

## News snaps

## New stone discovered

BANDARBAR, Feb 13: A rare type of stone, similar to diamond, was discovered at Bakichhara in Sadar thana here, reports UNB.

A source of the district administration said two natives Sukkur Ali and Monghol Marma informed the matter immediately after they found the stone. District Administration brought the matter to the knowledge of Geological Survey of Bangladesh (GSB). Deputy Director of GSB Nehal Uddin visited the spot and collected soil and a few pieces of the rare stone as sample on February 1. He told that after testing the stone and the soil it would be easy for them to identify whether it is diamond or any other metal. With the spread of the news, a huge number of curious people are gathering at Bakichhara to see the rare stone.

## Training programme for landless

TANGAIL, Feb 13: A week-long training programme for landless women on maintenance of rural road and tree plantation concluded on Thursday in BRDP auditorium here, reports BSS.

Twenty-five landless women participated in the training programme. The rural development project-14 (RDP-14), Tangail organised the training. Engineer Mohammad Shakhat Hossain conducted the programme.

## Annual drama festival

MANIKGANJ, Feb 13: Annual drama festival of Gaoitri Smriti Theatre, a group theatre organisation of the district, was held on Sunday at Jhikta in Harirampur upazila, reports BSS.

A discussion on the group theatre activities was held on the occasion. Dr Selim al-Deen, a noted playwright and president of Bangladeshi Gram Theatre, attended the function as the chief guest. Presided over by Shamsi Hazari, the function was addressed, among others, by Humayun Kabir Hiru, Engineer Nurdin Ahmed, Aftabuddin Biswas, Ranjan Shahi, Talib Hossain, M Ali Kader, and Principal Selimuzzaman Khan. A play, written by Selim al-Deen, was staged on the occasion.

## Plan to reconstruct roads

MADRIPUR, Feb 13: The pourasava authorities here have taken up a programme to reconstruct and renovate 10 roads under its town infrastructure development programme-2, reports UNB.

According to officials, the project was taken at a cost of Tk 40.65 lakh. Asian Development Bank will provide the fund. The roads which will be repaired included Kazi Mastan road, Shahid Bachchu road, Ghanpara road, TB Clinic road, main road of the town, Kulpadhi road, Chermuguria road and Amin Hawlader road. After completion of the project, the internal road communication of the municipality will be improved to a great extent. Officials said almost all the 35 roads of the pourasava were badly damaged in the last year's devastating flood. The extent of infrastructure damage in the flooding has been estimated at about Tk 20 crore.

## Fodder crisis in Iswardi

ISWARDI, Feb 13: A serious fodder crisis has been prevailing here since the last devastating floods, reports APB.

Many of the farmers have sold out their cattle at throw-away prices because of the crisis. Cattle in 71 unions and five municipalities in Pabna district are estimated at about 9.29 lakh. Farmers in different areas say, they sowed khesari seeds for fodder, but the yield was not good as seeds got damaged in wet soil after the floods. District Agricultural Extension Department said the target for khesari cultivation was 37,50 thousand acres, but the cultivation was less because of high price of the seed.

## Special agri-loan disbursed

MEHERPUR, Feb 13: Kirishi Bank, Meherpur region, disbursed Tk 1,500,000 as special agriculture loan out of the total target of Tk 2,500,000 in two thanas of the district till January 31st, in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to bank sources, over 2250 farmers received the loan through 10 branches of the bank in Meherpur region. The loan was given to buy seeds, seedlings, fertilisers, insecticides and other agri-inputs. The Krishi Bank, so far, realised outstanding loan amounting to Tk 42,10,000 in the current fiscal year from the farmers.

## Attack on Shamsur Rahman protested

JHALAKATHI, Feb 13: The Ark Shahitay Parishad and Sampriti Jubo Parishad, both local cultural organisations, jointly brought out a procession and held a rally in the town protesting the attack on poet Shamsur Rahman, reports APB.

