

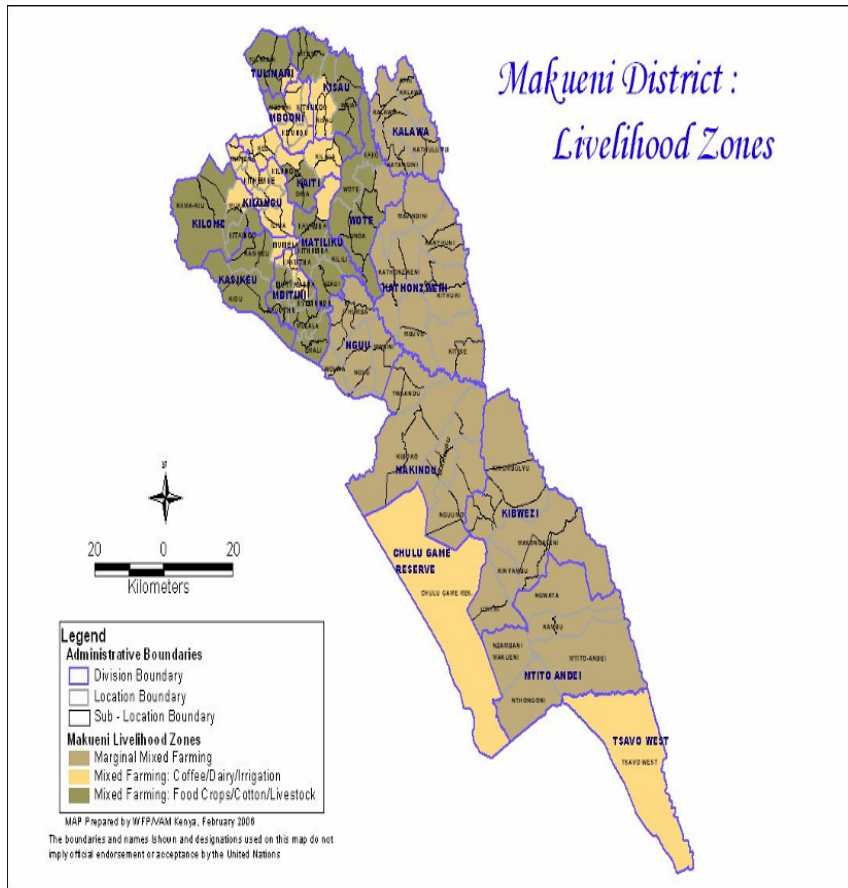


OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II

DROUGHT MONITORING BULLETIN, OCTOBER 2009

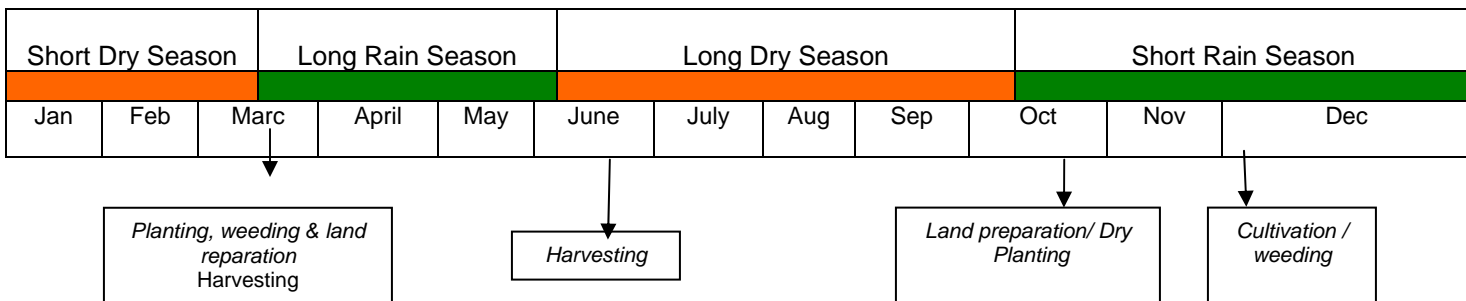
Makueni District

Warning Stages



Livelihood Zone	Warning Stage	Trend
Mixed Farming Coffee/Dairy	Alarm	Worsening
Mixed Farming Food Crops (Agro Pastoral Zone I)	Alarm	Worsening
Marginal Mixed Farming (Agro Pastoral Zone II)	Alarm	Worsening
District	Alarm	Worsening

