

DHAKA MONDAY FEBRUARY 24, 2025

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 41

FALGUN 11, 1431 BS

www.thedailystar.net

SHABAN 24, 1446 HIJRI

16 PAGES: TK 15.00



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Growing unease in the city amid crime spree

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka residents spent a frightful night yesterday as multiple incidents of muggings took place across different parts of the capital in a short span of time.

A sense of insecurity has been prevailing among people amid a spate of crimes, as reported by various media outlets over the last few days.

Yesterday, many took to social media to express their anger over the law enforcement failure as videos of miscreants attacking residents with guns and cleavers went viral.

"What exactly are you [government] doing?" asked a Facebook user.

"Muggings continue to go up and no one is taking action," said another.

Comments like these flooded Facebook last night.

The videos show groups of people, mostly on motorcycles, intercept individuals in dark alleys and attack them indiscriminately, snatching their belongings and then fleeing.

Meanwhile, several hundred protesters gathered at Dhaka University around 1:00am today, demanding immediate resignation of the home adviser for what they said were his inaction and failure to curb crimes.

The Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury in a hurriedly called press conference at three in the morning blamed cohorts of the Awami League for deteriorating law and order.

The government launched "Operation Devil Hunt" on February 8 to restore law and order, but there has been little reflection on the ground.

Against this backdrop, students across the country took to the streets yesterday, outraged by the "government's

- DU students demonstrate at night demanding home adviser's immediate resignation
- Home adviser during a press conference at 3:00am blames accomplices of AL for deteriorating law and order
- He promises better law and order from today

inaction" amid a series of incidents of rape and sexual violence against women and children.

Nazmul Limon, an undergraduate student of anthropology at Jahangirnagar University, said at a demonstration, "The government must ensure public safety and good governance. If the home affairs adviser cannot protect people's lives and property, he should quit. Otherwise, we will make sure that he does."

Shatabdeeka Urmi, a student of Bangla at Jagannath University, said, "Every morning, I wake up and see news of rape, robbery, and murder that make me feel unsafe as a citizen... If the government fails, it should admit its incompetence and step down."

At least four incidents of muggings, robberies and attempted rape took place yesterday.

In Rampura, armed robbers shot a man before snatching a bag containing gold ornaments and cash in the capital's Rampura.

The incident took place around 10:30pm on Road 7, Block D, in Banasree.

The victim, Anwar Hossain, 43, is a jewellery shop owner, police said, adding that he was carrying 200 bhoris of gold ornaments and Tk 1 lakh in cash.

Atau Rahman, officer-in-charge of Rampura Police Station, said Anwar was attacked in front of his house when he was returning home from his shop.

Shot in both legs, he was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, the OC said.

Anwar Hossain told reporters at Dhaka Medical College Hospital that seven armed robbers on three motorcycles

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Batting maestro Virat Kohli notched up his 51st ODI ton to help India to a commanding six-wicket win in a high-voltage ICC Champions Trophy group-stage fixture against archrivals Pakistan at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium yesterday. The 36-year-old put away seven fours for his unbeaten 111-ball 100 to help India chase down a 242-run target with 45 balls to spare. He also became the fastest player to 14000 ODI runs.

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Dhaka must decide the ties it wants with Delhi
Says Jaishankar

UNB, Dhaka

Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar yesterday said Dhaka needs to "make up its mind" what kind of relationship it wants with New Delhi, stressing that the two neighbours share a special history that goes back to 1971.

"If someone in the interim government blames India for everything every day... some of those things [they blame on India], if you look at the reports, [they] are absolutely ridiculous," he said during a conversation with Sanjeev Sanyal, a member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India (EAC-PM), at the Delhi University Literature Festival.

"You cannot, on one hand, say I would now like to have good relations with you, but I get up every morning and blame you for everything that goes wrong. It is a decision that they have to make," Jaishankar added.

He said India has sent a very clear signal to Dhaka that it would like to see things "calm down" and the resumption of normal bilateral ties. But it is unhappy with the constant hostile messaging emanating from across the border.

During their discussion, they explored new ways to resolve the Rohingya crisis and mobilise additional donors to support over a million forcibly displaced Myanmar citizens living in camps in southeastern Bangladesh.

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Make or break for Tigers

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN, from Rawalpindi

It's make or break for Bangladesh as they take on New Zealand in their second Group A match of the ongoing ICC Champions Trophy at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium today.

After a 60-run defeat against India in their first game in Dubai, Bangladesh need to win today's game to keep their semifinal hopes alive ahead of facing hosts Pakistan in their final group game at the same venue next Thursday.

Bangladesh can take motivation from their recent performances at this venue where they created history by beating hosts Pakistan 2-0 in a Test series last year -- the Tigers' first-ever series win in Pakistan.

"I hope it [Test triumph in Rawalpindi] does [give everyone confidence]. Because it's not an easy thing to come to Pakistan and beat Pakistan.

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SEXUAL VIOLENCE Protests flare on campuses

NILIMA JAHAN

Students across the country took to the streets yesterday, outraged by the "government's inaction" amid a series of incidents of rape and sexual violence against children in recent days.

Holding placards, they chanted slogans like, "Wake up government!", "End the silence, punish the rapists!", "Stop the violence, protect women!" and "Hang the rapists!"

In Dhaka, the protests have been widespread, taking place at prominent educational institutions such as Jagannath University, Eden College, Government Titumir College, the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) and BRAC University.



With rape cases surging, we are afraid to step outside. Even going to university feels unsafe. We want immediate action from the government.

Samiha Chowdhury, BRAC University student

At BRAC University, students held a demonstration on campus in front of the university's main gate in the morning.

They presented a 13-point demand that included stricter law enforcement, the establishment of special tribunals for rape cases, increased police presence and enhanced protection for victims.

They also called for the implementation of capital punishment for convicted rapists, the creation of a confidential investigation system for victims reluctant to report crimes and government-funded psychological rehabilitation services for survivors.

Additionally, they urged the authorities to deploy armed patrol teams in high-crime areas, ensure police stations are fully staffed and install CCTV surveillance nationwide.

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STARLINK
Yunus asks Musk to come over, launch it within 90 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has extended an invitation to billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk to visit Bangladesh and oversee the launch of SpaceX's Starlink satellite internet service in the country within the next 90 working days.

In a formal letter sent to Musk on February 19, Yunus outlined the potential of Starlink's connectivity, particularly for young entrepreneurs, rural communities, and underserved populations in Bangladesh.

"Integrating Starlink's connectivity into Bangladesh's infrastructure will have a transformational impact, particularly for Bangladesh's enterprising youth, rural and vulnerable women, and remote and underserved communities," Yunus wrote in his letter.

The chief adviser has appointed his High Representative, Khalilur Rahman, to work closely with Musk's team to ensure Starlink's rapid deployment in the country.

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