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Invisible power pulls strings in country

Anu Muhammad tells event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An invisible government always determines Bangladesh's policies without ever stepping into the limelight, said eminent economist Professor Anu Muhammad yesterday.



If they are not held accountable, and if the economy continues to follow their prescribed path, as it is now with the interim government relying on the IMF and World Bank, then what will change?

organised jointly by the quarterly journal "Sarbojanakotha" and the German-Bangladesh Forum.

The former Jahangirnagar University professor alleged that policies enabling Sheikh Hasina's "looting and money laundering development model" were formulated by the World Bank, IMF, and their affiliates.

"Those who supported and praised

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"There are various issues within the state that need to be addressed. To build a Bangladesh free from discrimination, we must explore these aspects and bring about a comprehensive change in planning. When you attempt to bring about that change, you will realise that there is an invisible government... that formulates policies for Bangladesh but never comes to the discussion," he said.

He made these remarks at a seminar titled "From Autocracy to Democracy: In Search of an Equitable Bangladesh", held at Dhaka University. The event was



The new Chargé d'Affaires of the US Embassy in Bangladesh, Tracey Ann Jacobson, at a meeting with Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at the state guest house Jamuna yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

US renews pledge to support govt
Chargé d'Affaires meets CA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The new Chargé d'Affaires of the US Embassy in Bangladesh, Tracey Ann Jacobson, yesterday reiterated her country's support for Bangladesh's interim government on various issues, including development and counter-terrorism.

"We are prepared as a nation to support your government on a variety of issues," Jacobson told Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus during a meeting at the state guest house Jamuna.

The chief adviser spoke about ongoing reform initiatives in Bangladesh,

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Mostofa Jalal on 5-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed former Awami League lawmaker Dr Mostofa Jalal Mohiuddin on a five-day remand in a case filed over the death of trader Abdul Wadud during quota reform protests in New Market area on July 19 last year.

Metropolitan Magistrate Joshiya Islam passed the order after Investigation Officer Amzad Hossain Talukder, an inspector of Detective Branch, produced him before the court.

The magistrate also rejected his bail petition.

On August 21 last year, Abdur Rahman, brother-in-law of Wadud, filed the case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 129 others. A DB team arrested Mostofa in Dhaka early yesterday.

Rallies, demos bring Dhaka to a standstill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least four protests in Dhaka yesterday left parts of the city paralysed, causing severe gridlock and immense suffering for commuters. Demonstrations were held in Mohakhali, Shikha Bhaban, Agargaon, and Shaheed Minar, with varying demands disrupting daily life.

In Mohakhali, CNG auto-rickshaw drivers staged a sit in protest around 12:30pm, blocking the road in front of the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority office in Banani.

The drivers pressed for a nine-point demand, including immediate implementation of a Tk 900 daily deposit rate set by the BRTA, registration for 5,000 additional CNGs from 2007, approval of 15,000 additional CNGs, Tk 10 lakh compensation for work-related deaths, and the freedom to form unions under ILO rules.

They also called for proper parking spaces, lane access on highways, and amendments to anti-worker transport laws.

The blockade caused a standstill

on the Mohakhali-Banani road and connecting routes, including the Banani-Airport Road. Commuters were left stranded for hours, with some resorting to alternative routes.

"I was stuck in traffic at Banani-II for an hour before taking the expressway," said private employee Rawshan Ali.

The protest ended around 2:00pm, allowing traffic to gradually return to normal.

Meanwhile, in Shahbagh, hundreds of job seekers rallied in front of the National Museum around 11:30am, demanding the age limit for government job applications be raised to 35 years for men and 37 years for women.

They cited recommendations from the Public Administration Reforms Commission, which proposed increasing the age limit from the current 32 years set by the interim government.

The demonstrators marched towards the Secretariat around 3:30pm but were intercepted by police near the Shikha Bhaban. A scuffle ensued as

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Traffic at key intersections in Dhaka came to a standstill yesterday as protesters with different demands blocked at least four important intersections of the city. The photos were taken in Banani, Shahbagh, and Shaheed Minar areas.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS, AMRAN HOSSAIN



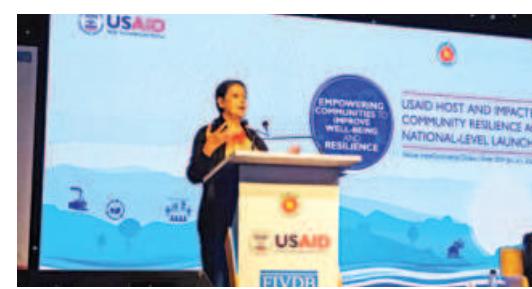
Hilly areas neglected in climate efforts Rizwana tells event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's hilly districts have been neglected in the climate change interventions, though the areas face a devastating impact, said Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan yesterday.

