

**District roundup**

**TANGAIL**  
**Vitamin 'A' capsules distributed among children**  
 Aug 27: Eleven lakh and sixty four thousand vitamin 'A' capsules were distributed in the district last year to remove the impact of nutritive food deficiency among the children, reports BSS.  
 The vitamins were meant for the children below six years of age and for containing the malady of blindness of the younger generation. The capsules were distributed by the health assistants and by the health centres. According to the health department there are about six lakh children in one to six year age group.  
 A department source said that the distribution of vitamin 'A' capsul would continue this year.

**LALMONIRHAT**  
**Shortage of quality bricks**  
 Aug 27: Construction work of residential buildings in the district is being hampered due to scarcity of quality bricks, reports UNB.  
 High quality bricks, rarely available in the markets, are usually absorbed in the construction of roads, culverts and government buildings.  
 It may be mentioned here that about two crore bricks are produced in four brickfields in the district which is quite insufficient to meet the growing demand.  
 Moreover, the high price of bricks and its scarcity in the local markets has been hampering the construction work in the government and private sectors as well.  
 High quality bricks per thousand are being sold at Taka 3,000, instead of Taka 1500-1600 a few months back.  
 Roads and Highways Department sources said they are using low quality bricks for the construction of roads due to non-availability of quality bricks in the local market.

**BARISAL**  
**Tk 10 lakh grant for pry schools**  
 Aug 27: A grant of Taka 10 lakh was disbursed Saturday among 60 government and non-government primary schools and madrasas in sadar thana of the district, reports UNB.  
 The grant was an electoral commitment of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.  
 Local MP Mujibar Rahman handed over the cheques for the amount to head masters of the schools and madrasas at a function at the Thana Council auditorium, presided over by TNO Majbar Rahman.  
 Government has introduced fax services in Barisal and Patuakhali recently to provide modern communication facilities for the people of these districts.  
 One fax machine each has been installed at the telephone and telegraph offices of Barisal and Patuakhali.

**NETRAKONA**  
**Post flood programmes**  
 Aug 27: Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, Netrakona district unit, has taken up a post-flood relief, rehabilitation and medicare programme in different remote flood affected areas under Netrakona district, reports BSS.  
 Netrakona Red Crescent Society office sources said that under the programme 300 pieces of sarces, 300 pieces of lunges and 900 pieces of old clothings would be distributed among the people during the current week.  
 Besides a medical team would start medicare services soon.

**MAGURA**  
**Gun battle leaves 20 injured**  
 Aug 27: Gun battle between supporters of Kuttamura union parishad chairman and the former chairman Saturday left 20 people injured, reports UNB.  
 Two of them - Siddiqur Rahman (28) and Farid Hossain (25) - riddled with grapeshots were admitted to Magura hospital. Others were given first aid in hospital or private clinics.  
 Witnesses and police said old feud between sitting chairman Risikat Mollah and former chairman Nazrul Islam led to the fighting in which both sides used guns and other deadly weapons.

**MYMENSINGH**  
**Condolence programme on ex-BAU vice-chancellor**  
 Aug 27: An 8-day condolence programme on the sudden demise of the Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Agricultural University Prof M Ashraf Ali Khan is on at the BAU, reports UNB.  
 The programme was taken at an emergency meeting at the V-C's official residence on Aug 19 with the Convener of the Council of Deans Prof M Abdul Haque in the chair.  
 All Deans, Provosts, Statutory Officers, Students' Affairs Advisor, Proctor, Director of Planning and Development Cell and Representatives of Teachers' Association, Central Students' Union, Officers' Association, Employees' Association and Employees' Parishad of the university attended the meeting.  
 A condolence proposal expressing deep and profound sorrow at the untimely death of Dr Ashraf Ali Khan and conveying the sympathy for the bereaved family members was taken up in the meeting. The meeting also prayed for the eternal peace and salvation of the departed soul.  
 Thirty meritorious students were awarded Abdul Wahed Memorial Scholarship at a simple ceremony held at Mymensingh Gouripur Pilot Girls High School on Thursday.

**NOAKHALI**  
**Unexcavated canal causes water logging**  
 Aug 27: Several thousand farmers of the district have been facing difficulties in producing paddy due to water logging caused by a canal flowing over Chaprashirhat union in Sadar thana, reports UNB.  
 According to the farmers, the canal known as 'Dabul Akher, Khal' remained unexcavated for long causing water logging and every year transplanted aman crops on 10,000 acres of land are damaged in the area.  
 Moreover, some fishermen place traps blocking the movement of canal water at several points of the canal for fishing. Local union parishad members asked the fishermen to take them off to block movement of the canal water to save the paddy fields but fishing is on as usual.  
 The affected farmers have urged the government to take immediate scheme to re-excavate the canal and impose restriction on fishing in the canal.

