



# MAKING THEM SMILE

**O**n a wintry morning in the northern district of Rajshahi, about 100 people joined a queue in front of the Janata Bank's Halidagachhi branch in Charghat upazila. The one common factor among the majority of them was they were all senior citizens. Some of the men and women had travelled five to 10 kilometres to get there. They went there to collect the state's allowance for the elderly people and widows. The allowance brought a smile to their faces, no matter how small the amount and how difficult the process of getting the money. Badal Ali, one recipient, described how his five sons and five daughters had almost forgotten him once he became unable to work in the fields. Now that he gets the allowance, his children have started caring for him again. This is an all too common story here. Abdus Sobhan, a member of Solua union, said 110 people were getting the benefits and there were 50 more applications waiting to be reviewed.

Photo: ANISUR RAHMAN

