

Bari Siddiqui on life support

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent folk singer and flautist Bari Siddiqui is in a critical condition, and has been kept on life support at the capital's Square Hospital since Friday night.



The 63-year old singer of popular songs like "Shua Chan Pakhi" and "Amar Gaye Joto Dukkho Shoy" was rushed to the hospital after suffering a heart attack, his son informed. He has also long been suffering from diabetes and complications in both kidneys. According to family sources, he had been undergoing dialysis treatment since last year.

Siddiqui, born to a musical family in Netrokona on November 15, 1954, trained in music from a young age under the tutelage of Ustad Gopal Dutt, Ustad Aminur Rahman, Babir Khan and Pannalal Ghosh during the early stages of his life. He later also took an interest in playing the *bansuri* (bamboo flute) and trained under noted classical flautist VG Karnad in India.

Despite having a singing career since the 1970s, Bari Siddiqui came to mainstream attention in 2000 with

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One killed in 'shootout' with DB men

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was killed in what police claimed was a crossfire between detectives and his armed cohorts in South Keraniganj early yesterday.

Al Amin alias Akash, 32, was killed hours after police picked him up in Munshiganj.

Dipok Chandra Saha, officer-in-charge of Dhaka District Police's Detective Branch (South), said a team of police, taking Al Amin along, went in a drive in Khejurbagan area to recover arms and drugs around 2:30am. But when armed gang men started shooting at police in an attempt to free him, he got shot and died.

Since 2004, law enforcers gave similar accounts of events leading to the deaths of around 800 suspects in custody, according to Rights body Ain o Salish Kendra.

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Tintin

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On sale at auction house Artcurial as part of a sale of Tintin memorabilia including original drawings, toys and figurines, it came in under an estimated price of 600,000 to 800,000 euros.

"Original Tintin works are today becoming more and more rare at auction, especially those from the 1930s and 1940s," said Eric Leroy, cartoons expert at Artcurial.

Tintin creator Herge, otherwise known as Georges Remi, holds a string of records for original cartoons sold at auction.

In November a drawing from "Explorers on the Moon" sold for 1.55 million euros at Artcurial, setting a record for a single cartoon drawing.

RU student

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As the victim and some of her classmates came out of the dorm, Rana and a couple of men jumped out of the microbus and forced her into the vehicle.

The woman's parents said Sohel and she got married in December last year.

But she went to her village home in Naogaon in August and told her parents that her husband tortured her and asked for a dowry of Tk 25 lakh.

The parents added that she filed for divorce soon afterwards. They also alleged that the suspect once attempted to kidnap her from their village home in September. They lodged a general diary with Mohadevpur Police Station at the time.

Her mother said Sohel was an addict and had been threatening them "with dire consequences" for the last couple of months.

Rana's father Joynal Abedin, a lawyer of Naogaon was arrested on Friday night.

Students, especially the women, demonstrated on the campus demanding safety.

"How can such crimes take place here while police are deployed?" Mahfuz Munna, a student of marketing, asked.

RU administration officials said they would meet civil society representatives and police to find ways to secure the campus.

A total of 150 police remain on the campus round the clock, where some 50 students have been killed in the last 44 years.



With people heading towards Suhrawardy Udyan in small processions for the "Nagorik Samabesh" yesterday, traffic on the other side of Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue came to a halt. The photo near Karwan Bazar was taken at 2:00pm.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Pride for the nation

FROM PAGE 1

She said the recognition has honoured every Bangalee, freedom fighter, pro-liberation force, and family members of the martyrs.

The prime minister was delivering the speech at the same ground where her father had addressed the nation 46 years ago on March 7, 1971. In his fiery speech, Bangabandhu had called on the freedom-loving Bangalees to wage a decisive struggle against the Pakistani rulers.

On October 30, Unesco recognised the historic speech as part of the World's Documentary Heritage.

Hasina, president of the ruling Awami League, was addressing the Nagorik Samabesh (citizens' rally) organised by Nagorik Committee, to celebrate Unesco's recognition of the March 7 speech.

Yesterday, Hasina did not say anything about the country's current political arena. She shared memories of her father and mother Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib.

She spoke about how her mother

led movements when Bangabandhu was in jail.

"Before the March 7 speech, my mother told my father 'you will speak your mind. You know better what to say. Remember, the fate of the people is in your hands'," Hasina said.

She also recalled her father's speech at Suhrawardy Udyan on January 10, 1972, after the country achieved victory. Bangabandhu in that speech spoke on how the new country would be run, Hasina said.