**DINAJPUR**  
**86000 cows artificially inseminated**  
 Aug 27: The livestock department has artificially inseminated about 86 thousand cows during the last fiscal year in the district achieving the yearly target by 96 per cent, says BSS.  
 Over 26 thousand calves were born due to artificial insemination during the time, an official source said.  
 Besides, the department assisted to cultivate grass and other cattlehead food on about 18 hundred acres of land. 17 also produced 81 thousand saplings of epl and distributed 45 saplings of cpil among the farmers during the period.

**MADARIPUR**  
**BKB gives Tk 3 cr as agri loan**  
 Aug 27: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) disbursed about Taka three crore loan among the farmers during the last fiscal year to help boost agri production, reports UNB.  
 According to the regional office of the bank, the loan was distributed through its 14 branches. Of the amount, Taka 23.94 lakh has been disbursed as crop loan and Taka 47.62 lakh as non-crop loan through four branches of sadar thana.  
 In Kalkini thana Taka 22.56 lakh was distributed as crop loan and Taka 89.02 lakh as non-crop through its three branches. Taka 26.30 lakh was given as crop loan and Taka 8.29 lakh as non-crop through one of its branch in Rajoir thana and in Shibchar thana Taka 38.37 lakh has been distributed as crop loan and Taka 34.55 lakh as non-crop loan through its six branches.



NATORE: The growers are returning home from local Taboria Hat with their unsold raw jute. The jute is selling below production cost for want of buyer. — Star photo

**Jute selling at nominal prices**

**From Our Correspondent**  
 NATORE, Aug 27: The growers are selling jute at a nominal price for want of buyers.  
 Jute is now selling between Taka 120 and Taka 200 per maund at open markets which is much below the production cost.  
 According to a survey conducted by Jute Department, the production of jute per acre has been reduced in this season. About 3.40 bales of jute has been produced per acre of land this year as against 3.80 bales of jute per acre of land produced in the last year.  
 During the current season, at least 12 lakh 85 thousand acres of land of 50 districts of the country have been brought under jute cultivation and it is expected that about 43 lakh 50 thousand bales of jute will be produced.  
 Of the total, about 3.50 lakh bales of jute is expected from 99 thousand 4 hundred 71 acres of land in the border areas of this country.  
 Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) will set up 122 jute purchasing centres throughout the country, it is learnt.  
 Of the total, 24 centres will be set up in border areas. Jute mills in private sector will purchase jute through mill-gate and selected dealers, it is also learnt.  
 The Jute Directorate has appointed 2,000 dealers for purchasing jute in border areas.  
 Bangladesh Jute Corporation (BJC) and other private agencies have not set up purchasing centres.  
 On the other hand, in Natore, Rajshahi, Pabna, Bogra, Naogaon, and Chapatnawabganj districts in northern part of the country, prices of jute have abnormally fallen in absence of government purchasing centres.  
 At present, only a few farias, beparies and middlemen are dominating the jute markets who always try to deprive the jute growers. They are fixing the jute price as their own sweet will.  
 Some of the jute growers of this region informed that due to the low price, they are bound to return home with unsold jute.  
 Some jute growers, also informed this correspondent that the present rates of jute are far below the production cost.  
 Most of the traders have not yet started buying jute as the main buyers are still undecided. Many of them are hiding to avoid last year's payments, it is reported.  
 The farmers of this region have urged the government to open jute purchasing centres.  
 Our Satkhira Correspondent says: The jute growers of seven thanas of Satkhira district are not getting fair price of their products in the absence of any jute purchasing centre in the district.  
 The jute growers of the district are selling jute to middlemen (pharias) at lower price. The growers are often seen going back home with their unsold jute.  
 Market sources say, the golden fibre is now selling between Taka 150 and Taka 170 per maund in the local markets. The price is much below the production cost, farmers say. The production cost of one maund of jute is between Taka 300 and Taka 350.  
 UNB from Gazipur adds: Jute growers of the district have been facing serious problems due to sudden fall in prices of raw jute in the local market.  
 Taking advantage of the situation the middlemen are purchasing jute at throw away prices which is far below the production cost.  
 Jute is now selling between Tk 180 and 200 per maund according to quality in Sreepur, Kaliganj, Kaliakotr, Tongi and Sadar thana whereas the cost of per maund production was between Taka 250 and 280.  
 Jute growers time and again appealed to the concerned authorities to open purchase centre to ensure fair prices of their produce but no step has been taken in this regard.  
 When contacted some jute traders said they could not retalise ousting money of the jute sold to the different mills and companies in the last two or three seasons. As a result they cannot start buying jute in large scale.  
 The cows were handed over to the local customs authorities.

