

DHAKA

Scrap 'anti-state'
US trade dealProf Anu Muhammad
urges govt at rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Anu Muhammad yesterday expressed strong concern over parliament's silence on the controversial trade agreement with the United States, demanding its immediate cancellation to protect the country's economic security.

Speaking at a rally organised by the Democratic Rights Committee at Shahbagh in the capital, he said, "An elected government has come to power for the first time since 2014, but it is unfortunate that not a single lawmaker has uttered a word against this anti-state deal so far."

The eminent economist alleged that the interim government signed the agreement in a "hurry" and with "over-enthusiasm" on February 9, just three days before the 13th national election.

Calling the move "beyond the jurisdiction" of the Prof Muhammad Yunus-led government, he said the debt and insecurity resulting from the deal would burden future generations.

He also described the agreement as a "colonial bond" that would allow the US to influence Bangladesh's trade and military-strategic interests. He claimed it would force

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Hawkers occupy much of this road in the capital's Gulistan area, just 10 days after Dhaka Metropolitan Police cleared encroachments and fined street vendors. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Delhi reviewing
Dhaka's request to
extradite HasinaSays Indian Ministry of
External Affairs

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

India is reviewing Bangladesh's formal request for the extradition of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina through established legal and judicial channels, said the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) yesterday.

"The request is being examined as part of ongoing judicial and internal legal processes. We will continue to engage constructively on the issue with all the stakeholders. We follow all developments very closely," said MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal at a weekly media briefing.

Dhaka had made a formal request to New Delhi seeking the extradition of Hasina, who fled to India after the July uprising in 2024.

The relations between the two countries had strained since then. After the BNP government assumed power,

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Footpaths reoccupied despite
citywide DMP crackdownHawkers back within days; experts urge
rehabilitation for lasting solutionHELEMUL ALAM, MUNTAKIM SAAD
and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Just 10 days after a massive drive by Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) to reclaim encroached footpaths and roads, many areas across the capital have again been occupied by hawkers.

At least 44 people were arrested, and around Tk 10 lakh was realised in fines during the drive from April 1 to April 5. The operation covered areas under DMP's Lalbagh, Wari, Ramna, Mirpur, Motijheel, Tejgaon, Gulshan and Uttara traffic divisions.

Additional Commissioner (Traffic) Anisur Rahman told The Daily Star on the final day of the drive that follow-up operations would

continue to prevent reoccupation. "We will keep monitoring so that encroachers cannot return," he said.

However, visits to Gulistan, Mirpur, Tejgaon and Mohammadpur found that hawkers have already resumed operations, reoccupying footpaths and roads.

Both sides of the road and adjacent footpaths in Gulistan, from Gulistan Hall to Golapshah Majhar Road, have once again fallen under the control of hawkers. Many hawkers have set up makeshift stalls using cloth and plastic so they can quickly move during drives, while others operate more permanently.

"We are running our businesses at risk, as there is no alternative. We pay Tk 100 as toll to linemen,

though business has become uncertain," said a hawker, requesting anonymity.

Similar scenes were observed in other areas.

In the first week of April, police cleared hawkers from key locations in Mohammadpur, including Town Hall, BRTC bus stand, Allah Karim Market and Basila Road, evicting around 500 shops. Although many returned within days, police carried out additional drives.

During a visit on Thursday, vendors were again seen occupying the left lane from Mohammadpur Bus Stand to Basila Tin Rasta, with goods spilling onto footpaths and restricting pedestrian movement.

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78,500 pilgrims
to perform Hajj
this yearPM inaugurates Hajj
flights, seeks blessings
from them for country

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman inaugurated the Hajj flights at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) last night.

The prime minister formally opened the first Hajj flight at 11:57pm, which was scheduled to depart the Dhaka airport at 12:20am today for King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, carrying 418 pilgrims.

Earlier, Tarique Rahman, also BNP chairman, arrived at the airport around 11:30pm and went straight inside the aircraft.

At that time, he was seen talking to each of the pilgrims onboard and shaking hands with them. The prime minister joined a munajat (prayer) inside the aircraft, seeking blessings of Almighty Allah for the successful accomplishment of the Hajj rituals.



