

Man killed in land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

A man was beaten to death allegedly over a land dispute in Badarganj upazila of Rangpur on Saturday night.

The deceased was identified as Ohidul Islam, son of late Abdul Mojib of Kutubpur Sardarpara village in the upazila.

Police, quoting witnesses, said Ohidul had a dispute over land with Saiful Islam. They locked in an altercation on Saturday night over the issue. At one stage, Saiful and his family members started hitting Ohidul with bamboo sticks, leaving him dead on the spot.

Police recovered his body and sent it to Rangpur Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

A murder case was filed with Badarganj Police Station, said Shahin Alam, inspector of the police station.

Fake milk factory busted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Detective Branch (DB) of police in a drive seized huge quantity of fake milk and materials used for making it from a factory at Shihipur village in Sonatola upazila of the district early Sunday.

The law enforcers also arrested three people—Sharjit Ghosh, 20, Abdul Hannan, 20, and Sajib Kumar Ghosh, 22,—from the spot.

Police said acting on a tip-off, a team of DB police raided the house of one Abdul Mannan around 5:00am and seized 100 litres of fake milk, 20 litres of soybean oil and five blending machines used for making the spurious item.



Chief Judicial Magistrate Mohammad Shahidullah records statement of Santals as the latter appear before the judicial investigation team at Madarpur village in Gaibandha's Gobindaganj upazila yesterday to give evidence of torture on the community people during the administration's eviction drives on November 6 and 7.

PHOTO: STAR

Judiciary, cops start probe into torture on Santals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Two teams from the judiciary and the police have started investigation into the killing of three Santal men and torture on the community in Gobindaganj upazila under the district during eviction drives at Sahebganj farm belonging to Rangpur Sugar Mills on November 6 and 7.

A team of Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI), led by Akhter Hossain, additional superintendent of police of Bogra, and a judicial investigation committee led by Mohammed Shahidullah, chief judicial magistrate of Gaibandha, visited Madarpur and Joypurpara Santal villages in Gobindaganj yesterday as part of the investigations following a High Court order.

The PBI team reached Madarpur at 10:00am and gave a patience hearing as the evicted Santals narrated the incidents of killing and torture on their people, and looting and setting fire to their houses during the eviction drive.

The PBI team later visited Sahebganj sugarcane farm area.

"We have started investigation, visiting the areas and talking to Santals and other locals. On completion of the investigation, report will be submitted to the higher authorities concerned," head of team told the journalists.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Mohammed Shahidullah accompanied by Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Moinul Hasan Yousuf reached Madarpur at 11:00am.

They visited the spots of eviction and damaged houses and talked to the affected Santal families of Madarpur and Joypurpara villages. The committee collected pieces of evidence of the incident from the spot.

"I started investigation as per order of the High Court. The investigation will run by turns and the report will be duly submitted to the High Court," the chief judicial magistrate said.

On November 6 and 7, clashes involving farm labourers, Santals and police at

Sahebganj farm centring the policemen's eviction drive against Santals from the area left three Santal men killed and 30 people including nine policemen injured. During the eviction, arson and looting of Santal's houses took place.

On November 17, one Swapan Murmu of Rampura village filed a case against 600 unknown accused. On November 26, Thomas Hambrom filed another FIR accusing 33 named persons including lawmaker Principal Abul Kalam Azad, president of upazila unit of Awami League, and 600 unknown others.

Demanding justice for killing of Santal men, and looting and arson attack on the houses of Santals, and return of their ancestral lands, the community people undertook different programmes including procession.

Earlier on July 1, some 1500 Santal families from different areas occupied over a hundred acres of land at Sahebganj sugarcane farm, claiming it to be their forefather's property.

NATORE DIST COUNCIL POLLS

Vote buying alleged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Candidates in the district council elections in Natore are allegedly buying votes.

Jamil Hossain Milon, a candidate for member's post in the Natore district council election, alleged that another candidate Dilip Kumar is giving Tk 5,000 for each vote.

Dilip Kumar, however, refuted the allegation saying that he has no need to give money as he is a party nominated candidate.

Seeking anonymity, a member candidate of Tebaria Union Parishad alleged that a candidate gave him Tk 20,000 and made him promise to cast a vote in his favour.

Another member candidate alleged that two candidates gave him Tk 5,000 and Tk 10,000 for his vote.

Aminul Islam Huda, a candidate of Ward No 5 of Natore district council alleged that Akram Hossain, personal assistant of lawmaker Shafiqul Islam Shimul, and Mortuza Ali Bablu, joint secretary of Natore district unit of Awami League, threatened the voters to cast their votes in favour of Raisuddin Rubel at a meeting in Naldanga.

