



"I think there are signals telling seniors when it is time to pack up ... juniors give those signals by rising to the occasion."

Bangladesh Test captain
Mominul Haque

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'Leaving all behind to survive'

Bangladeshis in Ukraine worry about life, future

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

As Tania Khatun went to sleep around 4:00am, shortly after putting her child to bed, she was jolted awake by the horrifying sounds of explosions reverberating through the city of Kyiv.

"With the sounds of a few more explosions, we were sure the war had begun ... Our house was shaking ... It was terrifying," Tania told The Daily Star over the phone hours after Russian forces launched a military assault on Ukraine.

"The situation in Kyiv is very alarming... We have packed our belongings and are planning to go to the Polish border."

Her husband, Mehedi Hasan Mohon, who had been living in Ukraine for over two decades, said "We didn't understand what to do as we have never faced such a situation in our lives. With warning sirens blaring, we have decided to leave the city for the Poland border as we fear the situation may go beyond control at night."

In his mid-40s now, Mohon moved to the country for higher education and now SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Local businesses fear ripple effect of Russian invasion of Ukraine

► STORY ON B1

Tears, defiance in Ukraine as Russia attacks

► STORY ON P7

Charter flights to relocate the Bangladeshis

Govt plans; worried over escalation

PORIMOL PALMA

Bangladesh is deeply concerned at the recent escalation of violence in Ukraine, the foreign ministry said in a statement yesterday.

"Such violence would seriously impact the peace and stability of the whole region," the statement read, adding that Bangladesh urges all parties to resolve the crisis through diplomacy and dialogue.

Meanwhile, Bangladeshi authorities are planning to operate charter flights to Poland for relocating citizens who moved from Ukraine, said Shahriar Alam, state

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GANG-RAPE OF STUDENT BCL attacks protesters

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Bangladesh Chhatra League activists allegedly attacked students protesting the gang-rape of a university student in Gopalganj yesterday.

At least 30 students of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University were injured in the attack, said Prof Rajtur Rahman, the proctor of the university.

Around 9:30pm on Wednesday, a woman student of the university was gang-raped in the town, according to a case filed by the proctor.

The woman and her friend were walking on a street in Nabinbagh area of the town when a group of seven or eight men stopped them and took them to a under-construction building and raped her.

The suspects tortured her companion before raping her, according to the complaint.

From the early hours of yesterday, students began to gather near Gopalganj Sadar Police Station and laid siege to the facility for nearly six hours, demanding punishment for the suspects.

Several hundred students later started demonstrating at Ghonapara on Gopalganj-Khulna highway in the morning. As the day progressed and more students joined, traffic flow was disrupted, causing long tailbacks on the road.

Around 5:00pm, a group of BCL men started hurling brickbats at the students, said several students, requesting anonymity.

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RUSSIA STRIKES UKRAINE

Dozens killed; Nato activating 'defence plans' for allies, but says won't send troops to Ukraine; thousands flee as missiles rain down across the country



Black smoke rises from a military airport in Chuguyev near Kharkiv, Ukraine, yesterday after Russian attacks. Inset, a woman reacts after the Chuguyev military airport attack.

PHOTO: AFP

AGENCIES

Russian President Vladimir Putin launched a 'full-scale invasion' of Ukraine yesterday, killing dozens and forcing thousands to flee for their lives in the pro-Western neighbour.

Russian air strikes hit military facilities across the country and ground forces moved in from the north, south and east, triggering condemnation from Western leaders and warnings of massive sanctions.

Weeks of intense diplomacy failed to deter Putin, who massed over 150,000 troops on Ukraine's borders in what the West said was the biggest military build-up in Europe since the Second World War.

"I have decided to proceed with a special military operation," Putin said in a television announcement in the early hours of yesterday.

"We will strive for the demilitarisation and denazification of Ukraine," he added.

Shortly afterwards, the first bombardments were heard in Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, and several other cities, according to AFP correspondents.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said a "full-scale invasion" was underway.

President Volodymyr Zelensky declared martial law and said Russia was attacking his

country's "military infrastructure" but urged citizens not to panic and vowed victory.

He accused Russia of acting like "Nazi Germany", saying it had attacked in a "cowardly and suicidal way".

Ukrainian forces said they had killed "around 50 Russian occupiers" while repulsing an attack on a town on the frontline with Moscow-backed rebels, a toll that could not be immediately confirmed by AFP.

Kyiv's main international airport was hit in the first bombing of the city since World War II and air raid sirens sounded over the capital at the break of dawn.

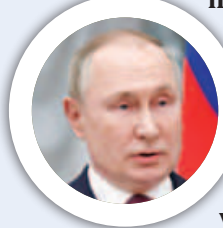
Within a few hours of Putin's speech, Russia's defence ministry said it had neutralised Ukrainian military airbases and its air defence systems.

Missiles rained down on Ukrainian targets. Kyiv reported columns of troops pouring across the borders with Russia and Belarus stretching from the north and east, and landing on the coasts from the Black Sea in the southwest and Azov Sea in the southeast.

Fierce fighting was taking place in the regions of Sumy and Kharkiv in the northeast, Kherson and Odessa in the south, and at a military

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“



I have decided to conduct a special military operation... We will strive for the demilitarisation and denazification of Ukraine.

Russian President
Vladimir Putin

“



Russia has attacked Ukraine in a cowardly and suicidal way, like Nazi Germany did during World War II.

Ukrainian President
Volodymyr Zelensky

ANALYSIS

Putin's move tests Biden's leadership

REUTERS, Washington

He threatened to impose the harshest sanctions ever on Russia. He worked to galvanise US allies into a united front. He supplied Ukraine with more weapons than any American president before him. And he beelied up US



forces on Nato's eastern flank as reassurance of his commitment.

Despite US President Joe Biden's efforts to head off a Russian attack against Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin was undeterred as his forces invaded in a mass assault by land, air and sea yesterday.

How Biden deals with the unfolding crisis, which Western officials fear could spiral into the bloodiest European conflict since World War Two, is expected to have profound implications for his political fortunes and US relations with the world.

Biden was always going to be limited because his administration made clear it would do whatever it could to help Ukraine defend itself but was not going to put troops on the ground.

His preference for diplomacy and sanctions reflects the scant appetite Americans have for intervention after the Afghanistan and Iraq quagmires.

Putin had the advantage of knowing Biden was not going to war against another nuclear power to protect a country that shared a long border with Russia.

Biden focused instead on coordinating with Nato allies, especially those in

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SEARCH PANEL

Final names handed to president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The search committee yesterday submitted its 10 nominations to the president for appointments to the next Election Commission, and a gazette notification in this regard is expected "within a day or two".

The committee members, except its chief Justice Obaidul Hassan, arrived at the president's official residence Bangabhaban at 7:30pm, said President Abdul Hamid's Press Secretary Mohammad Joyal Abedin.

The president will pick five for the EC appointments.

After the search committee's meeting with the president, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam told journalists, "The search

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Students of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University block the Dhaka-Khulna highway in Gopalganj Sadar's Ghonapara area yesterday, protesting the gang-rape of a fellow student on Wednesday night. They painted "why has my sister been raped?" on the road during the demonstration.

PHOTO: COLLECTED