Seasonal calendar



Situation overview

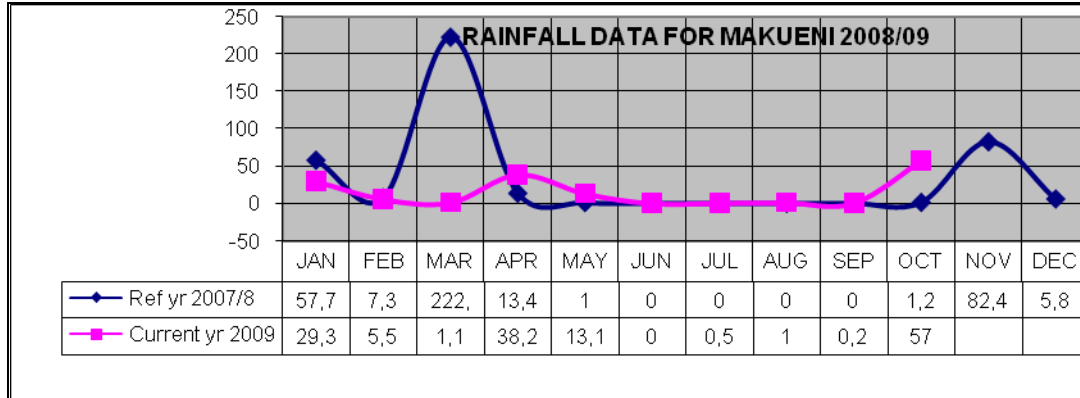
- Heavy rainfall was reported in the hilly and middle zones of the district on 15th October compared to the lower zones which received little rains at 57mm by 17th October.
- Fast germination of pasture and browse was noted in all the zones and the few emaciated cattle and shoats were recovering from the little available pastures.
- Water availability was noted in all the divisions which received good rains, reducing the distances for both livestock and domestic animals. Main water sources were natural rivers, springs, traditional river wells, boreholes, pans and dams.
- Increased food prices were noted in all the divisions, especially legumes, since the commodity was scarce in the local markets.
- There was delay in planting since commonly used draught power (oxen) died in the long dry spell.
- Milk and its products increased in prices due to low supply in the district.
- Prices of food stuffs such as legumes doubled compared to last month due to low supply and scarcity of the commodity in the markets.
- Livestock prices increased significantly for all the species (cattle, goats and sheep) within the month. These were the young emaciated cattle salvaged from the drought.
- Hiring of both men and women to till and plant in the gardens, sale of firewood, sale of sisal products, charcoal burning and other menial jobs were the main sources of income for most households during the month.
- No major disease outbreaks reported during the month but suspected cases of cholera were reported in the divisions along the Athi river zones (areas bordering southern parts of Kitui district).
- The nutrition status of children below five years slightly improved compared to last month but within the expected margin due to continuous supply of Unimix and CSP in the health facilities.

Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- Ministry of Water and Public Health to conduct assessments to ascertain the suspected cases of cholera.
- Capacity building for lactating mothers to avoid kwashiorkor and other related diseases.
- Ministry of Agriculture to supply planting seeds.
- All primary schools in the district should be put under the regular school feeding programme.
- Supplementary feeding for children under five be intensified in all health facilities.
- Community to be sensitised not to consume cattle carcasses or any uninspected meat.

1.0 Environmental indicators (stability)

1.1 Rainfall



Courtesy of Makindu meteorological weather station

- Heavy rainfall was reported in the hilly and middle zones on the 15th October compared to the lower zones which received fewer rains of 57mm by 17 of October.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- The heavy rainfall received for 2 weeks resulted in some pasture regeneration and it is expected to sustain the emaciated shoats and cattle.
- Germination of crops such as maize and beans was noted in the hilly and middle zones.

1.3 Water sources and availability

1.31 Water sources

- Water sources were rejuvenating after a long dry spell, reducing distances to main water sources.
- The main water sources during the month were natural rivers, springs, traditional river wells, boreholes, pans and dams.

