



## Theatre icon Shaoli Mitra passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent stage actor, playwright and Padma Shri awardee Shaoli Mitra died at her residence in South Kolkata on Sunday afternoon after suffering heart-related health issues.

She was 74. As per her last wishes, she was cremated without much fanfare and the news of her death was made public only after her cremation, said Arpita Ghosh, theatre personality and close friend of Shaoli. "She had been suffering from health issues but refused to be hospitalised when her condition deteriorated," she said, adding that Shaoli had

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Students demonstrating at the Sust roundabout yesterday afternoon to press home their three-point demand, including the resignation of the university's vice chancellor. This was the fourth day of their protests. Inset, they put a lock on VC Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed's office.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

## SUST PROTESTS

# VC declared unwanted on campus

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A day after police swooped on them, students started a fresh protest yesterday demanding the resignation of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology vice-chancellor.

To press home the demand, they started a sit-in blocking the road in front of the VC's residence from 4:00pm. Additional police were deployed in front of the gate of the residence.

Three days after their three-point, including resignation of a hall provost, were not met, the demonstrators confined VC Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed inside the MA Wazed Miah IICT Building on Sunday afternoon.

Police later charged truncheons on the demonstrators to free the VC, leading to a clash.

Police then shot rubber bullets and exploded sound grenades to bring the situation under control.

At least 30 students were injured. After an emergency syndicate meeting, the Sust authorities decided to close the university for an indefinite period. All students were also asked to vacate their dormitories by noon yesterday.

Claiming that the VC permitted police on campus and ordered the attack to free himself, the students are now pressing a fresh three-point demand – VC's resignation, his public apology and ensuring accountability of all involved in the attack on students.

They also declared the VC persona non grata on the campus.

On Sunday afternoon, the protesters locked the VC's office, the administrative building and all academic buildings, except the registrar building as the admission process was going on.

A student said describing the situation they would write to President Abdul Hamid, also the university chancellor, and ask him to fire VC Prof Farid Uddin.

On Thursday night, students of Begum Sirajunnesa Chowdhury Hall started demonstrating, demanding the resignation of Provost Zafrin Ahmed Liza over her alleged misbehaviour.

Provost Zafrin resigned from the post on Sunday evening, citing personal reasons.

Meanwhile, an eight-member body, led by Prof Rashed Talukder of mathematics department, was formed to investigate Sunday's incidents.

**WHO ORDERED POLICE?** The students claimed that the VC called in the police and had ordered the attack on the demonstrators. But the university authorities kept mum on the matter.

Contacted, Sust Proctor Alamgir Kabir refused to comment in this regard, while VC Prof Farid Uddin did not respond to phone calls of this correspondent.

However, Azbahar Ali Sheikh, deputy commissioner (north) of Sylhet Metropolitan Police, said police went to the university on request of the VC and the proctor, but acted on "Right of Private Defence".

He said, "After VC was confined to the IICT building, teachers tried to pacify the agitated students. Suddenly, some people among the students started throwing brick chunks, then blasted crude bombs and fired shots."

"As the situation went out of control, police charged truncheons, shot rubber bullets and 21 sound grenades. This was completely on the basis of Right of Private Defence to protect police and the teachers from the attack."

Police action on the Sust students sparked a nationwide protest.



## Sciatica in winter WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

M SHAHADAT HOSSAIN

Sciatica is a condition that occurs when the sciatic nerve, which runs from the back of your leg to your buttock and to your back, becomes irritated. The irritation may be caused by a herniated disk in your spine, an injury to the nerves, or inflammation.