"When we talk about climate change and adaptation, yes, we do talk about Cox's Bazar and the coastal areas.... We really don't talk about the hill areas where climate change also has a devastating impact," she said.

The environment adviser made this remark while addressing the national level launching event of a project titled "USAID Host and Impacted Community Resilience Activity" at Hotel InterContinental.



This five-year US \$70,199 activity will be implemented in four districts -- Cox's Bazar and three Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) districts -- to empower the communities to improve well-being and resilience.

Rizwana said areas rich in natural resources in Bangladesh, such as Cox's Bazar and the hilly districts, have become conflict-prone zones due to inadequate interventions.

"Unfortunately, these areas have turned into conflict zones due to insufficient interventions and geopolitical issues," she said.

"In other parts of the world, where local culture is respected and natural resources are protected, these regions are seen as assets."

She highlighted the potential of e-commerce platforms to boost local economies by improving the visibility of products such as bamboo, cane, handicrafts, honey, and indigenous fruits from Cox's Bazar and the Chattogram Hill Tracts.

She called for training, financial support, better product quality, and the establishment of exhibition and marketing centres in major cities to expand market access.

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Voting rights to be restored at any cost Says CEC

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

The nation must unite in the struggle to restore voting rights, said Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin yesterday.

He also stressed that public participation is essential for fair and inclusive elections.

Speaking at the launch of the "Voter List Update Programme 2025" at the Savar Upazila Parishad Auditorium, he said, "The day people can vote freely, without fear or intimidation, will mark the true establishment of voting rights. But we cannot achieve this alone; it requires collective effort."

The CEC highlighted the importance of an accurate voter list as the foundation of free and fair elections.

On the opportunity presented by the August 5 uprising, Nasir said, "This is a pivotal moment to exercise our right to vote. Missing this chance could delay such progress indefinitely."

He also urged civil servants, the general public, and especially women and younger voters to participate actively. "Many have sacrificed for voting rights. If we fail to ensure their voices are heard, we fail as a nation," he said.

Hold polls swiftly Says Khandaker Mosharraf

UNB, Dhaka

The interim government should swiftly organise a credible national election to ensure a peaceful transfer of power to public representatives, said BNP senior leader Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday.

Speaking at an event organised by the Doctors' Association of Bangladesh (DAB) at Dhaka Medical College's Dr Milon Auditorium, marking BNP founder Ziaur Rahman's 89th birth anniversary, Mosharraf warned the government of potential unrest if citizens' voting rights are denied.

"The interim government's tenure is not indefinite. To exit peacefully and with dignity, they must hand over power to elected representatives," he said.

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লেজার পাইল্স, ফিস্টুলা অপারেশন, কোষ্টকাঠিন্য, পলিপ, কোলোনক্ষপি, কোলন, রেকটাম ক্যান্সার ও ল্যাপারোক্সপি।



বেইটি সিলেছেন আন্তর্জাতিক খ্যাতি প্রদর্শন পাইলিয়ার কলোরেকটাল সার্জন।
কলোরেকটাল সার্জিটে বিশ্বাসী আৰু সহায় কোলন অপারেশন সম্পন্নকৃত সার্জন।
সম্পাদনায় : ডাঃ আসিফ আলমাস হক

এমবিবিএস, এফসিপিএস, এফআইসিএস প্রতিষ্ঠান।
এফসিপিএস (সার্জারি), এফসিপিএস (কলোরেকটাল সার্জারি),
এফসিপিএস (ইঞ্জিনেরিং), এফসিপিএস (প্রত্যক্ষ), এফসিপিএস (মুক্তেক্ষিত)।
কলোনল্যাপটান্ট ল্যাপারোক্সপি, লেজার ও কলোরেকটাল সার্জন।



ডাঃ ফজলুল হক কলোরেকটাল হসপিটাল লিঃ
৭২৬/এ, সাত-মসজিদ রোড, (দিদগাহ মসজিদের বিপরীতে) ধানমন্ডি, ঢাকা।
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