1.4 Emerging issues

1.4.1 Livestock migration

- Mass livestock migrations was reported mostly in search of pastures more so in the lower and southern parts of the larger Makueni district.
- Livestock deaths were also reported in the divisions along the Mombasa highway due to poor body conditions and other drought related diseases.

1.4.2 Insecurity /conflict /human displacement

- Livestock thefts were reported in the divisions along the Mombasa highway while petty theft increased especially in the food stores.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (Food availability)

2.1 Livestock body condition

- Poor and emaciated body conditions of livestock were reported in most of divisions but the condition is expected to improve. This is a normal occurrence at this time of the year.

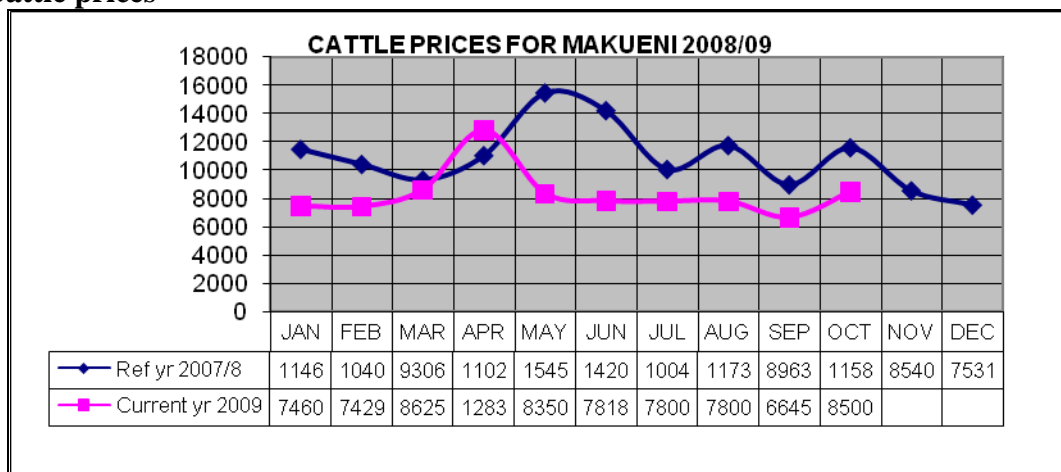
2.2 Livestock health

- Livestock health was poor but it is expected to improve significantly in the coming months.

3.0 Access to food

3.1 Livestock marketing

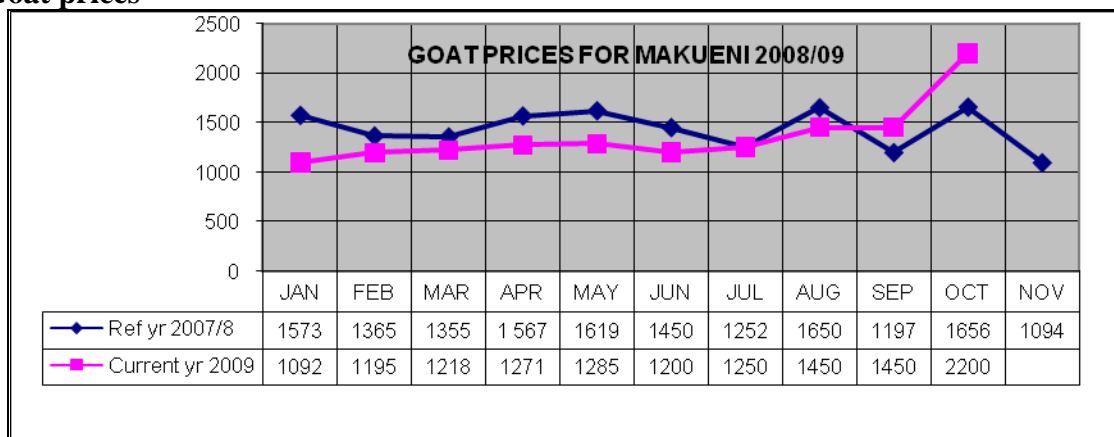
3.1.1 Cattle prices



*N=360

- Cattle prices increased compared to last month as a result of low supply in the local markets. This is a normal trend at the time of the year.
- The average price was Ksh8,500 compared to Ksh6,645 in September.

