

Prof Yunus calls for inclusive, digital healthcare

UNB, Dhaka

Emphasising inclusive healthcare, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said they are prioritising digital healthcare so that people in Bangladesh's remote areas can consult doctors online.

Their medical histories will be stored digitally, making future consultations easier, the chief adviser remarked in a meeting with SpaceX Vice President Lauren Dreyer at the State Guest House Jamuna.

"This is particularly important during pregnancy, a time when women often need male assistance to visit a doctor. With digital services, they can consult doctors from their homes," he said.

Richard Griffiths, global engagement consultant of SpaceX; National Security Adviser Khalilur Rahman; Faiz Ahmad Taiyeb, chief adviser's special assistant for the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology; and Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun, executive chairman of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) and Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA), were also present at the meeting, according to the Chief Adviser's press wing.

Dreyer commended the coordinated efforts of the interim government in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



PHOTO: CA'S PRESS WING

SpaceX Vice President Lauren Dreyer called on Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at the State Guest House Jamuna yesterday.

SUPREME JUDICIAL APPOINTMENT COUNCIL 20 HC judges to be hired without executive influence

Move aims to tackle massive backlog of pending cases

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

In a major step to reduce the crippling backlog of cases and restore public confidence in the judiciary, the authorities are set to appoint at least 20 additional High Court judges through the newly formed Supreme Judicial Appointment Council.

The council is the country's first-ever body tasked with recruiting judges free from executive influence, which was formed under an ordinance in June.

The High Court Division of the Supreme Court is currently dealing with around 5.9 lakh pending cases, but has only 88 sitting judges. Of them, three are on leave and five have been kept away from judicial activities since October 20 last year.

This leaves each working judge burdened with over 7,300 cases.

As part of the initiative, the seven-member judicial appointment council, led by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed, interviewed 59 candidates yesterday to recommend names for appointment as High Court judges.

The candidates were selected from about 300 applicants – all district judges or Supreme Court lawyers with at least 10 years of experience, said Supreme Court Spokesperson Md Muajjem Hussain while talking to The Daily Star.

The chief justice will now send the names of the recommended candidates to the president for appointment. Under constitutional provisions, the president will then appoint them as additional judges of the High Court Division for two years.

Muajjem said the council will decide how many judges will be appointed at this stage, and the number may be at least 20.

On January 21 this year, the interim government issued an ordinance to recruit qualified judges for the two divisions of the Supreme Court through the Supreme Judicial Appointment Council.

Although the constitution requires a law for appointing judges to the Appellate and High Court Divisions, no previous government had made such a law.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin issued the Supreme Court Judge Appointment Ordinance, 2025, on January 21, which says a Supreme Court judge must be at least 45 years old.

The council consists of the chief justice, the most senior and a retired judge of the Appellate Division, two senior judges from the High Court Division, the attorney general, and a law professor or legal expert nominated by the chief justice. The Supreme Court registrar general serves as the council's secretary ex officio.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 7

HC Division handling around 5.9 lakh pending cases

There are currently 88 sitting judges, with 3 on leave and 5 not involved in judicial activities since last year

Each active judge burdened with over 7,300 cases

In the past, judges were chosen through mutual understanding between the government and the chief justices and then appointed by the president. Many of these appointments were allegedly made based on political considerations.



'He played a key role in progressive movements' Say speakers on Abul Hasnat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Speakers at a programme yesterday recalled the contributions of former Kali O Kalom editor Abul Hasnat for his role in the advancement of the country's arts and literature.

Kali O Kalom, a revered monthly literary magazine, organised the event at Bengal Shilpalaya in the capital's Dhammardi. The event marked the 80th birth anniversary of Abul Hasnat, who was born on July 17, 1945, in Old Dhaka.

The programme featured the "Abul Hasnat Memorial Lecture", delivered by art historian Professor Abul Monsur.

Moderating the programme, Bengal Foundation Director General Luva Nahid Choudhury said in addition to his literary contributions, Abul Hasnat also played a crucial role in various progressive movements in the country.

Artist Biren Shome noted that Hasnat had deep knowledge about the arts.

In his lecture titled "The Journey of Our Contemporary Visual Arts: Colonisation-Nationalism-Globalisation Equation-Attempt", Prof Monsur said numerous small and large-scale artworks and related activities helped fine arts flourish in this region.

He said the institutionalisation of fine arts in the country began with the establishment of the then

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6



Protesting the rape of a 14-year-old girl in Khagrachhari, Pahari Chhatra Parishad and Hill Women's Federation held a protest march and rally in Rangamati yesterday.