**Tk 100 cr agri-loan unrealised**

**From Our Correspondent**  
 (1992-93), informed some official sources.  
 The sources informed that, of the total amount, Taka 60 crore 66 lakh had become 'overdue'. It would stand at about over Taka one hundred crore with the interest.  
 Of this total amount lying overdue, BKB has the highest one. They have the overdue loan amounting to Taka 51 crore 82 lakh 5 thousand while the Sonali Bank has an amount of Taka 4 crore 64 lakh 58 thousand. Agrani Bank has the amount at Taka three crore 37 lakh three thousand, Janata Bank has the overdue loan amount at Taka 67 lakh 14 thousand and the Rupali Bank with the lowest amount with Taka 35 lakh 32 thousand.  
 It is further learnt that there is minimum possibility of realisation of these amount of overdue loans, due to the faulty system of disbursement and receipt of loans by the interested and influential quarters in fake names.  
 Besides, in most of the cases, a portion of the loans disbursed, did not reach the target group, the poor and marginal farmers, it is alleged. It is observed that, most of the farmers from the 'well-to-do' families and influential people took the loans from the banks submitting the minimum papers and documents and sometimes, even by producing forged documents.  
 A small number of poor and marginal farmers who took the loans following a lengthy procedure, were unable to repay the amount due to the repeated crop damaged by the recurring floods during the last few years and fall in the prices of their produces.  
 Moreover, a mentality has grown among the some farmers that, some chances might come when the government would waive the agricultural loans as it was done after the last parliamentary elections.



SYLHET: the office-bearers of Islami Bank Foundation distributing relief materials to flood victims of Balaganj thana of the district recently. — Star photo

**Renovation work of two historical places on**

PAHARPUR, Aug 27: The second phase of renovation and preservation works of Buddhist monastery at Paharpur and the Muslim monuments in Bagerhat is going on in full swing at a cost of about Taka six crore including a foreign exchange component of half the total cost, reports BSS.  
 The projects are expected to be completed in the Fourth Five-Year Plan period. It is to be noted that monuments have been enlisted in the world cultural heritage list, an official handout said on Thursday.  
 Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Cultural Affairs led by State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof. Jahanaara Begum on Wednesday visited the Paharpur Vihara Archaeological Museum to review the progress of implementation.  
 The State Minister was informed that the archaeological museum at a cost of Taka 80 lakh was expected to be opened soon.  
 Taka 3.74 crore has been spent for the first phase of the work in the Third Five-Year Plan. The governments of Japan and Norway and UNESCO, UNDP and FAO have provided financial and other assistances for the first and the second phase works.  
 The Paharpur ancient Vihara built in the eight century BC is considered as one of the biggest Buddhist monasteries of South East Asia. It attracts huge number of tourists from home and abroad throughout the year. Some infrastructural works have been done in line with the tourists' facilities.  
 A number of similar works are still inhand earlier, members of the committee visited the private museum at Ramnagar in Dinajpur and Sheetakote Bihara at Naogaon.  
 The members of the committee accompanied the minister during the visits were Amanullah Chowdhury, Shamsun Nahar Ahmed, Salim Ara Huq of BNP, and Abu Lais Md Mubin Chowdhury of Jatiya Party. Besides, Khurshid Jahan Huq MP and Aktar Hamid MP and Cultural Secretary Islamuddin Malik were also present.

**Clash disrupts Pabna Jubo Dal meetings**

PABNA, Aug 26: Clash between the supporters of two factions of Pabna district Jubo Dal disrupted two workers meetings convened by rival factions of the BNP's youth front in the town today, reports UNB.  
 CHANDPUR, Aug 27: Minister for Environment and Forests, Fisheries and Livestock Abdullah Al-Noman has said that the present BNP government is a rare example of corruption-free political leadership in the Third World and its workers must always be vigilant to continue this example in future, reports BSS.  
 He was addressing at the chief guest at the biennial conference of the Chandpur district BNP held at Chandpur Municipal Park here on Tuesday.  
 Former State Minister Nurul Huda MP inaugurated the conference while State Minister for Relief Lutfur Rahman spoke on the occasion as the special guest. Secretary for Student Affairs of BNP Central Committee Advocate Mujibur Rahman was the main speaker.  
 The Environment Minister said that the founder of BNP Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman formulated a 19-point programme to improve the lot of the people by uniting them with the spirit of nationalism and BNP has won the confidence of the people due to its allegiance to the programme.  
 The BNP has been able to create a strong infrastructure by consolidating the shattered economy with untiring effort under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, he said. In this connection, he called upon workers of BNP to cooperate with the government in the implementation of different development activities.  
 State Minister for Relief Lutfur Rahman said that each and every worker of BNP must work with soldier-like spirit to foil the evil attempt of destroying hard-earned democracy in the country. He also emphasised the need for exercise of democratic values within the party itself.  
 Former State Minister Nurul Huda MP said that the opposition forces are raising the allegation of incompetence against the present government to confuse the people when the poverty alleviation programme of the present government is getting headway with the increase of internal resources. Presided over by the convener of Chandpur district BNP Mollah Siddiqur Rahman, the function was addressed, among others, by members of parliament Prof M Abdullah, M A Matin, Alamgir Haider Khan and Alam Khan.

