

**News snaps**

**Publication ceremony**

SUNAMGANJ, Aug 14 : Publication ceremony of the Health Information Book-'98 was inaugurated here on Monday, reports UNB.  
Jointly organised by UNICEF and the district information office, the ceremony was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner M Iqbal Hossain. UNICEF representative M Salik, district Civil Surgeon MA Munim, Deputy Director of Agriculture Abdul Matalib, ADC M Enamul Haque, educationist Dhurjhati Kumar Basu and journalist Shaharuddin were present. District Information Officer M Abdul Gafur delivered the welcome address.

**Fire arms recovered : 1 held**

MYMENSINGH, Aug 14 : Police in separate drives recovered two fire arms and arrested a man in separate drives in the town here on Tuesday, reports UNB.  
Acting on a tip-off, police recovered a gun from the dining room of Jamia Ashrafia Madrassa at about 10:30 am, but none was arrested in this connection. In another drive police nabbed a youth named Siraj, 18, with a pistol from a brothel area situated at the centre of the town. Separate cases were filed against them.

**18 arrested in Khulna**

KHULNA, Aug 14 : Police arrested 18 people are seized fire arms from different parts of the district recently, reports UNB.  
Of them, Akram, Faruque Akand and Helal Farazi were arrested from Judge Court area in sadar thana with a foreign made 32 bore revolver and six rounds of bullets. A wanted criminal was nabbed from ferry ghat area in Sonadanga thana and Shamim, Ibrahim and Mosharrif Hossain were arrested from different parts of the metropolitan city. Separate cases have been filed with the police.

**Contrabands recovered**

RANGAMATI, Aug 14 : Officials of Chittagong unit of Narcotics Control Directorate in a surprise raid conducted recently at local Bonorupa Market recovered a good quantity of contrabands including foreign whisky, beer and phensidyl, reports BSS.  
Two persons were arrested for illegally possessing and trading the contraband in the shops. The arrested were identified as Shahidul Islam, 26, and Mohammad Ali Chowdhury, 28. Recovered contraband included eight bottles of foreign whisky, 27 bottles of dry gin, 66 cans of beer and 12 bottles of phensidyl. A case was lodged in this connection.

**1 killed, 3 hurt in Faridpur road accident**

FARIDPUR, Aug 14 : One person was killed and three others were injured in a road accident Monday evening in Goalchamat area of the town, reports BSS.  
According to police sources, a tempo, coming from Dohar in Dhaka with a bridal party, was hit by a loaded truck. The truck dashed the tempo which was badly damaged. One Palash, 17, was killed in the spot and three others received serious injury. The injured were shifted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital for treatment. Police seized the truck from the spot after it was abandoned by the driver. A case was registered with kotawali police in this connection.

**Timbers seized**

BANDARBAN, Aug 14 : Forest officials of Bandarban forest division have seized about 3,000 cubic feet of valuable timber including teak and garjon worth about Taka 12 lakh and arrested two persons from Tarasa in this connection during the last three days, reports BSS.  
Forest officials told that drives have been taken against the illegal extractors of timber from government reserve forests under Ruangchari thana. A case was filed with Bandarban police station.

**Two minor boys committed suicide**

SATKHIRA, Aug 14 : Two minor boys allegedly committed suicide in Kalganj thana of the district recently, reports BSS.  
They were identified as Rabiul Islam, 14, of village Dulabala and Bhogiroth Mondal, 15, of village Chanditola under Kalganj thana. Separate unnatural death cases were filed with the respective thana in this connection.

**Relief distributed among flood victims**

KUSHITIA, Aug 14 : Abdus Salam, Deputy Commissioner, Kushtia visited flood affected unions under Daulatpur thana recently.  
He was accompanied by Civil Surgeon, District Relief Officer and TNO, Daulatpur. The flood affected unions which the DC visited are Chilmari, Ramkrishnapur, Maricha and Philipnagar. The DC assured the flood victims all possible help. District relief officer said that three persons lost their lives due to flood. Water of the Padma is receding and flood situation is improving. So far, 74,000 tonnes of rice, 2,500 pieces of shares and cash of Taka 27600 were distributed among the flood affected people, the relief officer added.