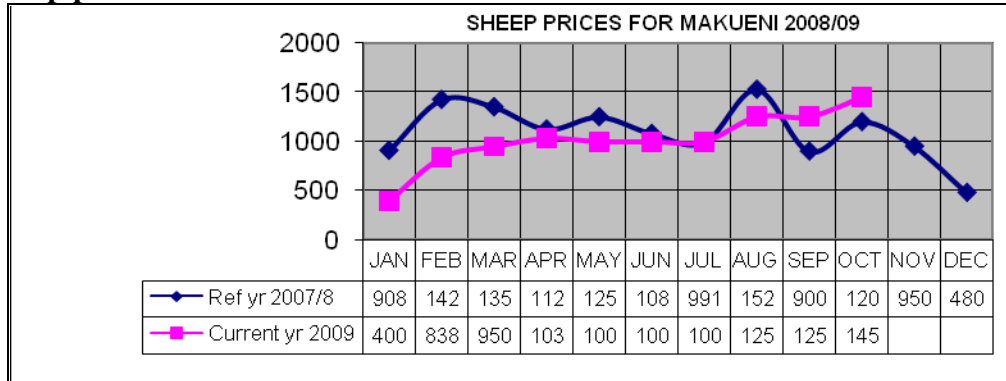
3.1.2 Goat prices



*N=360

- Goat prices increased considerably over the month and they were far above the same period last year. The average price was Ksh2,200 compared to Ksh1,450 in September.
- Depletion of cattle meat and poor quality forced the consumers to prefer shoats' meat, which is of good quality.
- This was also as a result of low supply in the local markets and improvement of body condition due to the rejuvenation of shrubs from the little rains received at the end of long rains. This was a normal condition.

3.1.3 Sheep prices



*N=360

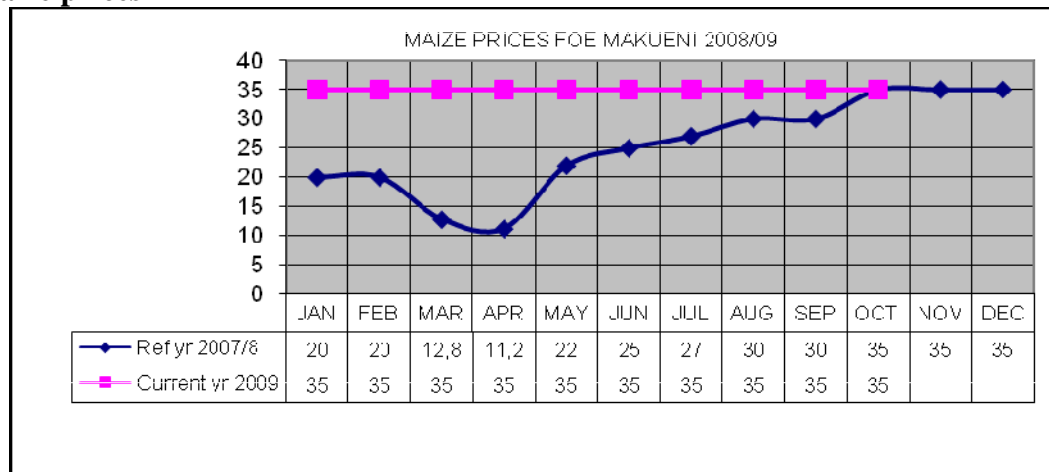
- Sheep prices increased slightly over the month and they were much higher than the same period last year but within the district average.
- This was as a result of low supply and high demand in the local markets. The situation was normal at the time of the year.

3.2 Milk consumption

- Milk and its products significantly increased in prices (Ksh52 per litre) but decreased in supply. This was an abnormal occurrence at the time of the year.

