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Vehicles asked not to head for Aricha

By Staff Correspondent

Ferry services at Aricha ghat have been suspended since 9 pm last night due to thick fog. Sources said that all ferries operating in Aricha-Daulatdia and Aricha-Natakholia routes were suspended, leaving some 991 vehicles stranded at the ghat.

Meanwhile, officials at Aricha ghat have advised bus operators and the passengers not to proceed towards Aricha before improvement of the weather.

Talking over telephone from Aricha ghat, an official told The Daily Star that a four-member special team of BIWTC

See Page 12 Col 1

Free Golap Barua, urges chief of ULFA armed wing

By Staff Correspondent

The chief of armed wing of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), Paresh Barua, in an interview with the BBC has appealed to Bangladesh not to hand over Anup Jetia alias Golap Barua, the said general secretary of ULFA, to India.

He has also called for unconditional release of Golap Barua. The ULFA leader said his organisation has been waging a movement against 'Indian expansionism' like that of Bangladesh against the Pakistan occupation forces.

He appealed to Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to release the captured ULFA leader Golap Barua on humanitarian grounds.

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Inside Today

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Only a Creamy Layer

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Can Dhaka traffic be improved; and AIDS in Bangladesh and Mongla Port

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DSE index edges higher

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Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Jan	Sehri	Iftar
5	5	5:18	5:29
6	6	5:18	5:29
7	7	5:18	5:29

Notice (Regarding Audit of Firms Registered under VAT)

জাতীয় রাজস্ব সংরক্ষণে অংশ নিন
মুসক অডিটে সহযোগিতা করুন

VAT system has been introduced since 1st July 1991. Under this system a tax-payer himself calculates the tax from the consumer while delivering/providing goods or service and deposits in the govt exchequer. That is, a goods producer/service provider realises this tax from the consumer at the time of selling goods/providing service and deposits in govt exchequer.

The duty of VAT management is to verify the matter whether this tax is properly calculated and paid in due amount & at due time and maintain the national revenue paid up by the local consumers.

To ensure realisation of due amount of revenue at due time the VAT management often audits a few activities of some selected tax-payer firms. For this, the firm selected for audit is informed in advance to keep ready such documents of account as may be required for auditing. So, it is not possible to complete auditing in prescribed time smoothly & properly without sincere cooperation of the registered firm authority.

Under Clause 34 of VAT Act 1991, any registered tax-payer firm is bound to produce any document of accounts under this Act on demand to the audit officer, otherwise it is considered a punishable offence under Clause 37.