Anisur Rahman, secretary of Naldanga upazila unit of Chhatra League, and Anwar Hossain Mukul, secretary of the upazila unit of Jubo League, also made a similar allegation.

Power crisis to increase boro production cost

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Farmers in three unions of Jaldhaka upazila may face increased boro production cost this year as three deep tubewells of Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA) are yet to get power connection from Rural Electrification Board (REB).

Farmers in Dhormopal, Shimulbari and Golmunda unions may not be able to irrigate their land if the three deep tubewells do not get connection.

Abu Bakkar Siddique, manager-operator of a deep tubewell at Dhormopal union, said none of the 200 farmers in his group could transplant saplings due to lack of water.

Faruk Hossain of Dhormopal village said his paddy saplings are lying in the seedbed as he could not transplant those within one month

of sowing the seeds.

Farmers said if they could irrigate from deep tubewells, their expenditure would be only Tk 1,000 per bigha, but the cost would be around Tk 2,200 to Tk 2,500 for diesel-run shallow machines.

Assistant Engineer of BMDC in Nilphamari zone Alamgir Md Ruhul Islam said they have set up electric poles, strung a connection line with metallic wire and completed wiring of the machine rooms, and were waiting for connection from REB.

General Manager of REB in Nilphamari SM Hasanat Hasan said they had stopped giving connection to new irrigation power pumps as their old transmission lines and grids are overloaded.

"However, we have decided to give connection to three BMDA-owned deep tubewells this year on special consideration," the GM added.

To legalise child marriage!

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Under-aged Sadia was married to a young man of Shrirampur village, showing her to be marriageable by a registrar maintaining a fake register in Dumki upazila of the district.

Sixteen-year-old Sadia Akhter, daughter of Mohammad Ali of Jhatra village, was married to Rasel Mridha, 22, son of Anwer Hossain Mridha, on December 9 by marriage registrar Md Shafiqul Islam of Shrirampur union. In his book No-1 on page 90, Sadia was shown to be of marriageable age.

Sadia sat for the Junior Dakhil Examination this year from Khatra Jalisha Dakhil Madrasa and her date of birth is January 1, 2000.

In another case, Sharmin Akhter, 16, daughter of Abdul Jalil Talukder, will sit for the SSC examination in 2017 from Uttar Shrirampur High School. Though she is only 15-year-old (her date of birth is January 15, 2001) she was married to Khondokar Saleh Ahmed of Muradia village on August 31 this year. This marriage was also registered by Shafiqul Islam (Book No 2, Page 58).

Like in the cases of Sadia and Sharmin, many under-aged girls got married, and the marriage registrar registered those marriages illegally.

After getting information about the marriage of Sadia, Dumki UNO Md Hafizur Rahman rushed to the spot, but the marriage had been registered by

then. The UNO later seized two marriage registration books from Shafiqul's house. He went through both marriage registers and found a lot of irregularities.

Many pages were blank and new marriage registers had been opened before the previous ones were filled. New books can be opened only after the previous register becomes full.

Shafiqul appointed some other people to work as his assistants, which is illegal as he cannot appoint anybody for registering marriages, and each assistant used a separate register.