People from all walks of life, including AL leaders and activists, started to throng the venue from yesterday noon in processions with banners, festoons and placards. They chanted "Joy Bangla" and "Joy Bangabandhu".

The March 7 speech was being played through loudspeakers from the processions and at the venue.

The stage was designed like a boat, the election symbol of ruling Awami League.

Hasina said, "The country's history was distorted after the assassination of

Bangabandhu in 1975. It's unfortunate that citizens of Bangladesh killed the Father of the Nation."

"My only request is to unite and remain alert so that no Pakistani ghosts can get the opportunity to distort the history anymore," she said.

Thanking Unesco, Hasina said Bangladesh has been placed at a respectable spot in the globe by this recognition.

"That's why we are a proud nation," she said.

Hasina said, "The Father of the Nation wanted to make Bangladesh poverty- and hunger-free. Insallah we will fulfil the dream of Bangabandhu by making Bangladesh a middle income country by 2021 and a developed one by 2041 and this is the pledge from this civic rally."

Towards the end of her speech, Hasina gave a reference of the nature saying, "It was cloudy today but it is sunny now. This sun will take Bangladesh forward."

Addressing the rally, Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman, who chaired

Mintoo family named

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couple of hundred million dollars few years back, industry insiders added.

Unocal, where Mintoo held some one percent share, had earned several controversies in Bangladesh—including its relentless bid to export gas from Bibiyana field in Sylhet during the Awami League rule in the late nineties and later in the following BNP regime.

In spite of enjoying high level access to the AL government in the late 90s, in a sudden move right before the 2001 polls, Mintoo joined BNP.

The Paradise Papers is a set of 13 million confidential electronic documents related to offshore investments. The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists has been releasing some of the documents to the public since November 5 this year.

Talking to The Daily Star at his office in Dhaka yesterday, Abdul Awal Mintoo stated that he had business with Unocal and later with Chevron.

"I used to hold one percent interest in Chevron a long time ago. Now I don't have any relations with Chevron," said Mintoo.

"That my name popped up in Paradise Papers is perhaps because of my link with Chevron," he added, explaining that as he had to deal with an international company he set up the offshore company. "I did not transfer any money from Bangladesh," he said.

"I have now asked my American (business) partner why my name has popped up in Paradise Papers after so many years," he pointed out, "after I

get more information, I can explain things in detail."

Explaining his role in Unocal, he said he brought in Unocal when he learnt that Bangladesh had a lot of potentials in the energy sector while the country lacked experience in exploration and development of gas fields. "I had my interest. But I put the national interest first," he claimed.

Focusing on the gas export controversy of Unocal, he said, "At that time I heard that Bangladesh was floating on gas with so many discoveries—so I supported the idea of export. But I changed my mind when I learnt it was not so."

"I have international businesses. So what is the problem if I open an offshore company?" he asked.

UNOCAL CONTROVERSY

According to the Paradise Papers, Unocal had registered several companies in Bermuda, among them were, "Unocal Bangladesh Ltd", "Unocal Bangladesh Exploration Ltd", Unocal Block Five Ltd, Unocal Block Ten Ltd, Unocal block 13 and 14 Ltd etc, between 1993 and 1998—when the company owned no such assets in Bangladesh.

While Unocal registered two companies on blocks 12, 13 and 14 in Bermuda back in 1993, it was actually another American company Occidental that had signed two PSCs for these three blocks in 1995 after two years of unsolicited negotiations. These three blocks now are known as Bibiyana, Moulavibazar and Jalalabad



Mintoo

gas fields.

Unocal entered Bangladesh gas exploration scene in late 1996-- pushing for an unsolicited deal over the Shahbazpur gas field at Bhola. Its attempt to win the gas deal ultimately did not work out in 1998 because of the controversies arising from a consultant report that the terms of the deal were not favourable to Bangladesh.

Occidental's operations in Moulavibazar suffered a massive blowout in 1997 known as the Magurchhara blowout following which Occidental was ready to wrap up its operation in Bangladesh.

However, in mid-1998, Occidental made a significant discovery in block 12 in the Bibiyana gas field and it made an initial assessment that the field had a recoverable reserve of around 5 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of gas. A year later, Occidental sold its Bangladesh assets to Unocal.

By that time Unocal had given Abdul Awal Mintoo a one percent share to "facilitate its operation in Bangladesh." This information was first shared with The Daily Star by Unocal Bangladesh's second in command Greg Gritters at that time.