Chanting various slogans, they paraded the main streets of the town and later held a rally in front of the local press club. The rally was addressed, among others, by Bahauddin Golap, Abubakar Siddik, Maniklal Ghosh, Mamunur Rashid, Mainul Islam Sagar, Kamal Hossen Sardar, Mahmud Hasan, Saiful Islam Saikat.

## Boro farming progressing

CHUADANGA, Feb 13: The cultivation of Boro paddy of the current season in all the four thanas here is in full-swing, reports BSS.

According to an official source, in the current season a total of 21,800 hectares will be brought under Boro cultivation, of which 4,500 hectares will be brought under cultivation on Chuadanga thana, 6,500 hectares on Alamdanga thana, 6,800 hectares on Damurhanga thana and 4,000 hectares on Jibannagar thana. So far, 70 per cent of the target of cultivation has been completed and the rest is expected to be completed by the current month.

## Meeting deferred

KHAGRACHHARI, Feb 13: A meeting of the Task Force on making list of internal refugees in Chittagong Hill Tracts, scheduled to be held on Tuesday, has been deferred, reports UNB.

The meeting, apparently rescheduled in the wake of 48-hour nationwide hartal called by allied opposition, is likely to be held at Bandarban on February 28. Some one lakh applications have been submitted by both tribal and non-tribal families, mostly from Rangamati and Khagrachhari districts, for rehabilitation as internal refugees. The Task Force was learnt to have fallen in trouble to deal with a huge number of applications as PCJSS raised objection regarding rehabilitation of Bengali settlers as internal refugees. PCJSS alleged that the Task Force has included the affected Bengali settlers in the rehabilitation list. But they said only tribessmen were supposed to be identified as internal refugees as per the CHT peace treaty.

## 23,972 mt of paddy produced

RANGAMATI, Feb 13: A total of 23,972 metric tons of Aman paddy were produced 10,450 hectare of land in 10 thanas here, reports BSS.

According to the Agricultural Extension Directorate, Rangamati, the target for Aman paddy was set at 25,525 metric tons from 10,450 hectares of land. Shortfall was 1,553 metric tons. Among this, 23,160 metric tons of paddy were High Yielding Variety (HYV) and 812 metric tons were local variety. The thana-wise production of paddy was Sadar 1,713 in tons, Niamchar-2,161 in tons, Kaokhali-3,705 in tons, Barkali-1,405 in tons, Zurrachar-994 in tons, Langadu-1,474 in tons, Baghaichari-6,228 in tons, Kapital-3538 in tons, Razsthali-2,480 in tons and Belachari-274 in tons. The highest producer of paddy was Baghaichari thana.

## Advocacy meeting on leprosy

RANGAMATI, Feb 13: District level advocacy meeting on leprosy was held at Civil Surgeon's conference room here recently in connection with the National Leprosy Eradication Programme, reports BSS.

The meeting was presided over by Civil Surgeon, Rangamati. Dr Supriya Barua, Rangamati Zila Parishad Chairman Ching Kue Roza attended the meeting as the chief guest. The chief guest said that the government had taken a programme to eradicate leprosy from the country by the year 2000. He had urged all to lend cooperation to the government officials to make the programme a success. Among others, Press Club Secretary Shakkaw Hussain Rubel, Kaokhali Thana Health and Family Planning Officer Dr Nazrul Islam, Health Education Officer Moniruddin Ahmed and Narangiri Government High School Headmaster Mohammad Alaudin spoke on the occasion.