PHOTO: PMO

Later, addressing the pilgrims, the prime minister sought doa from them for the country and its people and his government as well.

Earlier, the prime minister visited the Ashkona Hajj Camp in the city and exchanged pleasantries with the Hajj pilgrims there.

According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, a total of 14 flights are scheduled for today, including six to be operated by Biman Bangladesh Airlines, four by Saudia airlines, and four by Flynas.

Pre-hajj flights will end on May 21. A total of 207 pre-hajj flights are scheduled, including 102 by Biman Bangladesh Airlines, 75 by Saudia, and 30 by Flynas.

Bangladesh, one of the world's largest Hajj pilgrim-sending countries, is expected to send around 78,500 pilgrims to Saudi Arabia this year. Of them, 4,565 pilgrims will perform Hajj under government management, while 73,935 under private agencies.

Energy-focused urban
development amid
global changes crucial

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday said integrated urban development and transport planning aligned with sustainable energy systems is crucial in the context of the evolving global situation.

They stressed the need for energy impact assessments to measure and reduce energy consumption across sectors.

The discussion, titled "Urbanisation and Development Thinking in Bangladesh in the Context of the Energy Crisis and Changing Global Situation", was organised by the Institute for Planning and Development (IPD) at the Bishwo Shahitto Kendro's conference room in Dhaka.

IPD Executive Director Prof Adil Muhammed Khan identified energy-efficient lighting and effective public transportation as key ways to reduce demand.

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He called for strengthening rail-and-water-based transport services, warning that overdependence on roads and fossil fuels is unsustainable in the long term.

He also recommended planned expansion of electric vehicles, highlighted the need for energy demand mapping and realistic rationing during power shortages, and underscored expanding public-private partnerships (PPP), microfinance, and community-based initiatives, alongside raising awareness through education, research, and alternative energy use.

Dr Ariful Islam, president of the Bangladesh Institute of Planners and also IPD director, said rural energy shortages are accelerating migration to cities, hindering decentralisation and sustainable development.

He stressed improved public transport, green buildings, transit-

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MOB ATTACK
AT SHAHBAGH
370 citizens
slam 'police
inaction'

DU CORRESPONDENT

Condemning the April 10 mob attack in Shahbagh, 370 citizens have accused law enforcement agencies of failing to act.

They also expressed deep concern over "police indifference, lack of cooperation with victims, and reluctance to register a case, even though the assault took place near a police station."

During the attack, several individuals were beaten up and sexually assaulted.

In a statement issued yesterday, the signatories — including civil society members and rights activists — said the failure to act against perpetrators already identified through videos circulating on social media raises questions about the state's ability to fulfil its responsibilities.

They stressed that every citizen, irrespective of

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'No chaos over nominations,
accept party decisions'

Tarique tells reserved seat aspirants; interviews begin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairman and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has instructed party leaders seeking nomination to the women's reserved seats in parliament to accept the party's final decision.

He also directed all aspirants not to create any chaotic situation over the nominations, warning that such actions could harm the image of both the BNP and the government.

The issue was discussed during the BNP's interviews with aspirants at the chairman's Gulshan office yesterday afternoon, where members of the party's standing committee were present.

During the interviews, aspirants were asked about their political



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Senior BNP leaders said the party is trying to strike a balance by giving importance to both long-serving, dedicated women leaders and younger faces who may bring new energy and ideas to politics.

About two hours before the interviews, aspirants, along with their supporters, gathered in front of the office. They discussed their chances, shared updates about the selection process, lobbied informally with party insiders, and tried to assess who might secure nomination.

On the first day, aspirants from Rajshahi, Khulna, Barishal,

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Change of Date

25th

The Daily Star Prime Bank

O&A
LEVEL
AWARDSSaluting the Nation Builders of
TomorrowNew date:
Saturday, 25 July 2026~~Previous Date: 18 April 2026~~Due to an unforeseen technical
issue at the venue, the event
has been rescheduled
to 25 July 2026.We regret
any inconvenience caused.