore books will be printed for around 2 crore students at the pre-primary and primary

Only around 20pc of textbooks printed so far

13.5cr out of 40cr will be delivered by January 1

NCTB hopes to deliver all books by January 20

Printing industry insider says it may take up to first week of March to deliver all books

levels, while the remainder is for 2.24 crore secondary-level students.

As of yesterday, only about 20 percent of the textbooks have been printed, and all of these books are for primary-level students, said sources at the NCTB, printing press owners, and the Printing Industry Association.

For students in the capital, a total of 2.29 crore textbooks are required, while some 11.86 lakh books are printed for English medium school students. But as of Wednesday, no books were delivered to the schools.

When asked about the hold-up in printing the books, NCTB officials cited delays in re-tendering several lots of books for three primary grades, issuance of new tenders, and a paper shortage caused the hold-up.

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PAK UNREST
Military court jails 60 more civilians

REUTERS, Karachi

A Pakistani military court sentenced 60 civilians to 2-10 years in prison for attacks on military facilities after former prime minister Imran Khan's 2023 arrest, the military's media wing said yesterday.

Those sentenced include a relative of Khan as well as two retired military officers. Days earlier, 25 others were sentenced on the same charges.

Khan's arrest in May 2023 sparked nationwide protests that saw his supporters attack and ransack military installations in an unprecedented backlash against Pakistan's powerful army generals.

The sentences have sparked concerns among Khan's supporters that military courts will play a more significant role in cases related to the former leader, who is facing multiple charges, including inciting attacks against the armed forces.

The international community has also expressed concerns over the sentencing.

Bald eagle officially becomes America's national bird

CNN ONLINE

The bald eagle, a symbol of the power and strength of the United States for more than 240 years, earned an overdue honour on Tuesday: It officially became the country's national bird.

President Joe Biden signed into law legislation sent to him by Congress that amends the United States Code to correct what had long gone unnoticed and designate the bald eagle — familiar to many because of its white head, yellow beak and brown body — as the national bird.

The bald eagle has appeared on the Great Seal of the United States, which is used in official documents, since 1782, when the design was finalised. The seal is made up of an eagle, an olive branch, arrows, a flag-like shield, the motto "E Pluribus Unum" and a constellation of stars.

Congress that same year designated the bald eagle as the national emblem, and its image appears in a host of places, ranging from documents and the presidential flag to military insignia and US currency, according to a US government website.

But it had never been officially designated to be what many had just assumed it was — the national bird. The bald eagle is indigenous to North America.



MASTERS OF SPIN ... A striking female giant golden orb weaver spotted resting on her web near the Gumai Beel in Chattogram's Rangunia upazila. This fascinating species of spiders are found in all countries of East and Southeast Asia, as well as Oceania. Golden orb weavers spin larger webs than many spiders and it has also been reported that they can adjust their silk composition based on diet and environmental conditions. They are known to spin webs, which shine golden under light, frequently throughout the day. If there's any damage to the web, they take 10-60 minutes to repair it, and if it's irreparable, they consume the web and construct a new one.

PHOTO: KAMOL DAS