**Breast-Feeding Week observed**

MADARIPUR, Aug 14 : Breast-Feeding Week '98 was observed in Madaripur district through elaborate programmes, reports BSS.  
The programmes included procession and discussion. A colorful procession participated by people from all walks of life and government officials was brought out on the town streets led by Arun Kanti Biswas, Civil Surgeon-in-charge. The discussion meeting, organised by Madaripur Civil Surgeon office, was held in the sadar hospital office premises with medicine consultant Dr Rashidul Islam in the chair.

**Body recovered**

JAMALPUR, Aug 14 : Two bodies of a young woman and a minor boy were recovered from Mochhimpur village in sadar thana recently, reports UNB.  
Being informed by the local people, railway police recovered the bodies from near a railway track. The bodies were sent to hospital morgue for autopsy.

**Phensidyl seized**

MADARIPUR, Aug 14 : Rajoir thana police seized 389 bottles of Indian Phensidyl and 80 packets of cumin-seed from Takerhat bus stand under Rajoir thana recently, reports BSS.  
Police arrested two women in this connection. The arrested women are Jahanara Begum, 36, and Jhuma Begum, 18. A case was filed with Rajoir thana in this connection.

**Road mishaps claimed 115 in 2 dists in '97**

SYLHET, Aug 14 : Some 115 people were killed and 180 injured in road accidents in Sylhet and Sunamganj districts in 1997, reports UNB.  
According to BRTA sources, the victims include people of all ages all sexes while the accidents mainly involve buses, trucks, tempos and motor cycles. The reasons behind the accidents include driving by unskilled drivers, faulty vehicles and rough competition on the roads and highways. The process of arresting those responsible for the accidents and disposing of the cases are very slow which, local people said, encouraging the number of accidents.

