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UNAUTHORISED LEVEL CROSSING

Five killed as train rams microbus

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

At least five people were killed and four others injured when a train hit a microbus at an unauthorised rail crossing in Faridpur yesterday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as Mamun Chowdhury, 50, his wife Fahmida Sharmin, 40, Saiya Saju, 45, Atifa Rahman, 36, and Umme Tansuma, 30.

They were relatives who, after visiting Faridpur, were returning home to Narayanganj.

The accident occurred around 12:30pm, when the microbus, unaware of the oncoming train, got onto the unauthorised level crossing at Munshibazar area in Faridpur Sadar, said Asaduzzaman, officer-in-charge (OC) of Faridpur's Kotwali Police Station.

The level crossing is unprotected; it does not have any gates or a gateman. Furthermore, the adjacent road is lined with shops and tall trees, which makes it difficult to detect oncoming trains.

On information, three fire engines from the Faridpur Fire Service and Civil Defence rushed to the scene and began rescue operations, said Nazrul Islam, senior station officer of the Faridpur Fire Station.

He said the train had tossed the microbus into a roadside ditch.

"We reached the spot at 12:28pm and found three

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Fisherman Ferdous's mother welcomes her son with hugs and kisses after he was handed over to his family by the Bangladesh Coast Guard at No-15 jetty of Karnaphuli channel in Patenga yesterday morning. Like Ferdous, 90 fishermen and sailors were detained by the Indian Coast Guard while fishing on December 9. They were brought back yesterday after a prison exchange programme at the Bangladesh-India Maritime Boundary Line.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

KILLING OF BOY Hasina, 15 others sued at ICT

DU CORRESPONDENT

Another complaint has been filed against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 15 others with the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) for allegedly committing crimes against humanity during a demonstration protesting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh in 2021.

Shafiqul Islam filed the complaint yesterday over the killing of his 17-year-old son Asadullah in a police attack in Brahmanbaria allegedly ordered by the then government in 2021.

After submitting the complaint, Shafiqul Islam spoke with journalists at the ICT building.

Describing the events, Shafiqul Islam said his son Asadullah went out to buy medicine during the protest on March 28. When Asadullah reached the

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Confiscate 22 flats of Nafeez Sarafat, family Court orders ACC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

ADhaka court yesterday ordered the Anti-Corruption Commission to confiscate 22 flats owned by former Padma Bank chairman Chowdhury Nafeez Sarafat, his wife, and their son over allegations that they embezzled Tk 887 crore from banks and the share market.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain of Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after ACC Deputy Director Md Masudur Rahman, who is the head of an inquiry team, submitted an application in this regard.

The flats are in the capital's Gulshan, the Cantonment area, Banani, Baridhara, Bashundhara Residential Area, Nikunja, Panthapath, and Pallabi, as well as Gazipur and Kaliakair.

Of them, Sarafat owns nine flats in Gulshan, Dhaka Cantonment, and Bashundhara Residential Area, a 20-storey building at Gulshan, and 43.20 decimals of land in Badda and Nikunja in the capital, and Gazipur, and Kaliakair.

Sarafat's wife Anjuman Ara Shahid owns six flats in Panthapath, Gulshan, Pallabi and Bashundhara Residential Area and owns 21.25 decimals of property at Bashundhara, Nikunja, Badda and Gazipur while their son Chowdhury

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Strong tremor kills 126 in Tibet

188 hurt; hundreds of houses flattened

REUTERS, Beijing

A strong earthquake struck the foothills of the Himalayas near one of Tibet's holiest cities yesterday, killing at least 126 people and flattening hundreds of houses, Chinese authorities said.

The magnitude 6.8 quake's epicentre was about 80 km north of Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain. Tremors also shook buildings in neighbouring Nepal, Bhutan, India and Bangladesh.

The impact was felt across the Shigatse region of Tibet, home to 800,000 people. The region is administered from Shigatse city, the traditional seat of the Panchen Lama, one of the most important figures in Tibetan Buddhism.

Many homes in Shigatse city were reduced to rubble, video released by Tibet Fire and Rescue showed. Rescue workers searched through the debris of a ruined home and pulled out one injured person, it showed.

Adding to the misery for those left homeless, temperatures in the region had fallen to minus 6 degrees Celsius late yesterday, and were forecast to drop as low as minus 16 C (3 F) overnight.

The China Earthquake Networks Centre located the epicentre at Tingri county, known as the northern gateway to the Everest region, at a depth of 10 km. The US Geological Service put the quake's magnitude at 7.1. It struck at 9:05am.

At least 126 people were known to have been killed and 188 injured on the Tibetan side, China's state-run Xinhua news agency reported. There were no reports of deaths elsewhere.

More than 1,500 firefighters and rescue workers have been despatched to the affected areas, Xinhua said. Some 22,000 items including tents, coats, quilts and folding beds have also been sent, it said.

