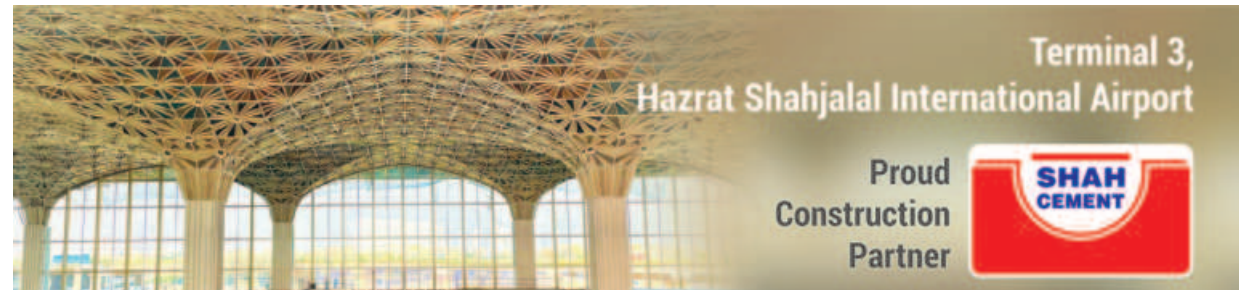



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Govt must use stronger voice against violence

Says Anu Muhammad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The attacks on temples and shrines are manifestations of the weakness and sluggishness of the interim government, said noted economist Anu Muhammad yesterday.



"There was supposed to be an atmosphere of festivity among the Hindu community as the Durga puja is approaching. But why are they in a state of fear? Only the autocrats will benefit from such an atmosphere," he said at a discussion titled "Two Months of the Interim Government: Review, Proposals, and Exchange of Views".

The government needs to take a stronger stance on incidents of killings and attacks on temples and shrines, said Muhammad, a former professor of Jahangirnagar University, at the discussion organised by Gonoantrik Odhikar Committee at the Dhaka University campus.

It must be strongly conveyed that no one can be attacked because of their religious beliefs or views.

"These incidents of attacks are overshadowing the achievements of the mass uprising."

He went on to criticise the government for failing to create a list of martyrs and ensure medical treatment for the injured from the July uprising even after two months.

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PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Saiful Islam weeps as he speaks about his son Mominul Islam, who was killed on July 19 during the quota reform movement, at the gathering held by the citizen's committee in front of the National Museum in the capital's Shahbagh yesterday. Mominul's photos were held aloft next to Saiful as he spoke. Story on Page 3.

New criminals extorting people, businesses now

Say people at white paper formulation committee hearing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Extortion is continuing after the recent political changeover in the country. The void left behind by the previous extortionists has been filled by new ones. Extortion is going on everywhere – from footpaths to factories, said people taking part in a public hearing of the Committee for the Preparation of the White Paper on the Existing Economic Condition of Bangladesh.

More than 200 people from different professions took part in the hearing yesterday, jointly organised by the committee and the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) at the Peninsula Chittagong.

They said that for the country's economy to be made more dynamic, jobs should be created for the educated unemployed young people.

They pointed out bureaucratic hurdles related to birth registration, passport issuance, trade licences, and land registration lead to hassles and financial strain on ordinary citizens.

Speaking at the event, eminent economist Debapriya Bhattacharya said, "Changing the king without changing the politics will not do. Those who sacrificed their lives [during the uprising] thought about reforming the state. So, we don't want to see the advent of a new tyrant instead of an old one."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Appointment of HC judges must be transparent

Say speakers at Star discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A panel of legal experts and activists yesterday called for transparency in the appointments of High Court judges and stressed the need to ensure that judges can carry out duties freely.

The speakers also highlighted the erosion of democratic culture and the consequent decline of judicial independence over the past 15 years, emphasising the importance of a judiciary free from political influence in ensuring justice for all citizens.

They made the remarks during an event titled "Uprising and Legal Reform: Independence of the Judiciary," held at The Daily Star Centre. This was the second instalment in The Daily Star's series of discussions on constitutional issues.

Speaking at the discussion, Additional Attorney General Anik R Haque said judges need to understand the distinction between hate speech and constructive criticism, terming them opposing concepts.

"This requires both a proper training of judges and a shift in their mindset."

Haque also opined that, aside from other parties involved, lawyers bear some responsibility for the backlog

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ Control of lower courts be transferred to Supreme Court
- ➔ Introduce law for appointing High Court judges
- ➔ Proper training of judges, shift in mindset

PRICES OF ESSENTIALS Rains, supply dearth cause spike

SHAHEEN MOLLAH, SUKANTA HALDER and MOHAMMAD SUMAN

The prices of rice, eggs, broiler chicken, soybean oil, palm oil, sugar and vegetables have increased significantly in Dhaka due to a supply shortage and incessant rain.

Vegetable prices have increased by Tk 20 to Tk 40 per kg, while broiler chicken has become dearer by Tk 20 per kg and is selling for Tk 180 to Tk 190 per kg. The price of a dozen brown eggs has soared by Tk 15 to Tk 175.