**Valuables worth Tk 2 lakh looted**

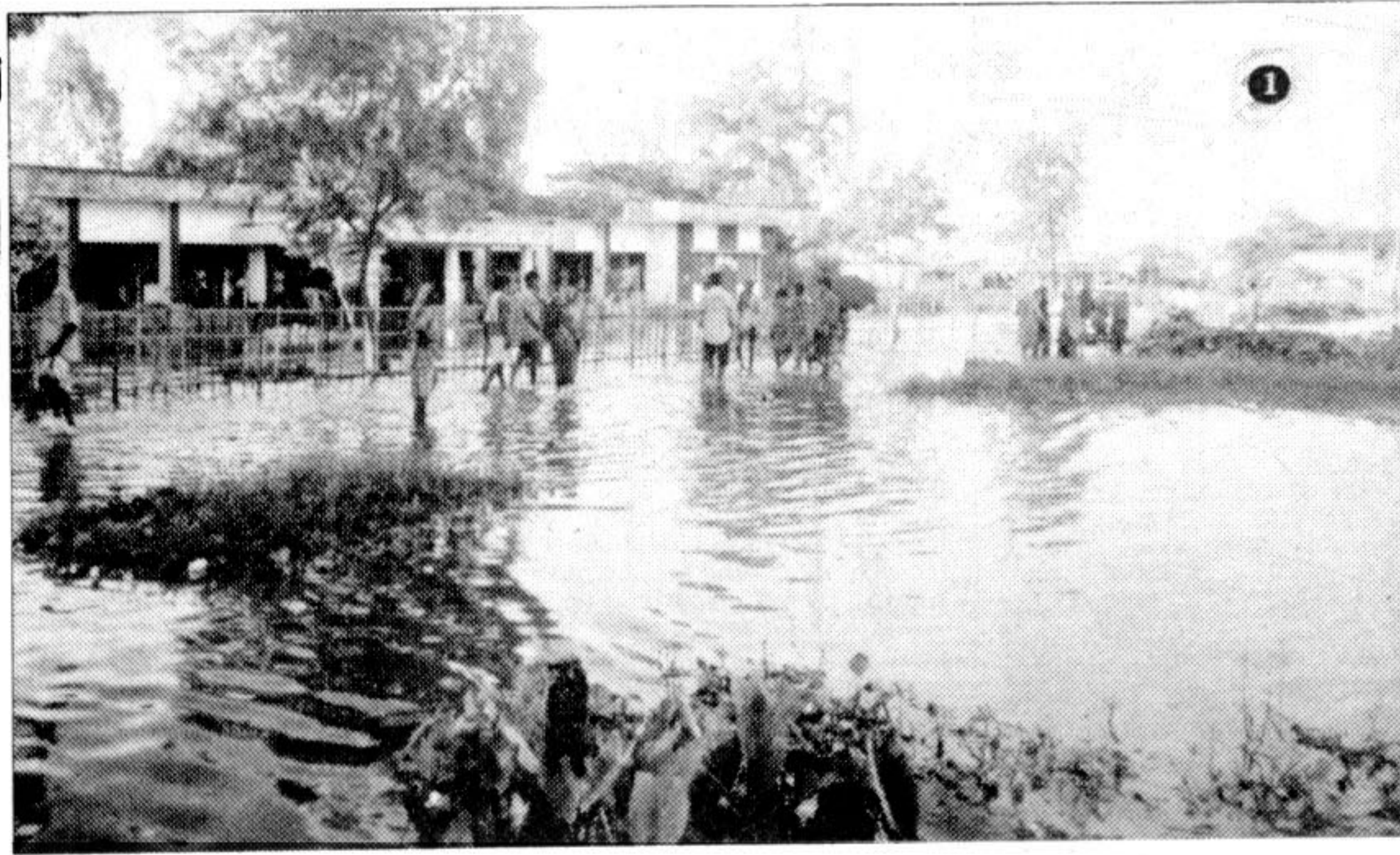
JESSORE, Aug 14 : A gang of armed dacoits stormed the local C and B office and decamped with cash and valuables worth about Tk 2 lakh on Thursday night, reports UNB.  
Witnesses said the gang of some 20 masked dacoits entered into the office by breaking the lock and keys and looted valuables from the its eight rooms. The dacoits also beat night guard Abdul Gani mercilessly who was later rushed to the general hospital in a critical condition. A case was filed with the Kotwali police.

**3 killers get life-term**

LALMONIRHAT, Aug 14 : A court here on Sunday sentenced three men to life term and four to three-year imprisonment for killing a local Awami League leader in 1995, reports UNB.  
District and Sessions Judge Soumendra Sarkar gave the verdict of the sensational Nabi Baks murder case in presence of thousands of curious people. Those sentenced to life term are: Akabbar Ali, 65, Shamsul Haq, 50, and Abu Bakar, 55. Jahangir was awarded three years' rigorous imprisonment while Entajul, 40, Jabbar, 50, and Fazu, 25, to three years in jail.

**Arrest condemned**

KHAGRACHHARI, Aug 14 : Parbataya Sarbadaliya Oikya Parishad strongly condemned the arrest of its leader Muhammad Badsha Member, reports UNB.  
Police again arrested Badsha from Hospital area of the town on Monday night. Badsha, who was earlier arrested in two cases, had been released on bail recently. In a joint statement, Parishad leaders Wadud Bhuyan, Harun-or-Rashed and Abdul Momen condemned the arrest and demanded his immediate release.



SYLHET: 1 Flood waters have remained stagnant at Jagannathpur thana headquarters in Sunamganj district. 2 A view of village Lakshmipur in Kanaighat thana which has been inundated by flood water.