Footage broadcast on state television CCTV showed rescuers

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- Epicentre was around 80 km north of Mt Everest
- Tremors felt in Nepal, Bhutan, India, Bangladesh
- 1,500 firefighters, rescue workers dispatched

Dhaka needs to urgently prepare for a major quake

PINAKI ROY

Having experienced two earthquakes in the span of a single week, an obvious question looms – are we taking this silent threat seriously enough?

Luckily, none of the two earthquakes – one on January 3 with a moderate magnitude of five that originated in Myanmar and another yesterday morning with a 7.1 magnitude originating in Tibet – were close enough to affect us.

Yesterday's quake had its epicentre near the Nepal-Tibet border and reportedly killed at least 126 people. Dhaka residents woke up to the tremors early in the morning, content with the thought that the quake was not big enough in the country.

Experts, however, say that Dhaka sits precariously on a seismic time bomb.

Research indicates that the Indo-Burma subduction zone, encompassing Sylhet and Chattogram, is accumulating strain capable of generating a significant seismic event, with the capability of releasing the energy of up to a magnitude of eight.

Another very active zone is the Dauki fault, which has been associated with several large earthquakes. It is believed to have ruptured three times in the past millennium, with significant events occurring in 840, 920 and 1548 and

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WFP accuses Israel of firing on Gaza aid convoy

31 more Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes

AFP, United Nations

The UN's World Food Programme has accused Israel of firing on one of its aid convoys in the war-torn Gaza Strip, saying at least 16 bullets hit the clearly marked vehicles but no staff were injured.

Condemning the "horrifying" and "unacceptable" incident, the WFP called again for "all parties to respect international humanitarian law, protect civilian lives, and allow safe passage for humanitarian aid."

The "clearly marked WFP convoy was shot at by Israeli forces near the Wadi Gaza checkpoint, putting the lives of our staff at tremendous risk and leaving the vehicles immobilized," the agency said in a statement on Monday evening.

"The convoy, consisting of three vehicles carrying eight staff members, came under hostile fire despite having received all of the necessary clearances from Israeli authorities. At least 16 bullets struck the vehicles," it added. "Thankfully, no staff members were injured in this terrifying encounter."

Questioned by AFP, the Israeli army said it had received reports of shots being fired at the convoy, without specifying the origin.

"The incident was reviewed, operating procedures have been clarified, and findings from the inquiry will be analyzed," it added in a statement.

Gazans face dire conditions after 15 months of offensive, with humanitarian agencies repeatedly warning not enough aid was reaching Palestinians in need due in part to looting as well as Israeli restrictions.

Israel's relentless bombardment of Gaza continued with at least 31 Palestinians killed and 57 injured over the past 24 hours, according to the enclave's health ministry yesterday. The offensive has so far killed at

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- Qatar say meetings on truce ongoing
- Israeli troops kill 3 Palestinians in West Bank raids
- Death toll in Gaza rises to 45,885

Youth hacked to death on his way home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Police recovered the body of a young man from a paddy field in Jhalakathi Sadar upazila yesterday morning.

The deceased Sudeb Halder, 28, was a resident of Betra village and owner of a mobile phone shop in Bawkathi Bazar, said police.

Police suspect that Sudeb was hacked to death by criminals in the Rampur Jorapool area while he was returning home from his shop Monday night.

On information, police recovered the body around 10:00am. Injury marks were found on the victim's head, said Jhalakathi Sadar Police Station OC Moniruzzaman.

The body has been sent to a hospital for autopsy.

Police are trying to identify and arrest the suspects. The victim's father, Subrata Halder, filed a murder case against unidentified individuals, added Moniruzzaman.



Rangpur Riders' English batter Alex Hales celebrates with Nahid Rana after one of the three dismissals by the Bangladesh speedster during their seven-wicket victory against Dhaka Capitals in a Bangladesh Premier League fixture at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium yesterday. Five wins from five matches consolidated Rangpur's lead while Dhaka remained winless after four matches.

PHOTO: STAR

BFIU seeks bank account info of Tulip, family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) yesterday sought information on the bank accounts of Tulip Siddiq, niece of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and UK city minister, and her family members.

The anti-money laundering agency has also asked for details of the accounts of Azmina Siddique, Tulip's sister, her brother Radwan Mujib Siddiq, and mother Sheikh Rehana.

Banks have been instructed to submit all the relevant information, including transaction records, account opening forms, and other related information.

Earlier, the BFIU sought information on the bank accounts of Hasina, her son Sajeeb Wazed, and daughter Saima Wazed.

Tulip recently made headlines in international media as she is now under increasing pressure to resign due to her ties with the fallen Awami League government.

Tulip, who is responsible for anti-corruption efforts, has been linked to multiple properties associated with Hasina and her party. The AL has been accused of siphoning funds from Bangladesh's banking system, although they deny the allegations, reports British daily Financial Times (FT).

The FT disclosed last Friday that Tulip became the owner of a two-bedroom flat near King's Cross in London in 2004 without making any payment for it. The flat had been purchased three years earlier for £195,000 by Abdul Motalif, a developer connected to senior AL figures.