**Steps taken to cultivate pearl in Cox's Bazar**

COX'S BAZAR, Aug 27: Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) has undertaken an initiative for massive cultivation of cultured pearls in Cox's Bazar district, reports BSS.  
 The BSCIC Chairman Maniruzzaman Chowdhury talking to local journalists on his recent field trip to Cox's Bazar said the vast tract of coastal belt of this region is suitable for large-scale artificial cultivation of white pearl. Burmese pearl which is precious and widely acclaimed also available with other kinds of pearl in this land, he said.  
 A special team of European Economic Community (EEC) had already visited Cox's Bazar in this regard and expressed their opinion that there was bright prospect for artificial cultivation of white pearl in this land, Chowdhury further said.  
 He said, a training centre and reproduction cell will be set up at Cox's Bazar very soon". In absence of planned way of collecting pearl, massive exploitation of pearl has become impossible, he added.  
 Chowdhury quoting the experts opinion said, the country could be able to earn Taka 1,500 crore by exporting pearl every year.  
 People of this region have been producing standard quality pearl artificially only in Gaibanga of Moheskhal under Cox's Bazar district since 1967, the Chairman said. The people of the area are yet to know scientific method of pearl production.  
 A pearl takes at least three years for its maturity and the oyster should be kept free from all sorts of diseases during its growth period, the Chairman said.  
 He expressed his optimism that it is possible for establishing pearl farm because it does not need any big machinery. He said that there are four to five hundred pearl farms in Japan at present.

**priority given to build roads, bridges**

HOMNA, Aug 27: Commerce Minister M K Anwar on Wednesday said, the present democratic government led by Begum Khaleda Zia gives priority to the construction of roads, bridges and other rural infrastructure for about development of the country, reports BSS.  
 He was addressing the inaugural function of Bagmara Bridge at Homna thana under Comilla district.  
 The 180 feet long and 14 feet broad Bagmara Bridge has been constructed by the Local Government and Engineering Department with the financial assistance of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) at a total cost of Taka 30 lakh. The bridge will benefit about three lakh people of the area. Another bridge at Alipur on Homna-Dualpur Road is under construction with the financial assistance of JICA. After completion of the Alipur Bridge Dualpur will be directly linked with Homna thana head-quarter.  
 The minister said, a development momentum has been started by the present government. But a handful of ill-motivated political parties are trying to frustrate the process of development. He urged the people to be cautious against these anti-stated activities of those political parties.  
 The meeting was also addressed among others, by the Chief Engineer-in-Charge of Local Government Engineering Department Monowar Hossain Chowdhury and Project Director, JICA Ziauddin Ahmed.  
 Later, the Commerce Minister witnesses the final match of the Homna thana inter-schools and madrasahs football tournament. The match was played between Homna Government High School and Kashipur Hasemia High School at Homna Government High School Ground.

**3000 homeless by Jamuna erosion**

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 27: Some 3,000 people of more than 600 families were rendered homeless on account of erosion by the river Jamuna in three thanas of the district in the last 48 hours, reports UNB.  
 According to sources, 500 families were affected in Kazipur and 50 each in Chouhali and Shahajadpur thanas.  
 The Thana Nirbahi Officer of Kazipur said Azizia Dakhil Madrasa and Samudra High School of thana sadar were threatened by river erosion. The river is only one kilometre away from the thana headquarters, he added.  
 The homeless people took shelter on nearby high places and are passing their days in great hardships.  
 Local leaders said no relief materials were distributed among the shelterless people in spite of repeated appeal.  
 However, the overall flood situation improved in the district Monday with receding of flood waters in the Jamuna, Koratoa, Bangalee, Fuljor and Gumal rivers.  
 The water level in the Jamuna fell by 10 cm, flowing 32 cm below the danger mark at Sirajganj town point.  
 Another report from Sirajganj said: Diarrhoea claimed at least two people including a child in Kazipur thana in last 24 hours.

**Help success pry education programme**

MUNSHIGANJ, Aug 27: Deputy leader of Parliament Prof. A.Q.M Badruddoza Choudhury Tuesday called upon the guardians, teachers and all others concerned to come forward to assist the government for success of the compulsory primary education programme, reports BSS.  
 Prof. Chowdhury was addressing as the chief guest at foundation stone laying ceremony of Birtara Government Primary School at Srinagar here.