Star photo by Iqbal Siddiquee

**Alleged political influence in leasing out rural bazars**

NATORE, Aug 14: The government is being deprived of about Tk 50 lakh as revenue earning due to political influence in leasing out rural bazars of the district, reports UNB.  
The authorities have leased out 146 hats and bazars for the current Bangla year of 1,405 out of the total 151 at Tk 2 crore 25.96 lakh.  
The earning last year was Tk one crore 70.20 lakh.  
Local people alleged that some influential political figures have manipulated the process of leasing out the markets thus depriving the government of more revenue earning.  
They said the revenue from the hats and bazars normally register a rise by 10 per cent every year. But, they said, this year there is not much increase in the earning due to undue influence.  
They reportedly prevented some parties from taking part in the leasing bid and took the markets in their names.

**No sub-registrar in Jamalpur, Melandaha thanas**

JAMALPUR, Aug 14: The post of the sub-registrar in Sadar and Melandaha thanas here have been lying vacant for long causing sufferings to the people, reports UNB.  
The people who come here everyday for the purpose of land registration and other registration-related necessities have to suffer a lot due to the absence of the Sub-registrar.  
The office of Sadar thana, one of the busiest land registration office in the district, used to register about 20,000 land documents every year.  
Registration activities had been suspended for long in the thana causing serious problem for the land sellers and buyers as well as deed writers.  
The authorities recently issued an order on the Sub-registrar of Madarganj to work in Sadar thana of the district for three days in a week.  
Another Sub-registrar has been asked to work in Melandaha in a similar arrangement, official sources said.

**Noakhali sub-station can't telecast programme**

FENI, Aug 14: About 60 lakh viewers of four districts of the region have been deprived of watching BTV programmes for a month due to some technical problems, reports UNB.  
BTV sources at Noakhali sub-station said the TV transmitter here cannot telecast the programme as the cable feeder remained inoperative since July 8.  
But the viewers alleged, the authorities are yet to take any remedial measures in this regard. Feni, Noakhali, Chandpur and Laxmipur districts into uncertainty.  
Besides, the Engineering Manager of Noakhali sub-station had been suspended after two days of the technical fault and the final match of the World Cup soccer was transmitted with special arrangement, they added.  
The viewers of the region urged the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to resume transmission without further delay.

**SI of police hurt by terrorists**

JHENIDAH, Aug 14: A police officer of Harinakunda thana was critically injured in an attack by terrorists near Noapara bridge on Wednesday, reports UNB.  
Police said the terrorist attacked SI Din Mohamad, 40, with lethal weapons while he was returning to the thana after investigating a case at Kanayadaha village.  
He was rushed to the thana health complex and later shifted to Sadar hospital in a critical condition.

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**Erosion renders 3,411 families homeless in Madaripur Pabna district suffers a loss of Taka 15 crore in Agri-sector due to flood**

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Aug 14: In the Agriculture sector, Pabna district suffered a loss of Taka 15 crore approximately so far due to flood. The target of cultivation of high-yielding variety Transplanted Aman paddy in the district is not likely to be achieved this year due to the same reason. The target of cultivation of the above mentioned crop might reach only about 45 per cent of the fixed one.  
It was disclosed by the Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Department, Pabna recently. According to the official, a target was fixed for bringing 34,728 hectares of land under High-Yielding Variety Transplanted Aman cultivation programme this year. The target of production was fixed at 85,027 metric tons. Nine thanas of Pabna district have been affected by flood.  
A total of 49 unions under the aforesaid thanas have been affected.  
Standing crops on 638 hectares of land have been damaged completely. Over 16,000 metric tons of crops have been destroyed fully.  
Damages caused to other sectors like communication, education, religious institutions, houses, hats and bazars are yet to be assessed.  
BSS reports from Madaripur: Erosion by the river Padma and Arial Khan left 3,411 families homeless in Shibchar thana of the district during the last two weeks.  
The district officials said the erosion ravaged unions are Utrail, Shiruail, Nelokhi, Matbarerchar, Katalbari and San-

