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HEALTHCARE CENTRES UNDER LOCAL BODIES

Even basic services not being delivered

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Urban healthcare centres, run by the local government bodies, are failing to provide even the basic reproductive health and nutrition services due to a lack of human resources, found a study released yesterday.

The local government healthcare centres cannot afford the necessary manpower due to fund shortages, which stems from the fact that the local government bodies have to spend from only their own earnings, said the study by the Institute of Health Economics of Dhaka University.

The study titled Role of Local Government in Facilitating Reproductive Health and Nutrition Services in Bangladesh claimed the local government bodies were struggling to pay for its existing staffers, not just healthcare staffers.

The city corporations and municipalities are responsible for delivering the primary health services to the urban population, according to the Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009, and the Local Government (municipalities) Act, 2009. Outside urban areas, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is responsible for providing the services.

Apart from vaccination campaigns, most of the healthcare centres under the

local government institutions have no role in providing health services, said the study.

Researchers interviewed officials of 128 centres and 3,420 people between February and December of last year under the study supported by the National Institute of Population Research and Training (NIPORT).

"There is a problem with the existing structure of the health departments of the local government institutions in urban areas. It is depriving the urban people, especially the poor, of primary healthcare," Prof Syed Abdul Hamid, team lead of the study, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The study shows only Sirajganj and Feni municipalities, out of all 53 district-level municipalities, had a doctor each.

In 15 of the municipalities surveyed, 29.82 percent of posts for healthcare personnel were vacant.

Of the 30 upazila-level municipalities surveyed, the average vacancy rate was more than 80 percent and five of them provide no healthcare services, not even regular vaccinations.

Only one of the 30 provides family planning services, according to the study.

Of the 12 city corporations surveyed, only Dhaka south, Chattogram and Khulna city corporations deliver some healthcare services.

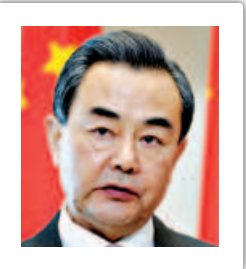
SEE PAGE 10 COL 7



PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

NOT ON MY TURF! ... A black drongo chases away a white-throated kingfisher from its territory while the latter was trying to hunt. Drongos are generally territorial and aggressive birds and can even take on birds larger than themselves if they feel threatened. Kingfishers, on the other hand, can go far and wide in their quest for fish, and might raid other territories for a good meal. The photo was taken in Bogura's Sonatala upazila.

Chinese foreign minister likely to visit Dhaka next month



DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi is expected to visit Dhaka early next month as the country wants to strengthen the strategic partnership with Bangladesh.

The Chinese ambassador to Bangladesh, Li Jiming, discussed Wang Yi's visit with Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen during a meeting on July 24.

"Yes, the Chinese foreign minister wants to visit Dhaka. But as I will be on a pre-scheduled visit to New York and Cambodia, I have

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Tiger population rises globally

Still far short of target set by Global Tiger Summit; their number in Sundarbans unknown

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

After years of decline, the number of Bengal tigers has seen a slight increase globally.

Officials and experts said it was a result of continuous action and advocacy led by governments, law enforcers, and local communities, which began with the Global Tiger Summit in 2010.

Even though this development appears to be an auspicious one for conservation, the bump in the number of tigers is far below the target of doubling their number by 2022. The target was set by 13 nations at the 2010 summit in Russia.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recently said there were 40 percent more tigers in the wild than previously thought with as many as 5,578 around the world. This was due to improved monitoring. The population is thought to be stable or increasing, it said.

The number of tigers in the Sundarbans was 106 in 2015. It increased to 114 in 2018. However, experts believe that there is a tiger habitation in Khagrachhari's Kasalong reserve forest with plentiful foliage and prey for the tigers.

"I recommend that the government take an immediate initiative to assess tiger presence in the area," he said, adding that locals claimed to have

INTERNATIONAL TIGER DAY



sighted tigers.

"Among the 13 nations native to tigers, the numbers have increased in many countries but the target of doubling the population by 2022 is yet to be reached. In Bangladesh, the population of the tiger also increased but it is very poor," M Monirul H Khan, chairman of the zoology department at Jahangirnagar University, told The Daily Star yesterday.

"If the improved protection given to tigers in the Sundarbans remains, the number will increase in the coming days," he said.

The world is observing the International Tiger Day

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Amit Habib, editor of Desh Rupantor, passes away



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent journalist and editor of the Bangla daily Desh Rupantor, Amit Habib passed away last night while undergoing treatment at National Institute of Neurosciences and Hospital. He was 59.

Around 11:00pm, doctors at the hospital declared him dead, Pavel Haider Chowdhury, a senior reporter of the daily told The Daily Star, quoting doctors.

He suffered a massive brain stroke while working at his office on July 21.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

The Earth broke its record for the shortest day

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

The Earth has set a new record for the shortest day. The planet completed a full spin on 29 June 2022, in a time that was 1.59 milliseconds - little over one thousandth of a second - shorter than its standard 24-hour rotation.



It nearly broke the barrier again this month, with 26 July being 1.50 milliseconds shorter than 24 hours.

Recently, the Earth has been increasing in speed. In 2020, the Earth saw its shortest month that has ever been measured, since the

1960s. The shortest day of all time was measured that year: 1.47 milliseconds under 24 hours, on 19 July.

The next year, Earth continued to spin at a generally increased rate although did not break records.

But when looked at over much longer periods, Earth's spin is slowing. Every century, the Earth takes a couple of milliseconds longer to complete one rotation.



Using a raft, two people crossing the Purba Dhaniram canal in Kurigram's Phulbari on Wednesday. The bridge, inset, built over the canal collapsed on August 22, 2018, before its inauguration. People of seven villages in Barobhita union are affected.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

ICAB and AB Bank Limited signed MoU on Documents Verification System (DVS)



The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Bangladesh (ICAB) and AB Bank Limited recently signed a MoU at a ceremony held at the Bank's Corporate Office under which the Bank will get access to use the Documents Verification System (DVS) for verifying the authenticity of audited financial statements of different entities. Mr. Md. Shahadat Hossain FCA, President, ICAB and Mr. Tarique Afzal, President & Managing Director of the Bank, signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations. ICAB already signed similar MoU with NBR, FRC, BSEC and RJSC. DVS already became popular among the business communities and the regulators.

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