Mohammad Amanat Ullah, president of the Tejgaon Egg Merchants' Association, which accounts for a major portion of eggs supplied in the capital, and Kayser Ahmed, managing director of Diamond Egg, one of the country's largest egg producers, cited a mismatch in demand and supply for the escalating price of eggs.

There was a drop in the production of eggs due to recent floods and high temperatures, they said.

Potatoes were selling for Tk 50-60 per kg yesterday, up from Tk 50-55 last week. Sugar was selling for Tk 135

per kg against the last week's price of Tk 130.

The price of green chillies has gone up to Tk 360-400 a kg, up from the Tk 300-360.

A kg of brinjal is selling for Tk 60-100, up from last week's Tk 60-80. The pointed gourd is selling for Tk 60-70 a kg, up from last week Tk 50-60.

Yardlong bean is selling for Tk 80-100 a kg, up from last week's Tk 70-80.

Noor A Alam, a vegetable wholesaler in Karwan Bazar who sources his fresh produce from Manikganj district, said many of the vegetable fields have been damaged by the rain. Besides, there is a labour crisis.

So there is a supply shortage: he brought seven tonnes of vegetables last week, down from his usual 15 tonnes.

Loose soybean oil is selling for Tk 170-180 per kg, up from Tk 165-170 last week. Loose palm oil is selling for Tk 155-160 a kg, up from Tk 140-145 last week.

The price of palm oil per maund in the wholesale market has increased

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Israel readying response to Iran's attack

Says top official as fighting rages in Lebanon, Gaza

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel was preparing a military response to Iran's missile attack this week that heightened fears of a wider regional war, an Israeli official said yesterday, as fighting raged in Lebanon and Gaza.

In its second-ever direct attack on its regional foe, the Islamic republic which backs armed groups across the Middle East on Tuesday launched about 200 missiles at Israel in revenge for a spate of Israeli killings of militant leaders.

The missile attack, which killed one person in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, caused some damage to an Israeli air base according to satellite images.

It came on the day Israeli ground forces began raids into Lebanon after days of intense strikes on Hezbollah strongholds across Lebanon, transforming nearly a year of cross-border exchanges with the Iran-backed militants into full-blown war.

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ANWAR IBRAHIM'S VISIT

A chance to root out graft from labour hiring

PORIMOL PALMA

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim's visit to Bangladesh has created an opportunity to restructure the labour recruitment process that has long been mired in corruption and exploitation, analysts said.

They added that Anwar Ibrahim's Madani vision and Chief Adviser Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus's track record of working for the marginalised people converge quite well.

Malaysia Madani is a policy framework and government slogan introduced by the administration led by the 10th Prime Minister, Anwar Ibrahim. It focuses mainly on good governance, sustainable development and racial harmony in the country.

The fact that these two leaders are "great friends", as was evidenced by Anwar Ibrahim being the first foreign head of government visiting Dhaka and supporting Prof Yunus, can play a critical role in initiating pragmatic ways to solve problems, the analysts said.

CR Abrar, executive director of the refugee and migratory movement research unit and former professor of international relations at Dhaka University, said the people are at the core of any state relationship and, in the case of Bangladesh and Malaysia, the first priority for Dhaka is the rights of some 800,000 Bangladeshis working in Malaysia.

He added that he is optimistic about this as the two leaders spoke positively. "Now, the words need to be translated into action."

Of the 800,000 Bangladeshis in Malaysia, 450,000 migrated there between August 2022 and May 2024.

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NEWS ANALYSIS

2nd oil tanker fire sparks sabotage concerns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The authorities concerned suspect the back-to-back fires on two oil tankers of Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) at the Chattogram port could be acts of sabotage to harm the country's energy security.

The Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) has issued directives to ensure special cautionary measures in all depots and installations of the energy sector across the country.

The Chittagong Port Authority (CPA), Bangladesh Navy, and Bangladesh Coast Guard have also beefed up security to avert any further incidents within the port limits and also in the maritime sector.

Yesterday, a crew member died after jumping off BSC oil tanker Banglar Shourabh, which caught fire at the outer anchorage of the Chattogram port.

The deceased was identified as Sadek Mia, 59, a general steward of the vessel. He died a couple of hours

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Fireboats working to douse the blaze on oil tanker "Banglar Shourabh" that caught fire at the outer anchorage of Chattogram Port early yesterday. This is the second fire incident on a tanker owned by Bangladesh Shipping Corporation in a week. PHOTO: COLLECTED



US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

30 DAYS TO GO

Not sure whether US polls will be peaceful: Biden

AGENCIES

President Joe Biden Friday said he was not confident the US election in November would be peaceful, citing incendiary comments by Republican contender Donald Trump, who still rejects his 2020 defeat.

Biden's warning came with lawmakers and analysts voicing concern over increasingly bellicose campaign language ahead of the vote.

Trump – who survived an assassination bid in July and another apparent plot in September – alleged widespread fraud after his defeat to Biden, and pro-Trump rioters riled up by his false claims ransacked the US Capitol.

"I'm confident it will be free and fair. I don't know whether it will be peaceful," Biden told reporters as he discussed the election.

"The things that Trump has said and the things that he said last time out when he didn't like the outcome of the election were very dangerous."

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