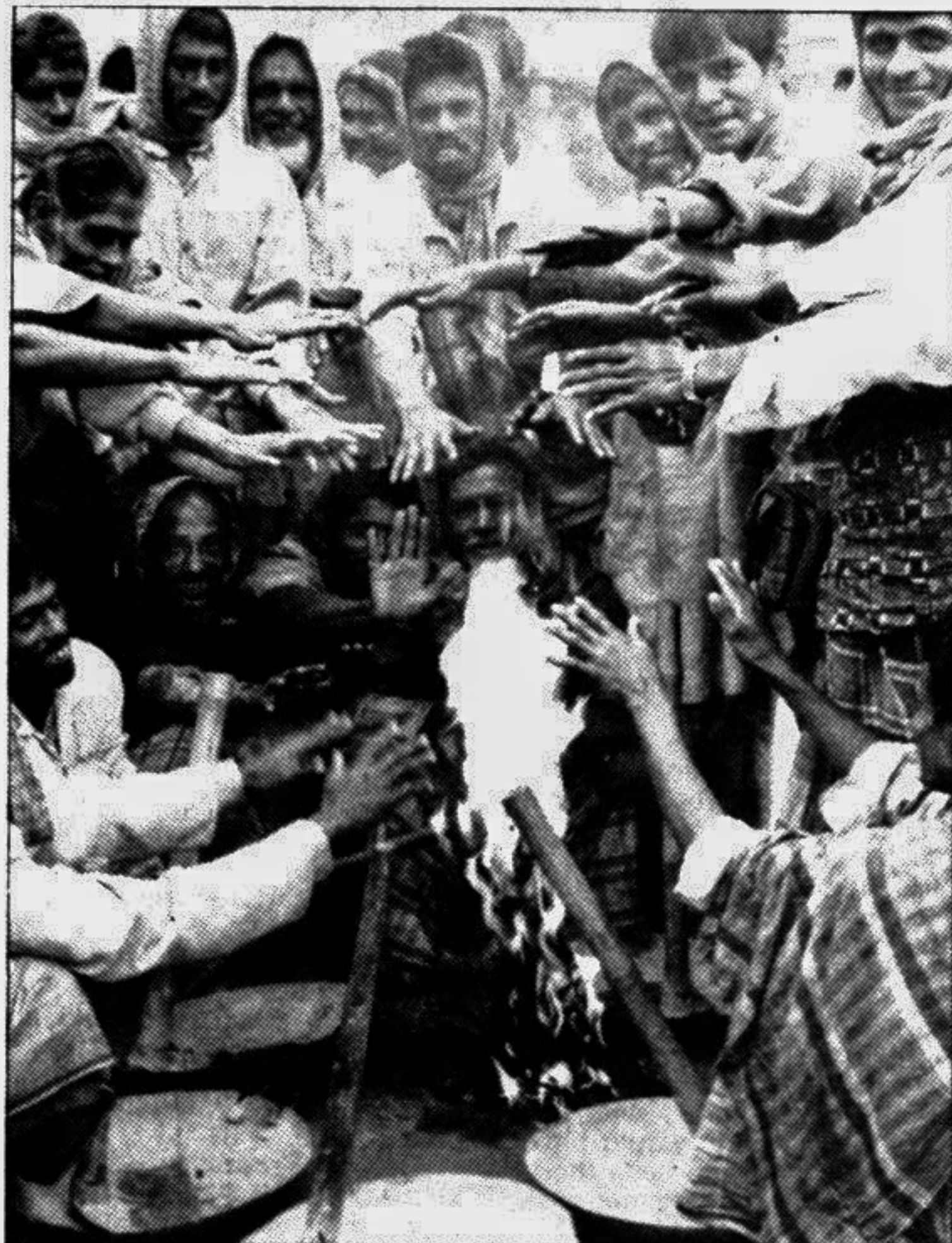
As such, therefore, all tax-payer firms registered under VAT are requested to actively cooperate in auditing. The firm concerned may ensure, prior to auditing, if the audit officers are carrying proper ID Card & audit order issued by the commissioner concerned.

DFP-29447-29/12
G-25

National Board of Revenue

Air, ferry services suspended for fog Shivering cold all over: 10 die, hundreds sick

By Special Correspondent



Day labourers sitting around a fire at noon at Dholaikhal as a cold wave gripped the city yesterday.

— Star photo by A K M Mohsin

Another cold spell sweeping the country since Saturday claimed 10 more lives, raising the total to at least 42 during the last two weeks, according to reports received from different sources.

Earlier 32 lives were claimed by the biting cold when it swept the northern districts late last month.

At least 500 people were attacked with fever and pneumonia due to cold and admitted to different hospitals in the northern region.

Since the New Year's Day, temperature began sliding, Saturday being the coldest so far with the minimum temperature recorded at Jessore at 6.2 degree Celsius.

But it rose a little almost all over the country yesterday, with fog covering vast areas. The cold was felt more in the afternoon with chilly wind from the north blowing across the country.

The temperature began rising when fog cover became thicker, which made driving difficult after late yesterday evening. By 10:30 pm, visibility neared zero, forcing authorities to suspend ferry and air services.

Earlier on the day, two flights of Bangladesh Biman from Karachi and Bombay, scheduled to arrive at 9:02 am and 9 am respectively, were diverted to Calcutta. Those returned to Zia at 12:55 pm and 1 pm respectively, Biman sources said.

The Riyadh-London flight of See Page 12 Col 7

'Save BIRDEM, resist evil attempts to disrupt service'

By Staff Correspondent

The Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (DAB) yesterday hoped that the people would come forward to resist any evil attempt to disrupt service to the patients at the BIRDEM thorough 'illegal' trade union activities.

Secretary General of the DAB Dr. Fasih Uddin Mahtab expressed the hope at a press conference yesterday evening. The agitating Employees Welfare Association (EWA) of BIRDEM is scheduled to declare today all office bearers of the DAB 'persona non grata'.