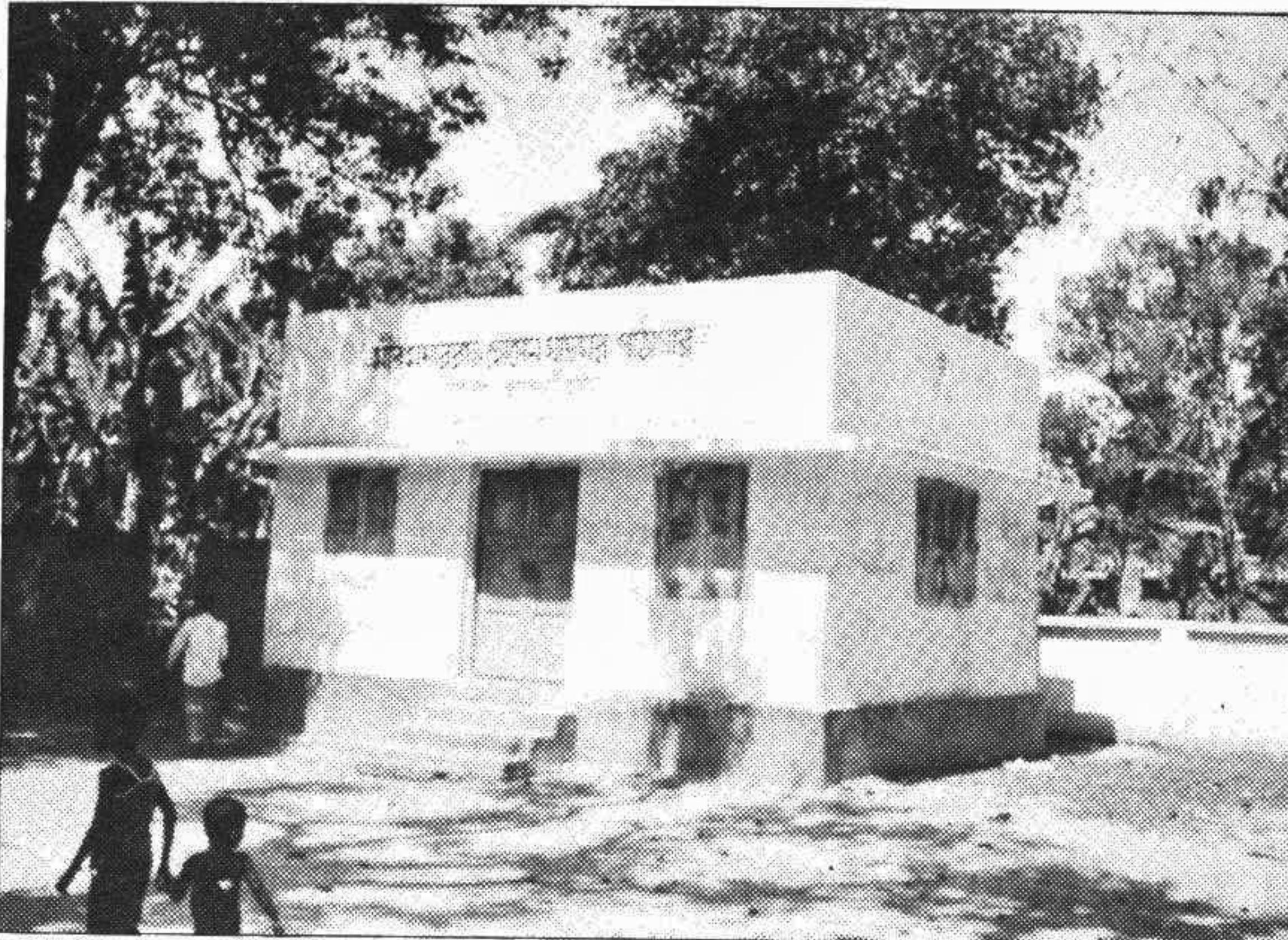
## Training on management development

CIMILLA, Feb 13: A 12-day training course on management development has begun on Sunday at the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) here, reports BSS.

Dr Mohammad Solaiman, Additional Director General of Director, BARD and Jasim Uddin Ahmed, Course Director, among others, spoke on the occasion. Twenty managerial personnel have been participating in the training.