Sciatica typically causes pain and numbness in the leg and/or buttocks and can also cause shooting pain along one or more legs and discomfort while sitting or standing. According to doctors at Harvard Medical School, colder temperatures are also a major cause of sciatica. It can happen during the winter months due to cold temperatures irritating nerves in the body. Reasons for sciatica pain

There are a number of potential causes for sciatica and pain in the back of the leg. A herniated disk can cause damage to the nerve roots, which may affect sensation and cause sciatica. Other

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# It's down to her TRUE GRIT

Clean image and visible development activities despite all the hostilities earned Ivy NCC polls hat-trick

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Selina Hayat Ivy's personal charisma as well as development activities carried out in Narayanganj city during her two successive tenures in the post of mayor are the key reasons behind her victory in Sunday's polls.

Voters, political leaders and civil society members said the mayor-elect of Narayanganj City Corporation got blessings from her party Awami League, but they attributed her victory mainly to her clean personal image and popularity.

They believe her win in the mayoral polls would mean more development of the city.

On the other hand, Ivy's main rival Taimur Alam Khandakar, a BNP leader, failed to establish his personal image overshadowing his party's. Moreover, a rumour that he got support from influential local AL MP Shamim Osman

during electioneering backfired, voters said.

"Ivy created her own image. She got good support from the women and young voters. Her development activities are visible in the city. All these helped her win the polls," Nur Uddin, president of Amra Narayanganjbashi, a non-political social platform, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He also said Ivy's win margin of 66,931 votes showed that it was not a close fight, but the margin could have been smaller if Taimur had blessings from his party.

Taimur was relieved of the posts of convener of Narayanganj district BNP and adviser to the party chairperson after he decided to run for mayor.

BNP boycotted NCC polls saying that a free and fair election is not possible under the current Election Commission and the government.

Narayanganj, once known as Dundee of the East, had earned a bad name for

abuse of power by some local influential politicians and poor law and order. But there was no violence or irregularities during Sunday's election. Voting was peaceful, free and fair although there was apprehension that violence may take place on the polling day.

People in Narayanganj said Ivy as the city mayor worked rising above partisan differences.

"Ivy created an image of a non-partisan mayor. When she was in office, she did not consider who belonged to which party. That's why she bagged votes from supporters of Awami League and also from those of other political parties," said Tofajjal Hossain, a voter from Chasara area.

Ivy first took office of Narayanganj city mayor in 2011 when the maiden NCC election was held. She got re-elected in 2016 defeating the then BNP-backed candidate by around 70,000 votes.

As Taimur contested this year's election going against the party's decision, many Narayanganj BNP leaders did not join his polls campaign.

Sources in the BNP said the party has three factions in Narayanganj. Taimur

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## MPs held hostage by bureaucrats Says AL Lawmaker Nizam in JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League MP Nazim Uddin Ahmed of Mymensingh-3 in parliament yesterday said lawmakers have become hostages to bureaucrats.

"The way bureaucrats speak, it seems MPs don't have any value ..."

Taking part in the discussion on the thanksgiving motion on the president's speech at the House, he urged all parliamentarians to raise their voices against bureaucrats.

Nazim said many development projects, including the construction of a hospital, school and college buildings, roads, and mosques, were taken up in his area.

"But all development activities are now stalled halfway .... The contractors ask how they will carry out the work if they don't get the money," he said.

Nazim said the site for the model mosque was fixed three years ago. Despite getting a verdict from the

Supreme Court, the construction of the mosque has not started due to bureaucracy.

"When I asked about it, the project director says one thing, the deputy commissioner says another and the Islamic Foundation says completely a different thing."

"We are being held hostage by the bureaucracy. We all need to be vocal to escape from the hands of bureaucracy. I will tell the members of parliament, please be strong to get rid of the bureaucracy," he said.

**SHUTDOWN YOUTUBE** Alleging that propaganda was being spread through YouTube, the MP demanded it be shut down.

"I see on YouTube that Khaleda Zia is dying. Sheikh Hasina is going to be deposed tomorrow... I see the army chiefs being dragged down .... Where are these coming from? We don't understand what the information ministry is doing," Nazim said.



People walk right next to a moving train on the Karwan Bazar rail tracks, as gaping holes on the wired fences show how security is breached at will. Such mindless acts often result in tragic accidents. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

