

## Jamaat in disguise?

### Questions raised over new party seeking registration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Development Party, which, many believe, is Jamaat-e-Islami in disguise, has applied for registration with the Election Commission.

"We have submitted 50,000 pages of documents alongside our application. We have fulfilled all the conditions. Hopefully, we will get the registration," said Anwarul Islam, chairman of the party.

The application was signed by the party's General Secretary Nijamul Haq.

Anwarul was talking to journalists after submitting the application at the Election Commission Bhaban in the capital's Agargaon yesterday.

According to some media reports, the top leaders of BDP were involved with Jamaat. The general secretary of the party is a former leader of Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat.

Asked about his involvement with Jamaat's Demra unit, Anwarul first avoided making any comment and then said, "This is false. I didn't go there in a long time."

He also said his party had no connection with Jamaat.

"We are a new party. We collected members in different ways. We are not subservient to anyone or any party," he said.

The members of the party were born after the Liberation War and they follow the constitution of Bangladesh, he further said.

Responding to another question, the BDP chairman said those who were born after independence could not be war criminals. "If someone wants to make them war criminals, they can."

He, however, did not mention when the party was founded. Instead, he said his party would hold a press conference to answer all the questions.

Election Commissioner Md Alamgir said everyone knows that Jamaat's registration as a political party was cancelled following a court order.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Residents of Mohammadpur's Adabor in the capital wade through over ankle-deep water. The area got waterlogged during the downpour caused by Sitrang on Monday but the water is yet to recede due to poor drainage. The photo was taken yesterday.

## Russia stages nuke response drills

### Putin warns of wider conflict as tensions rise over Moscow's 'dirty bomb' allegation against Ukraine

AGENCIES

Russia rehearsed its response to a nuclear attack yesterday in an exercise that involved nuclear submarines, strategic bombers and ballistic missiles at a time when tensions are high over a "dirty bomb" allegation it has made against Ukraine.

Russian President Vladimir Putin remotely observed the annual exercise, called "Grom" or "Thunder", which uses test launches to put Moscow's nuclear forces through their paces in a show of force designed to deter and intimidate foes.

Russian officials said test launches of nuclear-capable ballistic and cruise missiles

had passed off successfully. Putin was cited by the RIA news agency as saying the potential for conflict in the world and region remained high.

The Pentagon said a day earlier that Russia had notified it of its intention to carry out the exercises at a time when Nato is rehearsing its own use of US nuclear bombs based in Europe in its annual "Steadfast Noon" war games.

Kyiv and the West say there is no evidence for the "dirty bomb" allegation and that Moscow's warning looks designed to escalate tension around the war in Ukraine or to serve as the justification for some kind of Russian battlefield escalation, reports Reuters.

### Woman dies being hit by bus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 50-year-old woman died after she was hit by a bus of Bihanga Paribahan in the capital's Bangla Motor last night.

Sadhona Begum, who is from Anantapur village of Homna upazila of Cumilla, was a housemaid in the capital. She lived in the Eskaton area.

Jobain Ferdous, sub-inspector of Shahbagh Police Station, said she was hit by the bus around 9:30pm.

Doctors at Dhaka Medical College Hospital pronounced her dead around half an hour later.

Police seized the bus, but the driver fled the scene, he added.

## 30pc people facing food scarcity

FROM PAGE 1

Presenting the keynote, Ayago Wambile said, "Price increase is reported as a key challenge and impediment to food security."

He noted that food insecurity has heightened the vulnerability of the most food-insecure regions, including the countries in poorest areas.

The WB survey said food security for 70 percent of Bangladesh's population has not changed in one year since June 2021.

Sailesh Tiwari, another senior economist at the WB, said, "The country's economy has seen a V-shaped recovery in the last two years since the onset of Covid

pandemic but the recovery was uneven as people from all levels failed to get the result of such recovery."

A V-shape recovery means a quick and sharp improvement in an economy after a sharp decline.

The survey titled "Tracking Impact of Covid-19 in Bangladesh: High Frequency Phone Survey" was conducted at 10 different times between June 2020 and May 2022. It was carried out at the national level as well as in urban and slum areas of Dhaka, Chattogram and Cox's Bazar. The sample size ranged from 1,300 to 7,700 people.

According to the study, during the time since the onset of the pandemic in June 2020, 31 percent people were

unable to get Tk 25,000 in cash in case of emergency. The number fell to 4 percent in May this year.