Since taking over Occidental's assets, Unocal had been saying Bangladesh did not have sufficient domestic market demand to justify developing the Bibiyana gas field and pushed for export of the gas to India. The company conducted the country's first 3D seismic survey in the gas field to confirm that the field was indeed

persons are seeing a ray of hope after the return of Aniruddha.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, some of them reiterated their call for bringing back those missing by any means.

"All that we want is my son's safe return," said Motaheer Hossain, father of missing North South University Assistant Professor Mubashar Hasan.

The young political Islam researcher went traceless after he came out of the university around 4:30pm on November 7.

Chittarnajan Das, father of missing

the rally, said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared the war of independence through the March 7 speech.

He said the government should translate the speech in different languages so that the repressed people of the world could be inspired.

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader read out a note of thanks to Unesco director general.

The rally was also addressed by eminent educationist Prof Rafiqul Islam, Daily Samakal Editor Golam Sarwar, eminent educationist Prof Muhammed Zafar Iqbal, Unesco Country Director Beatrice Kaldun and martyred intellectual Alim Chowdhury's wife Shamoli Nasrin Chowdhury.

Noted singer Momtaj, Shahin Samad, and Sajid Akbor enthralled the audience with their songs while Poet Nirmalendu Goon and Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor recited poems at the programme that was conducted by cultural personality Ramendu Majumder.

Gaibandha MP Mostofa hurt in road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Golam Mostofa Ahmed, the Awami League lawmaker from Gaibandha, suffered serious head injuries in an accident on Dhaka-Tangail highway at Delduar yesterday afternoon.

Sources said the microbus he was travelling in collided head-on at Natiapara with a bus heading towards Bogra around 5:30pm when both the vehicles were overtaking other vehicles.

The collision also left three others in the car injured, said SM Mizanul Haque, officer-in-charge of Mirzapur Police Station.

The MP was first taken to the nearby Jamurki Health Complex and then to Tangail General Hospital, the OC said.

Doctors of Tangail General Hospital referred him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said Abdus Sobhan of the hospital.

Mostofa was not conscious, he said.

"The lawmaker might have had brain haemorrhage," the doctor said, adding that an ambulance carrying him left for Dhaka around 7:30pm.

The lawmaker's nephew Shahjahan, his personal secretary Ripon Miah and driver Manju Miah received treatment at Tangail General Hospital and they were all out of danger, he said, adding that two of them were released.

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RANGPUR MAYHEM

Titu Roy on remand for 4 more days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A Rangpur court yesterday granted another four-day remand for Titu Chandra Roy in a case filed over "de-meaning Islam" in a Facebook post.

The court passed the order after police produced him before it on completion of four-day remand, said Babul Islam, sub-inspector of Rangpur Detective Brach (North) of Police, also the investigation officer of the case.

Police produced the 40-year-old before the chief judicial magistrate's court around 3:30pm and sought 10-day remand for him for further interrogation. Law enforcers also submitted a health check-up report of Titu to the court.

Alamgir Hossain of Khaleya Shah Bazaar in Rangpur had filed the case with Gangachara Police Station on November 6. It was transferred to the

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IS 'caliphate' dream in tatters

AFP, Baghdad

Its "caliphate" has imploded, its de facto capitals in Iraq and Syria have fallen, and hundreds of its fighters have either surrendered or fled.

The Islamic State jihadist group may not be dead yet but its dream of statehood has already been buried, analysts say.

No one in IS "will now think of imposing 'the territory of the caliphate'," said Hisham al-Hashemi, an Iraqi specialist on extremist movements.

In 2014, self-proclaimed IS "caliph" Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi ruled over seven million people in a territory as large as Italy encompassing large parts of Syria and nearly a third of Iraq.

This new "territory of Islam" -- Dar al-Islam in Arabic -- attracted thousands of jihadists from around the world, many accompanied by their wives and children.

Won't stand

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The BNP chief gave the warning during a meeting with the vice chairmen at her Gulshan office last night.

Khaleda heard from the vice chairmen and then gave some directives to the party leaders.

The whole discussion revolved around the organisational activities of the party, said senior seeking anonymity.

A vice chairman said the BNP chief has asked the party leaders to form the district committees within the quickest possible time.

She also said committees of front and associate bodies of the party should be formed by December, he added.

The BNP vice chairman further said Khaleda did not say anything about anti-government programmes but asked the party leaders to maintain uniformity when talking about the non-partisan polls-time government.

Earlier, Khaleda Zia held a meeting with the BNP led 20-party alliance leaders and decided that she will go for mass campaigns in divisional and some district headquarters to drum up support in favour of their demand of holding the elections under a non-partisan interim government.