**Loadshedding grips S-region again**

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Aug 14: Severe loadshedding has gripped again the entire southern region. As the supply of power decreases time of loadshedding increases in the region causing immense suffering to the people.  
According to the PDB sources here, power supply now is varying between 10MW to 15MW against the requirement of nearly 40MW in the Barisal PDB zone.  
The Barisal PDB zone consists of Barisal, Barguna and Jhalakathi including some parts of Pirojpur and Madaripur districts having 18 feeders in the transmission lines.  
Barguna, a coastal district is the worst affected area as it needs nearly 6MW power supply at a time which is difficult to supply from Barisal. As a result loadshedding continues from six to eight hours a day in Barguna, while it is four to six hours in Jhalakathi and in Barisal it is at least 2 hours feedewise alternatively.  
According to sources, loadshedding prevailed in Barguna for days together recently as the power distribution lines were disrupted at Betagi thana area due to tornado that swept over different thana areas of Barguna.  
According to Load Despatching Centre (LDC) at Khulna, only 8MW power is being generated in the Turbine Generator

**Extortionists harassing labourers of Bholaganj Stone Quarry**

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 14: Organised gangs of miscreants are extorting huge amount of money from the biggest stone quarry of the country, Bholaganj Stone Quarry in Companyganj thana for a long time.  
The allegation was brought by the leaders of Companyganj thana Stone Quarry (Carriers' Association) in a press conference held at Sylhet Press Club recently.  
The leaders alleged, the miscreants in connivance with a section of members of the law and order agencies are extorting about Taka 3 lakh every day from 20,000 labourers engaged in collection of a huge quantity of stones from the quarry. They alleged that, no action had been taken by Companyganj Police even after repeated complaints lodged with them by a large number of labourers. It made the criminals more powerful, the leaders said adding, some big shots who had made their wealth through illegal extortion, were asked to show the sources of income through written notice from the Thana Nirbhai Officer last year. However, they gave no answer to the notice.  
Giving a list of toll collectors, the leaders said, when any labourer declines to pay the toll, the extortionists swoop on him and begin torturing physically. Even, there are some armed gangs who work for the gang leaders in the quarry. It is observed, very frequently the gangsters take away spades and other things from the labourers on refusal of payment of the tolls.  
They further alleged, some big shots claiming ownership of some lands within the quarry areas, collect additional tolls from the labourers for years together.  
The leaders also alleged, af-

ter repeated complaints with the district administration and agitation programme of the labourers, a mobile team headed by a First class Magistrate was sent to the quarry area by the district administration in the month of June. The team caught redhanded as many as 13 extortionists from the quarry area with the help of labour leaders.  
The leaders said, the government has been earning crores of taka through leasing out of the quarry. So, there should be a peaceful atmosphere in the area for the sake of government's revenue earning, they opined.  
The written statement in the press conference was read out by Awami League leader Humayun Kabir Mosabbir, while leaders of Awami League, BNP, Jamaat -e-Islami and Jatiya Party were also present.