BIDS Director General Binayak Sen said a large segment of the population faces difficulties in getting emergency cash in times of crisis.

"In developed countries, the authorities ensured cash aid for people ...," Binayak told the seminar titled "Socio-Economic Impacts and Policy Responses to Covid-19 Pandemic in Bangladesh: Lessons for the Future".

Referring to the study findings, he said the country's economy suffered during the lockdowns. It gradually bounced back, but everyone didn't equally reap the benefits of the recovery.

In his presentation, Wambile said 55 percent people in slum areas were unable to pay rent in June 2020, while it came down significantly to 25 percent in May this year.

According to the study, 22 percent tenants in slum areas feared eviction by house owners in June 2020. The number dropped to 14 percent in May this year.

Wambile called upon the Bangladesh government to prepare for natural disasters, and economic and health-related shocks.

Mentioning that the country's vulnerability to economic shocks has risen, he said the government should expand and strengthen the social safety net for the poor.

### Italian coastguard rescues over 1,000 migrants

AFP, Rome

Italy's coastguard said yesterday it had rescued more than 1,000 migrants from two fishing boats in the Mediterranean overnight, while two bodies had been recovered.

The two "complex" operations off the coast of Syracuse in Sicily, involving boats from Libya, followed an alert on Tuesday from Alarm Phone, a group running a hotline for migrants needing rescue.

From the first boat, about 35 miles from the Sicilian coast, an Italian coastguard ship rescued 416 migrants while a Spanish patrol vessel working with EU border force Frontex rescued another 78.

From a second fishing boat, 60 miles from the coast, vessels from the coastguard and Italy's financial crime police intervened to rescue 663 migrants and "two lifeless bodies" were recovered, it said.

Italy's new Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni vowed Tuesday to stop migrants crossing in boats from Africa, in her first speech to parliament since taking office at the weekend.

Meloni said her government, the country's most far-right since World War II, wanted to "stop illegal departures and break up human trafficking", notably by preventing departures from crisis-hit Libya.

She insisted it was time to stop traffickers "being the ones who decide who gets in".

Italy has long been on the migration frontline, taking in tens of thousands of people who attempt the world's deadliest crossing yearly.

## Recharged Tigers

FROM PAGE 1

weather did not intervene.

Despite the winning start initiated by a much-awaited productive opening stand, stitched by Soumya Sarkar and Najmul Hossain Shanto, the Bangladesh team management would want to see their middle order batting make the necessary impact this time.

Unlike the middle order batters, barring Afif Hossain and Mosaddek Hossain, Bangladesh quicks would be soaring with confidence after their brilliant show against the Dutch side, spearheaded by Taskin Ahmed's career-best figures of four for 25. Rookie seamer Hasan Mahmud played a great supporting role with figures of four for 15, including a wicket- maiden, while Mustafizur Rahman displayed shades of his disciplined self as the Tigers successfully defended a modest total of 144.

Meanwhile, Shakib did not shy away from playing mind games during the pre-match press conference yesterday.

## EC probe finds 100 involved

FROM PAGE 1

police of Gaibandha, presiding officers, assistant presiding officers and polling agents of 51 polling centers where voting was halted.

It also recorded statements of all five candidates in the by-polls.

A member of the probe body said they would not recommend any punishment for officials found involved in irregularities.

"The Election Commission will decide their punishments if it finds them to be guilty," said EC officials.

Some polling officials told the probe committee that law enforcers and magistrates did not cooperate with them enough to stop the election irregularities.

"I told the probe body that some irregularities took place at my polling centre," said Samsuzzoha, presiding officer at Saghata Government Primary School polling station.

He said he tried to prevent the wrongdoers from committing irregularities, but in vain. "Later, I sought cooperation from police, but the law enforcers showed reluctance to drive them out of the polling station."

Seeking anonymity, another presiding officer said, "Some polling agents of the ruling Awami League candidate entered the polling booths and cast fake votes."

"I asked police and magistrates for help, but they did nothing," he said.

After giving his statement to the probe committee on October 20, Gaibandha DC Waliur Rahaman said, "We visited some places and saw that the election was peaceful, free and fair."

Gaibandha SP Touhidul Islam said

### Student crushed to death by train

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A 25-year-old woman died after being run over by a train in Rangpur on Tuesday evening.

Shiuly Barman, 25, daughter of Khitish Chandra Barman of Balakumar area in Rangpur, was a postgraduate student of political science at Begum Rokeya College.