The DAB is a nonprofit voluntary socio-medical service organisation which treats 16 hundred diabetic patients everyday, while it covers 25 thousand patients across the country. Mahtab said adding: 'We hope people would come forward to resist any evil attempt to disrupt the organisation's continued service to the patients and protect the institution from the danger of collapse due to illegal trade unionism.'

However, representatives of the DAB and the EWA were holding talks to settle the disputes till the writing of this report last night.

The EWA is fighting for scrapping of the service rule of 1996 which said that all the new appointments would be made on contract basis, and the hiring and firing authority would be lying with the management.

THE DAB and the EWA eventually reached a settlement last night, according to DAB treasurer Maj Gen (rtd) A R Khan. According to the settlement, the authorities concerned would formulate a new set of service rules, combining those adopted in 1992 and 1996, in a month. Khan said. The EWA leaders have agreed to postpone their agitation today. However, none of the EWA leaders was available for comment.

agement of the hospital.

The DAB said yesterday that they would not concede to the illegal demand of the employees.

The EWA leaders, in a letter to the Director General of BIRDEM on December 23 last, said that the DAB office bearers would be declared persona non grata, if the 1996 service rule was not scrapped by January 5. They also threatened that the employees would physically prevent the DAB office bearers from entering office, if the demand was not met within the stipulated time.

The National Council of DAB met on December 24, the day after EWA had sent the letter, to review the situation and formed a five-member body to formulate a comprehensive service rule for the organisation in the light of the rules adopted in 1992 and 1996. The Council also decided to seek suggestions of EWA leaders on See Page 12 Col 3

Duties on computer software lifted, hardware reduced

The government has decided to withdraw duties and taxes on import of computer software for rapid expansion of the sector, reports UNB.

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting at the Ministry of Finance yesterday.

Chaired by Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria, the meeting was attended, among others, by Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed and State Minister for Planning and Science and Technology Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir.

Identifying the potentiality of the sector in export earning, the meeting decided to give top priority to this sector so that it can be flourished uninterruptedly.

It also recalled the directives of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to take immediate measures for the development of computer software sector as it is one of the three thrust sectors for export.

The meeting has also decided to reduce customs duty from 7.5 per cent to 2.5 per cent on computer hardware and withdraw infrastructure development surcharge, advance income tax and licence fee from computer hardware.

Besides, the computer industry will be given the facility of special bonded warehouse under simplified procedure. It will help import computer hardware, accessories and other inputs without advance payment of duties and taxes like other export oriented industries operating under special bonded warehouse.

Recognised computer training See Page 12 Col 1

The government and market operators yesterday agreed to work together to prop up the cash-hungry and confidence-lacking capital market, with plans to inject part of the pension and trust funds, among other options.

The government, however, does not have any estimates about the size of the funds lying idle mainly with autonomous corporations, a top Banking Division official said. Officials are already working for these funds to be available for the capital market. 'We have prepared changes to existing laws and sent the draft to the law ministry,' said Secretary Amir-ul-Mulk.

He said the government was also considering withdrawing the 30 per cent band on insurance funds for investment. 'It may be raised or withdrawn,' Amir-ul-Mulk said.

Strike in 8 education boards

By Staff Correspondent

Employees of the eight education boards in the country yesterday began an indefinite strike at the call of the Inter-education Board Employees Federation to press their four-point charter of demand, a top leader of the Federation claimed yesterday.

The demands are cancellation of a Task Force (TF) report that brought corruption charges against some officials and employees of the boards, end to 'attempts' made to curtail autonomy of the boards, transfer of the centralised computer cells to respective boards and stoppage of intervention in the affairs of the boards by the ministry of education.

The report of the Task Force

is against the interest of the officials and employees of the boards, the Federation leader said while talking to The Daily Star.

'The strike is illogical,' Education Minister A S H K Sadek said talking to The Daily Star yesterday. 'It is too premature to say anything about the Task Force report,' he said adding that recommendations of the report were still under scrutiny and were not even in the implementation stage.

Asked whether the schedules for SSC and HSC examinations will be hampered because of the strike, the minister said, 'The schedules for the examinations have not yet been discussed, but

as of yesterday, there was no backlog in the progress of registration of students.'

The minister however hoped that the strike will be called off through discussions and the examination schedules will remain unaffected.