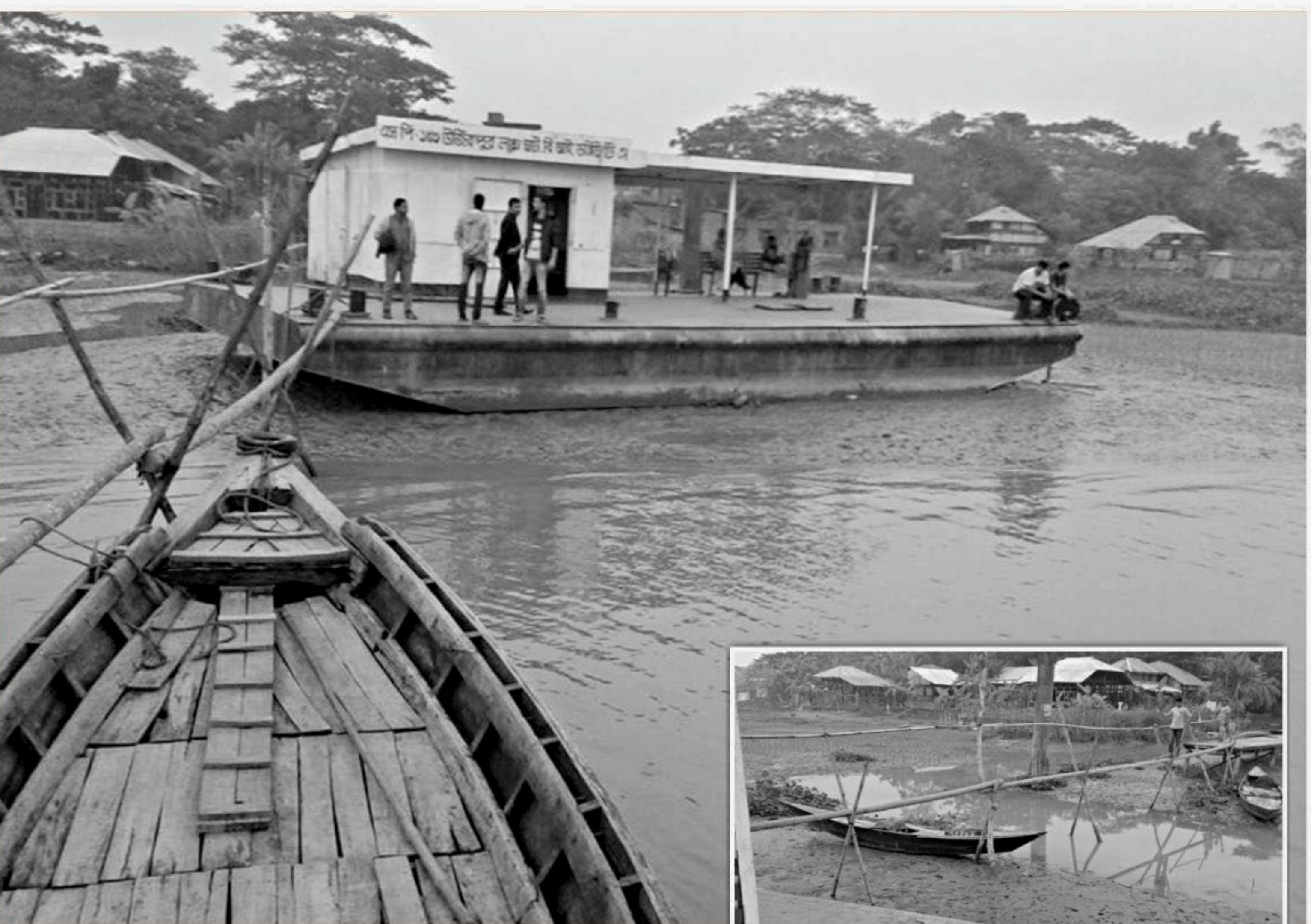
Moreover, Shafiqul is serving as assistant registrar at Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU), violating the law, the UNO said.

According to Bangladesh Gazette April-10/2011, a marriage registrar cannot work anywhere else except a non-government school, college or madrasa. But, violating this rule, Shafiqul took appointment as Shrirampur union marriage registrar from the law ministry about 20 years ago, a source said.

Narrating these irregularities, the UNO sent a complaint to the ministry concerned on December 20.

Shafiqul said, "I am not involved in the matter, but one of my assistants did it." He did not answer when asked if he could take an assistant for this job.

"I seized two marriage registers from Shafiqul Islam's house and found a lot of irregularities," the UNO said, adding that the registrar should be removed.



In absence of a gangway, this risky bamboo bridge serves as passage for the passengers to get on launches at Habibpur terminal in Ujirpur upazila of Barisal.

PHOTO: STAR

People suffer as launch ghat without gangway

Passengers use risky bamboo bridge to get on launches

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Thousands of people are suffering due to lack of a gangway to connect with the pontoon at Habibpur launch terminal in Ujirpur upazila of the district.

People use the terminal to go to different destinations like the upazila and district headquarters and other areas including capital Dhaka but they have to use a bamboo bridge connecting the pontoon to get on or down from launches.

"Especially elderly people, women and children have to suffer much due to the situation," said Noto Dasgupta, a passenger of Ujirpur area.

Newcomers to the area often get scared to get down from launches, said Mokhes, a tea seller near the launch terminal.

A new pontoon was set at the terminal about three years ago but passengers cannot use it smoothly due to lack of gangway and approach road, said Hafizur Rahman, chairman of

Ujirpur Upazila Parishad.

Tk 5 as toll is taken from each passenger entering the pontoon but there is not adequate service for a large number of people using the terminal, he said, adding, "We requested officials of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) to set up a gangway here, but to no effect yet."

Azmol Huda, deputy director (River Safety and Traffic) of BIWTA, said he will inform the higher authorities to solve the problem.

