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Engage more in politics

Chief adviser urges the youth

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday urged young people to participate more in political activities to translate their dreams into reality and bring meaningful changes to society.

Yunus made the call when a group of young political activists from different political parties of Norway called on him at the state guest house Jamuna.

“We are encouraging young people to join

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Motorcycles and CNG-run auto-rickshaws were allowed on the Dhaka elevated expressway yesterday under special circumstances. The move aimed to ease traffic congestion in the capital ahead of Khaleda Zia’s return from London. The photo was taken in the Banani area.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

12 killed by mobs in April

Says HRSS monthly report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 12 people were killed and 21 others injured in 22 incidents of mob violence across the country in April, according to a monthly report by the Human Rights Support Society (HRSS), released yesterday.

AT A GLANCE	
➔	11 killed in political violence
➔	88 women and girls raped
➔	5 killed by BSF at the border
➔	9 died in custody
➔	38 journalists harassed or tortured

The rights body said in addition to mob attacks, incidents of political violence, rape, and abuse of women and children were reported throughout the month.

It noted that the overall human rights situation showed no improvement in April, adding that crimes such as extortion, theft, mugging, robbery, and murder continued to occur, spreading fear and panic among the public.

Based on HRSS’s own findings and news published by various media outlets, the report said at least 11 people

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SHITALAKKHYA

Form a panel to monitor pollution: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority to form a monitoring committee for taking effective steps to prevent factories from discharging waste into Shitalakkhya River and to submit a compliance report in two weeks.

In response to a writ petition, the court ordered the Department of Environment and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to jointly form a committee to assess the extent of the river’s pollution and the financial value of the damage.

The findings of the committee must be submitted to the court in three months, the HC said in the order.

Regulate diagnostic costs, launch social health insurance

Recommends Health Sector Reform Commission in its report

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The Health Sector Reform Commission has recommended creating a national “Essential Diagnostics List (EDL)” and setting fixed prices for diagnostic tests to improve quality and ensure cost-effectiveness in diagnostic services.

The commission also suggested introducing a performance-based grading system for private hospitals and clinics to help patients make informed decisions, improve service quality, and ensure greater transparency and accountability.

Led by Prof AK Azad Khan, the commission submitted its report on Monday.

It also called for mandatory Social Health Insurance (SHI) to protect patients from the financial burden of treatment.

These recommendations come amid growing concern over the lack of standard pricing for lab tests. Currently, diagnostic centres charge varying rates for the same tests, leaving patients vulnerable.

Out-of-pocket (OOP) healthcare spending in Bangladesh remains high -- over 70

RECOMMENDATIONS	
➔	Introduce performance-based grading system for private hospitals, clinics
➔	Establish institutional accreditation process
➔	Monitor ICU quality, infection rates, antibiotic stewardship
➔	Require hospitals with over 50 beds to have a management board
➔	Subsidise healthcare access for the poor and vulnerable

percent -- which often forces patients with diseases like cancer, kidney failure, and heart conditions to discontinue treatment or fall deeper into poverty.

In its report, the commission stressed that a national Essential Diagnostics List must be introduced based on World Health

Organization (WHO) guidelines and the country’s disease burden. This list must be enforced as a standard for all public and private laboratories, it said.

There are 19,627 registered private hospitals and clinics and 35,597 private diagnostic centres in the country as of April this year, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

A cost-based pricing system must be implemented for the listed tests, allowing for reasonable variations based on the type of service and region, said the report.

However, strict measures must be taken to prevent excessive pricing, especially in urban areas, it added.

The report said global examples show that such initiatives effectively reduce inequalities and prevent unnecessary expenses.

It noted that over 20 countries have already adopted the WHO’s EDL, resulting in better access to diagnostic services and reduced patient costs.

“Bangladesh must also introduce this system without delay,” said the commission,

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ICT, ENERGY, INFRASTRUCTURE

Dhaka calls for Canadian investment

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has sought Canadian investment in potential sectors such as ICT, infrastructure, pharmaceuticals, engineering, and renewable energy.

Foreign Secretary Jashim Uddin made the call when Canada’s Indo-Pacific Trade Representative Paul Thoppil met Ambassador Jashim Uddin, Foreign Secretary, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday.

Thoppil, who arrived in Bangladesh on Saturday evening, was accompanied by a business delegation including representatives from Gildan, BlackBerry, Advantech, Bell Helicopter, JCM Power, and Export Development Canada.

High Commissioner of Canada to Bangladesh Ajit Singh was also present at the meeting.

Jashim Uddin highlighted the multi-pronged economic reforms by the interim government.

Thoppil expressed growing interest in Canadian companies in Bangladesh.

Both sides welcomed the steady growth in bilateral trade amounting to US\$3 billion.

The foreign secretary appreciated Canada’s duty-free, quota-free market access for

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Ensure building safety and accountability

Urges housing and public works adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Every building must be safe, environmentally friendly, and disaster-resilient, and Rajuk must fulfil its responsibilities effectively, said Housing and Public Works Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan yesterday.

Speaking at a seminar at Hotel Sonargaon in Dhaka, he emphasised the need for a skilled and modern monitoring system to ensure construction quality.

Without such oversight, incidents like fire and other disasters continue to occur, he noted.

He urged building owners, engineers, architects, and contractors to remain vigilant throughout the construction process.

Adilur expressed hope that the seminar would help chart a strong course of action through shared knowledge and experience, serving as a guiding framework for future planning.

Titled “Raising Public Awareness to Mitigate Building-Related Disaster Risks (Earthquakes and Fire),” the event was jointly organised by Rajuk and Jica.

Md Nazrul Islam, secretary of the ministry and special guest at the seminar, said despite having strict laws, safety cannot be ensured without compliance.

“There’s a tendency to flout regulations, especially among influential individuals, which often leaves Rajuk officials powerless. In the event of fire or other accidents, Rajuk and related bodies must still be held accountable,” he said.

Parbatya Chattogram Pahari Chhatra Parishad brought out a procession in the Shahbagh area of the capital yesterday, protesting the alleged rape and murder of an indigenous Khyang woman in Thanchi, Bandarban. They demanded exemplary punishment for the perpetrators.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

DEATH OF KHYANG WOMAN

Husband files rape and murder case

Authorities vow thorough investigation; indigenous communities stage protest seeking justice

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

The authorities in Bandarban have promised a thorough investigation into the death of an indigenous Khyang woman in Thanchi.

Deputy Commissioner Shamim Ara Rini and Superintendent of Police Md Shahidullah Kawsar made the promise during a press conference yesterday.

Meanwhile, Thanchi Police Station’s Office-in-Charge Nasir Uddin Majumder said the victim’s husband, Sumon Khyang, filed a rape and murder case on Monday.

The deceased, Chingma Khyang, hailed from the Tindu union, according to press statements issued by the district administration and police.

On Monday, she left home to plant paddy on her jhum field. When she did not return after midday, her family members and villagers mounted a search.

Around 3:30pm, they found her body

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