'They began a strike even before implementation of the recommendations of the TF report. It is just a political manoeuvring by the Federation,' the minister said.

'They were supposed to come along with the chairmen of the boards for talks with ministry officials today but they did not show up. The chairmen of the boards also could not explain why they did not come. They do not have any answer which particular attempt curtailed the authority of the board,' he said.

Sources in the education ministry said that the chairmen of five of the eight education boards and the Controller of Dhaka Board met the minister yesterday in their bid to resolve the crisis. Sixteen passes were also issued for the Federation leaders to come to the ministry and discuss their problems with officials but they did not come yesterday, the sources said.

'Efforts will be made to bring the Federation leaders to a dialogue with the officials of the ministry,' said a high official of one of the boards after See Page 12 Col 3



DHAKA BECOMES HI-TECH: Lights for the third umpire's verdict are being positioned on the rooftop of the pavilion at Dhaka Stadium yesterday. The stadium will host the Coca-Cola Independence Cup Tri-nation Cricket Tournament from January 10 (Details on Page 11).

Alleged fraud No decision at IFIC board meeting

By Staff Correspondent

The board of IFIC Bank met yesterday to discuss the recent cases of alleged fraudulent purchase of 261 cheques and payment orders to create inland bills purchased (IBPs) to fund companies linked with two of its directors, Salman and Sohel F Rahman.

The board, however, could not take any decision as the 'directors committee' formed earlier to review the situation and identify who are responsible for the affairs did not submit its report.

The board, which sat full bench after a long time with a single item on the agenda, was told that the legal adviser to the See Page 12 Col 8

BTV, Betar in a fix over cricket tourney

Sports Reporter

Millions of sports lovers in the country may be deprived of enjoying on TV and Radio the Independence Cup cricket tournament starting in the capital on January 10.

It is learnt that both the state-run media — Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar — were in a fix as the organisers, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), struck a deal with the America-based company — WorldTel.

The WorldTel reportedly sold the transmission rights to the Doordarsan International for an undisclosed sum. This has left both the local electronic media with the only option to make a deal with the foreign company.

BTV and the Betar are reported to have been asked to pay 1.20 crore and 12 lakh taka respectively for the rights to air all six matches of the tourney, said a reliable source in the Information Ministry.

'We have no allocation in our annual budget to meet the cost for the coverage,' said a high official in BTV.

F-28 sent to Amsterdam for D-check

Star Report

A Fokker 28 aircraft of Bangladesh Biman left Dhaka for Amsterdam yesterday to undergo a major check and overhauling.

It was grounded since December 21, a day before its twin crash-landed on a mudflat, eight-km off Sylhet airport.

It will cost the Biman 0.7 million US dollars to get the F-28, a vintage of 1981 production line of the now defunct Fokker company, to be ready for flying in six weeks time.

Crash landing of its twin left the Biman's domestic sector in jitters, forcing its only operational ATP aircraft hauling five flights a day.

The other ATP is out of service following an accident in See Page 12 Col 8

Police-mob clash in Ctg 3 shot dead, 50 hurt

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 4: At least three persons were shot dead and over 50 people injured in a series of clashes between police and a mob during an eviction drive by the district administration near Chittagong cantonment at South Pahartoli under Hathazari thana today, police and administration officials said.

The drive was launched to evict the occupants from about 40 acres of land acquired for expansion of Chittagong cantonment.

The dead were identified as Jamal (28), Ashraf (29) and Walullah (32).

The injured persons included nine police personnel. One of them was admitted to the Combined Medical Hospital in a critical condition.

Other injured persons were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital and private clinics.

Police arrested nine persons including four retired army personnel. Of the four arrested retired army personnel, one was a retired major, police said.

District administration officials and police said several thousand people gathered at the spot to resist the eviction drive, launched by a large contingent of police, led by two magistrates.

See Page 12 Col 5

Coal import thru' Tamabil border stopped again

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 4: Coal import through Tamabil border has been suspended again as importers went on an indefinite strike today protesting 'extortion and terrorist activities'.

The importers also decided to stop import of all other perishable items like orange and onion through the border from January 8 as part of their strike programme, said a press release this night.