**Banana production declines in Magura**

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, Aug 14: The production of banana has declined in the current year despite bright prospect of its cultivation in the district and its adjoining areas, banana growers said.  
According to the growers, a huge quantity of bananas are grown in the district and its adjoining districts like Jhenidah, Kushtia, Chuadanga, and Meherpur every year. The growers get a lot of money from this cash crop every year.  
Recurrent natural calamities like tornado, drought and one kind of virus disease, lack of patronisation and motivation work have been attributed to the reduction of banana production in the district. As a result, the price of bananas has increased abnormally.  
According to the Horticulture Department, popular varieties of banana including Sagar, Sabri, Champa are suitable in the western areas of the country. Banana growers in Jhenidah district initially cultivated the Sagar variety. But due to low demand of this variety in the market they had to cultivate the Sabri variety largely.  
While talking to a group of banana cultivators in Alankhali area under Magura sadar thana they told this correspondent that they were inspired to cultivate banana in their high land from the growers of Garagonj, Kaligonj Sheikhpura areas of Jhenidah district about a decade back.  
Within a short time it became a popular cash crop for the farmers. The banana growers of the western districts of the country are able to meet a portion of demand of this delicious and rich food valued fruit in the country.  
They informed that despite bright prospect of the main cash crop, the production has been decreasing gradually due to manifold reasons. Many banana growers in the areas are not following the rule of rotation of crops. They usually cultivate again and again the same crop year after year due to possession of small land. As a result, the production are being declined. On the other hand, a section of marginal farmers are not able to use requisite quantity of fertiliser due to lack of fund. They do not get loan from banks for this purpose.  
The banana growers further informed, the banana production has been seriously hampered during the current year in their areas due to frequent storms in the nor' western season. Besides, a huge number of banana plants had been damaged due to virus diseases. Many banana field of Kaligonj areas in Jhenidah district had been seriously destroyed for the aforementioned reasons.  
According to the market observers, 100 full cluster of a banana plant are being sold at Taka 16,000 to Taka 25,000, according to size of banana in the wholesale markets of Kaligonj, Salkupa, Ichakhada and Gopalpur. Chapa Sabri, the small sized variety is being sold at Taka 6,000 to Taka 8,000 per hundred clusters, market observers said.  
The local experts and agriculturists apprehended the banana cultivation, one of the most important cash crop in the western region of the country would be seriously affected in near future if the Agriculture Extension Department did not take proper initiative to promote the cultivation of the cash crop.

**In N-region Cold storages using poisonous insecticides**

NAOAGAN, Aug 14: The cold storage in the country's northern region have been using poisonous insecticides to protect potato causing serious health hazards, reports UNB.  
The injurious insecticides like Carbomil and D-Chloroves are sprayed on thousands of tons of potato in 66 cold storages of 16 districts in the region at regular intervals.  
Experts here said that these chemicals and other insecticides including Organo-chlorine and DDT powder which are being used by the potato farmers in the crop fields have serious adverse effect on human body.  
Experts with Agriculture Extension Department (AED) said that the poisons contained in the insecticides which the farmers use in their fields remain effective for at least one year.  
The cold storage owners are using the same kind of chemicals to prevent the attack of insects, thus making the preserved potato more poisonous, they said.  
These kinds of insecticides have already been banned in most of the countries, said the experts adding that in our country the authorities issued order to confine the use of such chemicals in only jute and sugarcane fields.  
But the farmers, unaware of the health hazards caused by these materials, are using these in their fields, they observed.  
Local people said they have been suffering from various diseases like chronic dysentery, skin diseases, damage of eyesight and irregularities in the intestines after taking the potato preserved in the cold storage.  
Vendors selling potato in different hats and bazars in the northern region complained that they feel dizzy and a vomiting tendency as there is a pun-



NATORE: Liaquat Bridge on the river Narod is in bad shape. Star photo

**Private clinics in Narsingdi not following standard of health service**

From Our Correspondent

NARSINGDI, Aug 14: Private clinics and pathological laboratories in the district have been rendering sub-standard health services to the patients, reports UNB.  
The number of such clinics and pathological laboratories is increasing day by day though the standard of service is decreasing, alleged the local people and the patients.  
They said the clinics, most of them run by the doctors working in different government hospitals, are not following government rules and ordinances.  
These are not following the standard of providing one doctor, three nurses and 80 square feet of space for each of the 10 beds, they added.  
Besides, there is shortage of necessary equipment and lack of hygienic conditions in the clinics, said the patients.  
The clinics charge abnormally high fee from the poor patients from the remote villages.  
Local people have also alleged that doctors of the government hospitals usually discourage the patients to stay in the hospital and refer them to the private clinics and patho-

logical laboratories.  
Pathological laboratories are also doing thriving business charging high rate for various tests.  
But there is allegation that the results of the tests are not always correct as a very few laboratories have experienced medical technicians.  
The sufferers said the reports vary abnormally even in case of conducting the same test in different laboratories.  
Local people have urged the authorities to take necessary steps in these regards and mitigate their sufferings.