BNP expresses concern over law, order in Chattogram

STAR REPORT

BNP has expressed concerns over the deteriorating law and order situation in Chattogram city, alleging that extortion and false cases are being used to harass people.

In a statement yesterday, signed by BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, the party has issued a call for safeguarding innocent businessmen from "false cases and extortion".

The BNP believes that the prevailing situation is already affecting trade and commerce, and warned that if the current situation continues, the country's economy will come to a standstill.

"We are calling on the local administration to take appropriate measures against this lawlessness," it said.

"The Bangladesh Nationalist Party [BNP] calls on business communities at all levels and the general public to stand together and resist the miscreants," the statement noted. "As a port city, Chattogram holds immense significance. Essentially, trade and commerce across the country are conducted from this city. To advance the country's financial sector, stable law and order in Chattogram is essential," it added.

Training centres without trainers

12 upazila-level BMET facilities fail to fully operate years after launch due to manpower, equipment shortages

JAMIL MAHMUD

At least a dozen newly built technical training centres (TTCs) at the upazila level have been struggling to function properly for over two and a half years.

A shortage of trainers and training equipment has hindered operations, undermining their goal of preparing the rural workforce for overseas employment.

Built under a government project, 11 of these TTCs were inaugurated in July 2022. They are located in Sherpur Sadar, Kamarkhand of Sirajganj, Munshiganj Sadar, Mithamoin of Kishoreganj, Nagarpur and Kalihati of Tangail, Hatibanda of Lalmonirhat, Digholia of Khulna, Alfadanga of Faridpur, Haluaghata of Mymensingh, and Khansama of Dinajpur.

Another, in Ramu of Cox's Bazar, began offering training in January 2023.

However, all 12 centres are yet to operate at full capacity.

These centres were set up by the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) under the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Ministry as part of a project to build 40 upazila-level TTCs and one Institute of Marine Technology (IMT) in Chattogram, funded by the Annual Development Programme (ADP).

One of the key objectives of setting up these 40 new institutes is to equip unemployed rural youth with skills for foreign employment, thereby boosting remittance inflows.

Since May last year, the already-built

JULY UPRISING Documentary honours private univ students

UNB, Dhaka

A documentary titled "Heroes Without Capes: Private Universities in July" has been produced to commemorate the vital and courageous role played by the students of private universities during the July mass uprising.

The documentary was made under the supervision of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in order to observe the "Private University Resistance Day", which was yesterday. It highlights the students' bold stance and activism in defence of democracy and justice.

At a time when the previous regime shut down public universities to suppress the movement, students from private universities stepped up and took the lead in the "Complete Shutdown" programme.

Thousands of students from institutions, including North South University, BRAC University, East West University, IUB, UIU, Daffodil, ULAB, UODA, Dhaka International, Prinasia, Stamford, UITS, and many others, formed resistance in areas like Noyanagar, Rampura, Uttara, Badda, Dhanmondi and Mohammadpur in the capital.

Outside Dhaka, students from BGC Trust and Premier University in the New

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

One of the key objectives of setting up these new technical training centres is to equip unemployed rural youth with skills for foreign employment, thereby boosting remittance inflows.

specifically target unemployed youth, marginalised communities, ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities.

Officials said training is currently being conducted by a small number of instructors on "attachment" from older TTCs, some guest trainers, and, in some cases, ASSET project trainers.

At Ramu TTC, five ASSET courses -- computer operation, graphics design, electrical installation and maintenance, sewing machine operation, and tailoring

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

'Violence persists in hills as peace accord elusive'

Demos held in Rangamati, Dhaka protesting rape of 14-yr-old girl in Khagrachhari

STAR REPORT

Pahari Chhatra Parishad and Hill Women's Federation yesterday held a protest march and rally in Rangamati to protest the rape of a 14-year-old girl in Khagrachhari.

Speakers at the event said the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts had hoped the interim government would take effective steps to implement the CHT Peace Accord and the long-standing "regime of exploitation and oppression" would come to an end following the change in government.

However, they claimed that "there was no reflection of that hope".

"Rapes, disappearances, and murders continue in the hills because the agreement (peace accord) remains unimplemented," they said.

The speakers demanded that all those involved in the rape incident be brought to justice and face appropriate punishment.

The protest rally was presided over by Kavita Chakma, vice president of the Hill Women's Federation Rangamati District Committee.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1