



Relatives mourn Kazi Mohammad Nurul Islam, a businessman, who was killed by muggers at Sutrapur in the city in the early hours of yesterday.

# 'Increased' police watch fails to check city crime

SHAIKH NAZRUL ISLAM

Crime in the city has gone up despite "increased" police vigilance ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha.

At least five persons were killed, three of them in incidents of mugging and robbery, in the last three weeks.

Law and order in the country started deteriorating after partial withdrawal of the joint forces on January 9.

The situation worsened in the last few days though strength of both uniformed and plain-clothes policemen has been increased and all city police stations alerted against crimes, sources said.

This is because 'listed criminals' have come out of their hideouts following withdrawal of the joint forces. There have been incidents of such crime by these criminals under alleged cover of a section of policemen, the sources claimed.

Extortion by eight policemen at Bangabazar Hawkers Market on Thursday last added a new dimension to it, making people more

concerned about safety in public life and embarrassing the police administration. The eight, along with one of their sources, are now in custody.

Earlier on December 26, three policemen -- Abdus Salam, Rezaul Karim and Mojibur Rahman -- were arrested for attempting to snatch money from one Mizanur Rahman in Motijheel area in the city.

There is no let-up in the crime situation though the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner said police is taking prompt action after every crime incident.

In the latest incident, Deputy Editor of The Prothom Alo, Mozammel Hossain Manju, was stabbed by muggers in front of his residence at Dilu Road in the early hours yesterday.

In another incident on Saturday night, Nazmul Ashraf, Senior Reporter of The Daily Star, was mugged at Dhanmondi

On Sunday last, muggers stabbed to death and took away v a l u a b l e s

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# Cattle markets create traffic jam in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The city witnessed unusual traffic jam on some major roads yesterday, mainly due to temporary cattle markets along those.

Long snarl-ups kept vehicles stranded for hours on the Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in front of the Prime Minister's office, Maghbazar-Banglamotor- Mouchak road, Topkhana Road, North-South Road, Amin Bazar-Gabtolli road and at Motijheel.

Hundreds of vehicles were also stranded on both sides of the road from Satrasta to Staff Road.

An official at the Deputy Commissioner (Traffic) said, traffic on many roads in the city collapsed due to cattle markets and movement of cattle along roads.

Hundreds of cattle were seen being taken to and from the cattle markets, often blocking roads for vehicles.

One traffic sergeant at Mahakhali was found desperately trying to keep vehicles moving towards the Shaheen College from Mahakhali but he failed, as the long queue of vehicles could not move ahead.

Another sergeant at Banani Rail

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# PM turns down promotion of 407 bureaucrats

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday again set aside the recommendation of the Superior Selection Board (SSB) that 407 senior assistant secretaries be promoted to the post of deputy secretary.

Highly placed sources said the SSB, after completion of all formalities, recommended promotion of 407 senior assistant secretaries, drawn from the 1982 special batch and the 1984 BCS batch, but Prime Minister Khaleda Zia rejected the proposal for the third time.

They said currently there were some 1,620 senior assistant secretaries eligible for promotion, but the SSB recommended promotion of 262 and 145 senior assistant secretaries from the 1982 and 1984 batches respectively, against 407 vacant posts of deputy secretary.

Prime Minister's Office sources said Cabinet Secretary Dr Saadat Husain, who is also the head of the seven-member SSB, and Establishment Secretary Anwarul

Bar Chowdhury met with the prime minister yesterday afternoon with prior appointment and sought her approval, but she turned it down.

Principal Secretary to the PM Dr Kamal Uddin Siddiqui was also present when the two top bureaucrats met with her.

Earlier, the SSB, after a lengthy meeting late on Saturday, finalised the recommendation for promotion of 407 senior assistant secretaries.

Sources said the SSB met urgently to meet a court order, which asked to promote the officials within four weeks that would expire on February 15. However, it is not known whether the PM would give her approval after the Eid vacation.

Sources at the Ministry of Establishment said the concerned authorities had informed the promotion and notification section and instructed it to complete the process of issuing the promotion notice.

Besides, the officials, who have been waiting for years to get promotion, were very enthusiastic about

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# Prothom Alo deputy editor mugged, stabbed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers have stabbed the deputy editor of the Prothom Alo in front of his residence at Dilu Road in Ramna yesterday.

The journalist was heading home after the day's work when the accident occurred.

When Deputy Editor Mozammel Hossain Manju reached the Dilu Road crossing at about 2:20am, a gang of eight muggers stopped the auto-rickshaw at gunpoint.

The gang succeeded in looting Tk 8,000 from his colleague, Zakir Hossain, a staff of graphic section of the newspaper.

But failing to snatch from the

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# Muggers murder businessman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers have stabbed a businessman to death at RM Das Road in the city's Sutrapur area in the early hours of yesterday.

Kazi Mohammad Nurul Islam Harun, 28, was travelling on a rickshaw to his Rupchand Lane residence from his cast-iron factory at RM Das.

At about 11:30pm, four muggers stopped his rickshaw in front of 20, RM Das Road and stabbed Harun repeatedly.

A local man rescued him and rushed him to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he died at about 1:10am. The body of was sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

The victim's family alleged Harun might have been killed by the same muggers who were threatening him to withdraw a case he had filed.

Three months back when muggers had snatched cash and a mobile phone from Harun, he filed a case with the Sutrapur Police station accusing Picchi Babu and John. The accused were then arrested and sent to jail.

Family members said the murder might have been an act of revenge.

A case was filed with the Sutrapur Police Station in this regard but none was arrested till the writing of this report last night.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Feb 10		5-50 pm
Feb 11	6-36 am	

Prayer Timings		
Feb 10		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-45	6-15
Zohr	12-15	1-20
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-56	6-01
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

# Europe to counter UN war resolution

## US plans to attack Iraq suffer setback

AFP, Munich

US plans for an imminent invasion of Iraq suffered severe blows yesterday when European states led by France said they would run interference in the UN and NATO, and Iraqi officials handed over key documents about its weapons programmes.

Germany announced that it and France were working on a proposal to be put to the UN Security Council on Friday that would call for UN peacekeepers to be deployed in Iraq, the number of UN inspectors there to be tripled, and the entire country to be made a no-fly zone.

Belgium, which also backs the plan, shot down US hopes of using NATO to immediately bolster defences in Turkey -- a planned launching pad for part of its invading force into neighbouring Iraq -- by saying it and France would block military assistance.

Britain's Sunday Telegraph newspaper earlier said President George W Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair were drawing up their own UN resolution that would give Saddam as little as 48 hours to flee Baghdad or face war.

But a Downing Street spokeswoman downplayed the report, saying: "It is far too early to be

talking about that sort of thing."

Meanwhile, Washington's Arab allies are examining a last-ditch Saudi initiative to oust Iraqi President Saddam in a bid to prevent a US-led war on Baghdad, Arab officials have told AFP.

In Baghdad, top UN inspectors Hans Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei were given documents on Iraqi biological, chemical and nuclear arms programmes as they completed two days of talks with senior Iraqi officials, according to a UN source.

Blix said Saturday the talks had proved "useful...and substantial". The developments undermined

US efforts to rally sceptical allies for a war in the near future to forcibly disarm Iraq, with or without a new UN resolution being drafted by Britain.

They also set the scene for an acrimonious showdown between the five permanent UN Security Council members: the United States and Britain on one side, and China, France and Russia on the other. Germany holds the council's chair this month.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has weighed into the matter by warning the United States it must not go it alone on Iraq, but adding

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