Income ups in CHT Says BBS official

A CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

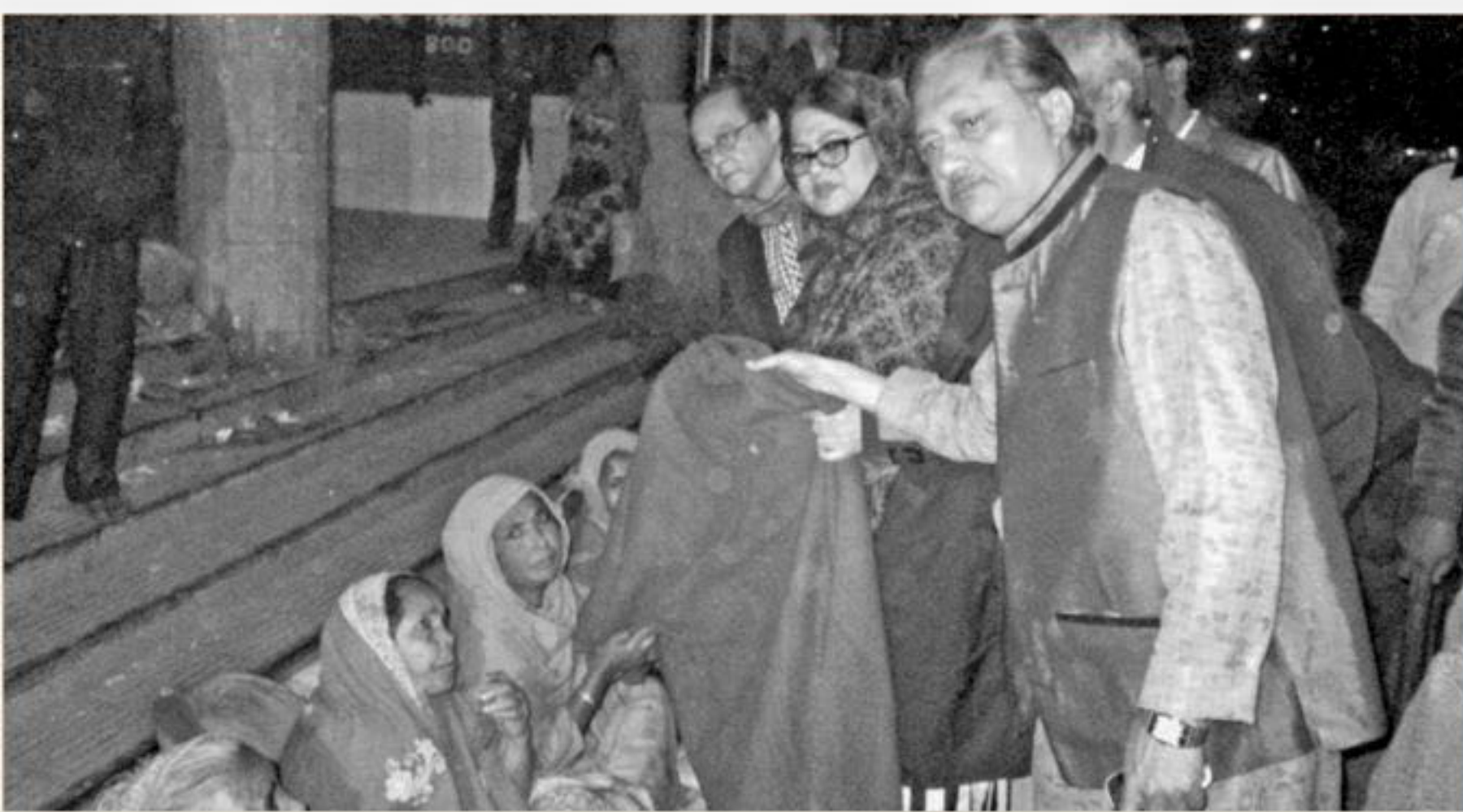
Jafor Ahmed Khan, deputy secretary of Department of Planning, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), said income of both men and women in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) has increased now due to the economic boom.

He said this at a seminar titled "Economic census report-2013 district report publication" at the conference room of Rangamati deputy commissioner's office in the town.

The district administration and district statistics office organised the programme chaired by Deputy Additional Commissioner Abu Sayed Chowdhury.

Earlier, it took a long time to collect data in CHT, but now the same work is done easily with the help of the latest technology, said Jafor.

Sources at the statistics office said in 2003, earning of women was 15.78 percent while it was 84.21 percent for men.



Noted Singer Kanak Chapa, her music director husband Moinul Islam Khan and Mayor of Bogra municipality AKM Mahabubur Rahman distribute warm clothes to the cold-stricken people at Bogra railway station in the town recently.

PHOTO: STAR