# Memory of Mir Mosarraf Hossain being lost into oblivion

From Fokhrun Nesa



KUSHTIA: Mir Mosarraf Hossain's memory is about to be lost in oblivion due to lack of proper preservation. At present there is only a museum and a library at Lahanipara, three miles off Kushtia town.

Calcutta. Earlier, he studied at Kirsnanagar Collegiate School.

He worked as manager of Gazni Estate in Tangail district where he spent a few years. He was a proud father of five sons and daughters. He breathed his last on December 19, 1911 at village Pangsa.

Mosarraf Hossain is still remembered for his memorable book 'Bishad Sindhu' which is treated as a masterpiece to all. During his early life, he used to write in Gram Barta Prakashika of Kangal Harinath Mozumdar and Sangbad Provakar of poet Iswar Gupta.

He came closer with them and exchanged ideas. He also published a monthly magazine in memory of his first wife. Later he published a weekly paper 'Hitakari'.

Such a great man was not honoured befittingly as no monument was built near his grave to preserve his memory by the authorities concerned till now, opined the local elite.

—Star photo

## 99 murdered in Feni in 2 yrs

FENI, Feb 13: Some 99 murders including 32 owing to political rivalry were committed here during the last two and a half years, reports UNB.

According to police, press reports and local sources, the murders were committed in different parts of the district from July 1996 to December 1998.

Besides, other crimes including 300 robbery, 500 mugging and looting, 200 riot, 45 highway robbery, 500 burglary, 50 abduction, 35 rape were committed during the period.

The period was marked by political violence and rivalry that left about 200 people in five crippled.

Over 100 houses were gutted during the clashes between the rivals. Besides, about 300 families in Fuqzai and Darganbhuiyan thanas fled away their localities out of fear.

But the sources said cases were filed with the police much less than the incidents.

The first political murder since the present government came to office was reported from Laskarhat of Sadar thana. On December 3, 1996, a Juba League worker Abu Ahmed Nabi was shot dead by the rivals.

A total of six political murders were committed only in December that year. Of the victims, four were the activists of Awami League while the rest two were the supporters of BNP.

In 1997, the total number of political killing was 16, out of which nine victims belonged to Awami League while seven to BNP.

In 1998, six Awami League supporters and four BNP activists were killed.

The incidents of murder, violence and attacking each other have been going on in the district with no sign of improvement.

People of the district are passing their days in panic in the absence of security of life and property, they added.

## Credit programme

RAJBARI, Feb 13: Four state-run banks have taken up schemes to disburse farm credit about Tk 25.72 crore among flood-hit farmers of the district in the current fiscal, reports UNB.

Officials said Sonali, Agrani, Janata and Krishibank have already distributed Tk 16.85 crore among 16,520 farmers to cultivate Boro, wheat, potato, onion, lentil, sugarcane, vegetables and to purchase cattle.

They said the credit programme would continue till June this year.

Meanwhile, the banks have realised outstanding loan amounting to about Tk 8.19 crore.

Besides, the District Council has undertaken a number of development projects, involving Tk 47 lakh.

The projects, to be implemented in the current fiscal, include reconstruction of damaged roads, carpeting, construction of passenger sheds and renovation of dakhungolaw.

Another report adds: Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) will implement a scheme to develop five roads in the current financial year.

Under RD-project-4, LGED will implement the scheme at a cost of Tk 85 lakh.

Works on the scheme include carpeting of Gabtali-Shayestapur, Pangsha-Langalbad, Baghara-Ahaldipur, Sonapur-Ghoramara and Pangsha-Jashai roads.

## Patients cheated by 'brokers' at Faridpur Medical College Hospital

FARIDPUR, Feb 13: Patients coming to Faridpur Medical College Hospital for treatment are being cheated by 'brokers', allegedly engaged by some doctors, reports APB.

The brokers woo the patients to go to private chambers of doctors and have their pathological tests done at laboratories run by them.

Although outdoor patients start crowding the hospital from noon, no doctor is available after 2 pm on most of the days.

Only one doctor looks after all emergency and indoor patients from afternoon till about 9 next morning.