3.3 Food prices

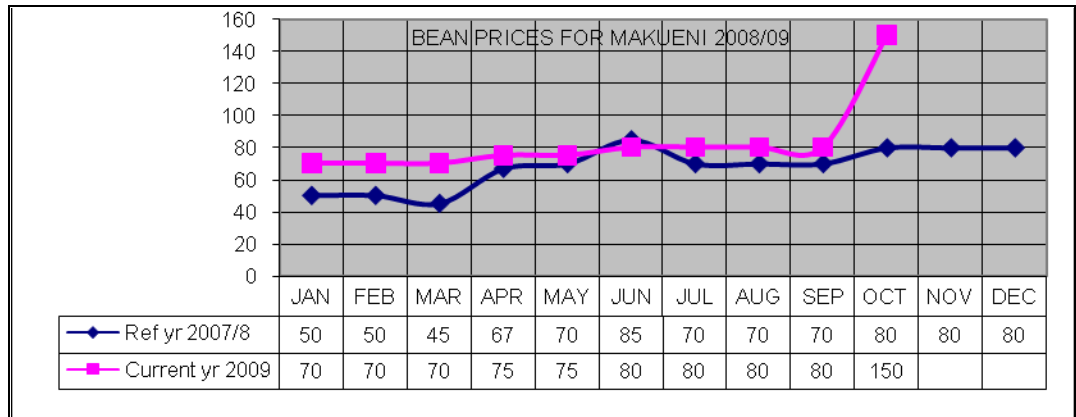
3.3.1 Maize prices



*N=360

- Maize prices stagnated at Ksh35 per kilo during the month but this was way above the price at the same period last year. The stability was due to permanent supply of GOK relief food.
- This was an abnormal occurrence but the phenomenon could be attributed to low supply in the local markets following subsequent crop failures. The cost is projected to increase further in the coming months if there is no change in the trend of supply of the commodity.

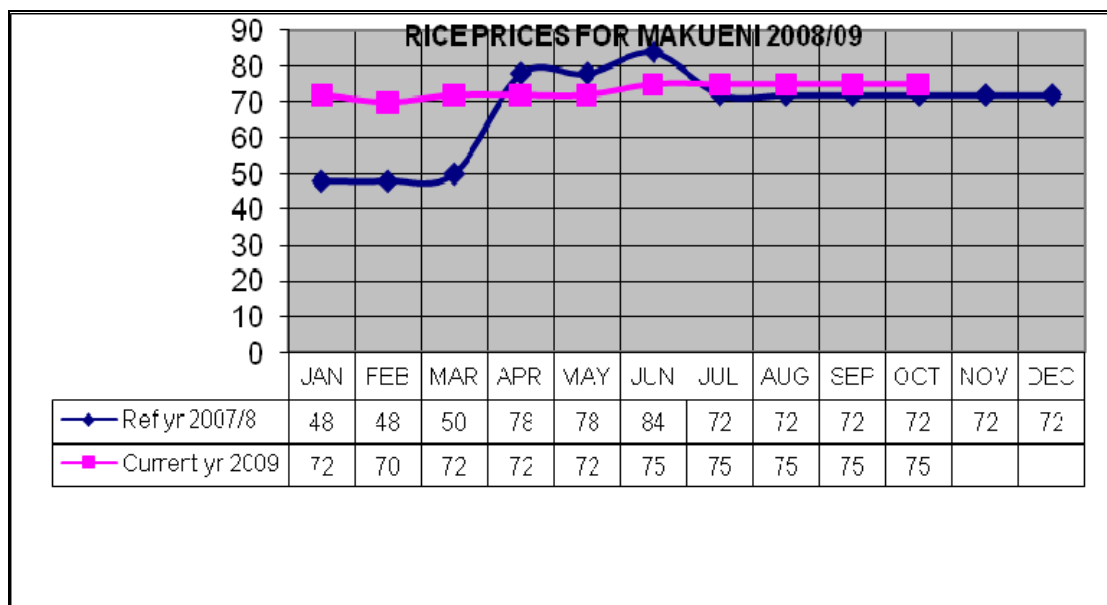
3.3.2 Beans prices



* N=360

- Bean prices almost doubled over the month to Ksh 150 per kilo compared to Ksh80 in September. The price was also way above the same period last year.
- This was an abnormal occurrence at the time of the year.