She was killed at a level-crossing in Lalbagh around 6:30pm, said Station Master Sankar Ganguli of Rangpur Railway Station.

Police said her body was handed over to her family members.

### Rare Nilgai rescued in Chapainawabganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

A Nilgai Antelope was caught by locals in Barik Bazar area of Shibganj upazila yesterday.

The animal, also known as blue bull, was declared extinct in Bangladesh by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Upazila Livestock Officer Ranjit Kumar Singh said the Nilgai caught by locals was male and he was sick.

A veterinarian team treated him, Ranjit added. Wildlife Inspector Jahangir Kabir of Rajshahi said the animal would be rescued by his department.

### Teacher lands in jail for attempted rape of student

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A Thakurgaon court yesterday sent the teacher of a kindergarten school to jail on charges of trying to rape an 11-year-old girl.

Tularam Paul, 38, a teacher of Nekmarad Residential School And College in Ranisankail upazila, was accused in a case filed for trying to rape the girl in an empty classroom on Tuesday afternoon.

Her father later filed the case with Ranisankail Police Station.

### Indian Coast Guard rescues 20 Bangladeshis from sea

UNB, Dhaka

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) rescued 20 Bangladeshi fishermen near the maritime border after their boat capsized when cyclone Sitrang made landfall on Monday night.

ICG found the fishermen clinging to floats and debris from their sunken boats.

ICG spotted them about 90 nautical miles from Sagar Island in West Bengal on Tuesday.

They will be handed over to Bangladesh, ICG said in a tweet.

FROM PAGE 1

Imam Mollah, 24, Jahidul Islam, 22 and Mahmud Mollah, 25, yesterday morning, said Minhazur Rahaman, Mirsarai upazila nirbahi officer.

The latest body found was that of Md Alam Sardar, 38, son of Nuru Sardar, from Patuakhali's Jainokathi.

His body was also recovered by fellow workers around 10:30pm yesterday, said Kabir Hossain, officer-in-charge of Mirsarai Police station.

Originated in the Bay before setting its course north towards Bangladesh, the cyclone made landfall around 9:00pm on Monday.

**CROPS DAMAGED**

In Khulna, crops, vegetables and fruits grown on around 18,483 hectares of land have been damaged due to heavy rains and strong winds whipped up by the cyclone, according to the local agriculture office.

Hafizur Rahman, deputy director of Khulna's Agriculture Extension Department, said fields growing Aman paddies, vegetables, papayas and bananas were worst affected.

Sukesh Rakshit, a resident of Tipna village in Khulna's Dumuria upazila, said, "Over 1,000 of my banana trees were damaged by the cyclone on Monday."

Meanwhile, fish farms on around 23 hectares of land were also badly affected by the cyclone, said Ranjit Kumar Sarkar, of Khulna's District Relief and Rehabilitation office.

Jewel Hossain, a fish trader of Baghmara village in Khulna's Rupsha upazila, said, "I cultivated fish in seven ponds. All my fish were washed away due to heavy rains. I will have to count a loss of around Tk 15 lakh."

Even in Tangail, vegetable and banana farmers suffered huge losses due to continuous rain and gusty winds, while banana and papaya

orchards of different upazilas in the district were also destroyed.

Khawja Miah, a resident of Sagardighi of Tangail's Ghatail upazila, said, "Around 8,000 of my banana plants were damaged."

In Sakhipur upazila, over 21,000 banana plants were damaged, according to the local agriculture office.

**FISHERMEN HIT HARD**

The cyclone wreaked havoc on the fishing community in Bhola's Charfesson upazila and rendered over 30 families homeless there.

Some 150 people in the upazila's Hazaribagh have been living under the open sky as their homes were decimated by the cyclone.

Mizanur Rahman, a fisherman in the area, said, "There was incessant rain throughout Monday ... Suddenly, a spell of strong wind hit our house and completely destroyed it."

"We took shelter at one of our relative's houses, but had to leave the next morning. Now, my family and I are living under the open sky."

He added, "Our local union parishad chairman took my photo and [wrote down] my name, saying he would arrange relief assistance for me. But I have not received any yet."

Contacted, Selim Chowdhury, chairman of Hazaribagh union parishad, said at least 30 houses of fishermen were damaged completely, while over 100 were damaged partially.

"We are preparing a list of the victims to provide relief with," he said. Al Noman, upazila nirbahi officer of Charfesson, said they will soon begin distributing the relief.

(Our correspondents from respective districts contributed to the report.)