Sometimes doctors themselves advise the patients to have their blood, stool and urine tested at diagnostic centres owned by them.

Doctors are using some of the cabins as their office chambers, leaving only two with four beds for patients.

The room beside the cabins is used as 'sick-room' for class VI employees. The sterilisation room is beside the 'sick-room'.

Although diarrhoea patients are to be kept in an isolated ward, there is no such arrangement.

Hospital sources told that mostly surgery patients come to this hospital, but the operation theatre is yet to be developed.

Although the hospital needs 10 anaesthetist machines, it has only six, of which three are out of order, the sources said.

Of 12 sucker machines, two are in workable condition. Of the two Ultrasonogram machines, only one is working.

Most of the patients have to have their pathological tests done from diagnostic centres

outside. Dental patients simply have to return disappointed, because of lack of doctors and treatment facilities.

The hospital lacks a doctors' dressing room and an adequately developed blood bank.

Administrative officials of the hospital allegedly remain away most of the time.

Although it was planned to be upgraded to a 500-bed hospital long ago, no step has yet been taken. Most of the sanctioned posts of doctors and other employees continue to remain vacant. The existing ones have also no residential quarters.

Administrative officials of the hospital is named a 'medical college hospital' students complain that they are not given the minimum facility required for their academic pursuit.

DAUDKANDI; Veteran freedom fighter Maj Gen (Retd) Subid Ali Bhuyian speaking at an Islamic conference on Thursday as the chief guest at Chosai Dharibari SB Dakhil Madrasa ground here. Al-haj Abdul Kader Molla presided over the conference, while it was addressed by Maulana Abdul Mannan, Maulana Ruhul Amin, Abdul Mannan Master, Dr Abdur Razzaq Mojumder and Shafiqul Islam Master.

## 135 suicide incidents recorded in Narsingdi last year

NARSINGDI, Feb 13: Local police recorded 135 incidents of alleged suicide as cases of unnatural death in the district in 1998, local people alleged, reports APB.

Police deliberately listed these as suicide cases because they did not want to investigate the deaths, it was alleged.

When asked, police sources however said that relatives of murdered persons deliberately registered murders as cases of suicide to escape retaliation by murderers.

Many also prefer not to report the incidents to police to avoid 'defamation' of the family.

Most of the murders and suicides were due to family feuds, land disputes, unsuccessful love affairs and demands for dowry.

Golam Sarwar, Chairman of the Hainmania Union Parishad here while talking to this correspondent claimed police tended to register cases of suicide and murder as unnatural deaths.

One Shahidullah Bhuiyan, a social worker in the area told

that in most cases, murderers threaten the relatives of the victims with dire consequences if they file a case.

Another social worker, Mostafa Kamal Ahmed, said speedy autopsy of the bodies could help reduce such deaths.

According to police records, of the total 42 incidents of alleged suicide in Raipura thana, 30 took place in Sadar, 28 in Shibpur thana, 15 in Palash thana, 10 in Manohardi thana and 10 in Belabo thana during the year.

Among the dead, 25 in Raipura thana had allegedly committed suicide by taking poison and 12 by hanging themselves.

In the Sadar thana, 15 people allegedly committed suicide by taking poison and 11 hanged themselves.

It is gathered that of the total number of people who allegedly committed suicide, 73 were men and 63 women.

Most of them belonged to 16-35 age groups.

## Winter vegetables farming now popular among Narsingdi farmers

NARSINGDI, Feb 13: Farmers there are now getting more interest in cultivating winter vegetables than other crops as those are more profitable, reports APB.

Cultivation of early varieties of high-yielding cauliflower, cabbage, potato, brinjal, radish, tomato, spinach, bean and pumpkin takes less time than other traditional crops and are more profitable, farmers said.

Farmers Aftab Hossain and Tara Miah said they planted tomato seedlings in October and harvested the crop in December. They could sell those at Tk 30 per kg since their tomatoes were