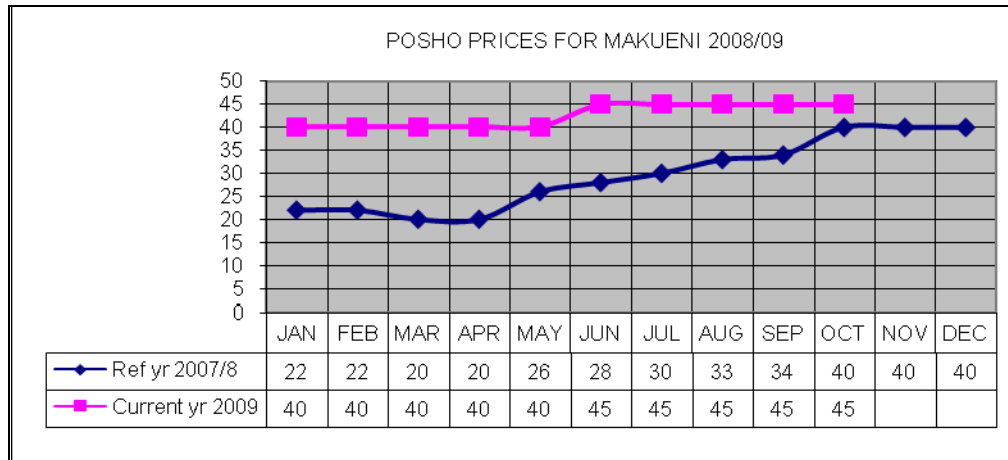
3.3.3 Rice prices



* N=360

- Prices of rice stagnated over the month at Ksh 75 per kilo but were still above last year's prices.
- This was an abnormal occurrence at the time of the year and could be attributed to increase in prices of other food commodities.

3.3.4 Posho prices



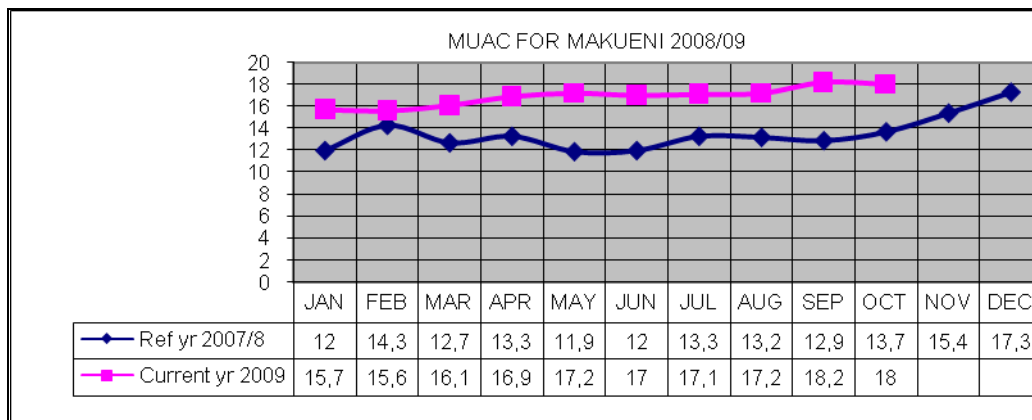
* N=360

- Posho prices stagnated at Ksh 45 per kilo but were still higher than the same period last year. The stability was attributed to stagnation of whole maize prices and continuous supply of relief foods.

4.0 Human welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

4.1 Nutrition status

Nutrition status of children below five years in Makueni district in October 2009 (MUAC<135mm)



*N =1502

- The nutrition status of children below five years slightly improved compared to last month but within the expected margin due to continuous supply of Unimix and CSP in the health facilities.
- The percentage of those rated at risk of malnutrition was 18% compared to 18.2 in September.
- The increased food prices have caused some families skip and reduce the quality and quantity of meals and also there was lack of vegetables and fruits.
- Hardest hit divisions remained Kalawa, Nguu, Kathonzweni, Makindu, Kibwezi and Mtito-andei respectively.

4.2 Human health

- The number of sick people reported in health facilities increased due to HIV/ Aids and malnutrition.

5.0 Current interventions

- Relief food supplies were reported in hardest hit divisions in the larger Makueni district by G.O.K.
- The lead agencies Red-Cross and World Vision continued to assist in food distribution in the larger Makueni district.
- Vaccination against lumpy skin disease, black quarter and foot and mouth diseases was done in Kibwezi, Nzaui and Mbooni Districts.

6.0 Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- Ministry of Water and Public Health to conduct assessments to ascertain the suspected cases of cholera.
- Capacity building for lactating mothers to avoid kwashiorkor and other related diseases.
- Ministry of Agriculture to supply planting seeds.
- All primary schools in the district should be put under the regular school feeding programme.
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