Earlier, import of coal through the border remained stalled for two days from January 1 when the truck labourers went on a strike demanding minimum wages for unloading coal from the Indian trucks at Tamabil border point.

The strike was called off yesterday following a fruitful discussion with the officials concerned.

দারিদ্র বিমোচন ও বেকারত্ব দূরীকরণে অগ্রণী ব্যাংক

দারিদ্র বিমোচন, আর্থ-সামাজিক অবস্থার উন্নয়ন এবং গ্রামীণ অর্থনীতিকে গতিশীল করার জন্য অগ্রণী ব্যাংকের বহুমুখী ঋণ কর্মসূচী রয়েছে। এ সকল কর্মসূচীর মূল লক্ষ্য হচ্ছে— গ্রামীণ বিপুল দরিদ্র জনগোষ্ঠী তথা ভূমিহীন, প্রান্তিক ক্ষুদ্র চাষী, বেকার যুবক-যুবতী, মহিলা ও ক্ষুদ্র উদ্যোক্তাদের বেকারত্ব দূরীকরণসহ উৎপাদনমুখী কর্মকাণ্ডে সম্পৃক্ত করা। এতদউদ্দেশ্যে অগ্রণী ব্যাংকের নিম্নোক্ত কর্মসূচী/প্রকল্প চালু রয়েছে :

- ☆ চিংড়ি চাষ ঋণ কর্মসূচী (সাধারণ)/আধা নিবিড় চিংড়ি চাষ কর্মসূচী
- ☆ জাতীয় ক্ষুদ্র সেচ উন্নয়ন (এনএমআইডিপি) প্রকল্প/সেচযন্ত্র ঋণ কর্মসূচী
- ☆ কলা চাষ ঋণ কর্মসূচী/লবণ উৎপাদন ঋণ কর্মসূচী
- ☆ দারিদ্র বিমোচন ঋণ কর্মসূচী
- ☆ উৎপাদনমুখী কর্মসংস্থান (পিইপি) প্রকল্প
- ☆ প্রান্তিক ও ক্ষুদ্র খামার পদ্ধতির মাধ্যমে শস্য নিবিড়করণ প্রকল্প (MSFSCP)
- ☆ ক্ষুদ্র উদ্যোগ উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প (SEDP)
- ☆ পল্লী ঋণ প্রকল্প (আরএফপি)
- ☆ হাট-মুরগীর ক্ষুদ্রাকার খামারের জন্য ঋণ দান কর্মসূচী
- ☆ আত্মকর্মসংস্থানমূলক ঋণদান কর্মসূচী
- ☆ শস্য-গুদাম ঋণ প্রকল্প (শগুপ)
- ☆ গরু তাগড়াকরণ ঋণ কর্মসূচী
- ☆ পল্লী পরিবহন ঋণ কর্মসূচী
- ☆ দারিদ্র বিমোচনে ক্ষুদ্র কুটির শিল্পে অর্থায়ন কর্মসূচী
- ☆ বেসরকারী সংস্থাকে (এন,জি,ও) ঋণ প্রদান
- ☆ ইফাদ ও ব্যাংকের যৌথ উদ্যোগে এমপ্লয়মেন্ট জেনারেশন প্রজেক্ট ফর দি রুরাল পুওর প্রকল্প
- ☆ নেত্রকোণা সমন্বিত কৃষি উৎপাদন ও পানি ব্যবস্থাপনা প্রকল্প
- ☆ স্ব-নির্ভর ঋণ কর্মসূচী
- ☆ কৃষি ভিত্তিক শিল্প ও প্রযুক্তি উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প (এ,টি,ডি,পি)
- ☆ কৃষি বহুমুখীকরণ ও নিবিড়করণ প্রকল্প (ইফাদ)
- ☆ কুড়িগ্রাম দারিদ্র বিমোচন প্রকল্প
- ☆ রুরাল লাইভলিহুড প্রজেক্ট
- ☆ ক্ষুদ্র উদ্যোগ প্রকল্প

বিস্তারিত তথ্যের জন্য প্রধান কার্যালয়ের পল্লী ঋণ বিভাগসহ নিকটস্থ যেকোন শাখায় যোগাযোগ করুন।



অগ্রণী ব্যাংক

দেশ ও জাতির সেবায় প্রতিশ্রুতিবদ্ধ একটি ব্যাংক