

CAPTAIN RAYMOND HOLT, SIGNING OFF

A tribute to Andre Braugher's iconic character

Captain Raymond Holt wasn't just a character; he was a source of inspiration and comfort, a familiar face that greeted us with stoic yet endearing expressions, igniting laughter and warmth in our hearts.

ZARIN TASnim

As news of Andre Braugher's passing echoes through the hearts of fans, a profound sense of loss settles, a loss that extends beyond the screen, into the very fabric of our lives. For many of us, rewatching all the cold openings of Captain Holt on YouTube won't be the same. It's as if a cherished friend, a beacon of wisdom and humour, has departed, leaving a void that cannot easily be filled.

Captain Raymond Holt wasn't just a character; he was a source of inspiration and comfort, a familiar face that greeted us with stoic yet endearing expressions igniting laughter and warmth in our hearts. His moments - those beautifully crafted cold openings captivated our attention, not merely for their comedic brilliance but for the remarkable portrayal delivered by Andre Braugher, a performance that transcended mere acting.



In those snippets of everyday life within the precinct, Braugher breathed life into Holt - a character whose deadpan delivery, unexpected hobbies, and unique quirks became a cherished part of our viewing experience. Each rewatch offered new layers of nuance, unveiling hidden gems within Holt's meticulously constructed persona.

Raymond Holt wasn't just a captain; he was a trailblazer, a character who defied the norms of LGBTQ representation on television. In an era where most LGBTQ characters were defined solely by their sexuality, Captain

Holt stood tall as a fully realised, multi-dimensional personality. Braugher's portrayal didn't confine Holt to a singular aspect of his identity; instead, he showcased a man of remarkable depth, intelligence, leadership, dry wit, and commitment to his principles.

Braugher's performance also injected life into Holt's complexities, struggles with his past, hurdles faced in a predominantly white and straight-male dominated profession, and the challenges of being true to himself while navigating a world that didn't always embrace his individuality.

Beyond Holt's outstanding professional persona lay a tender, loving side - a man who adored his husband, Kevin Cozner, with a quiet and profound passion. Their relationship wasn't defined by stereotypes or caricatures; it was a portrayal of love, respect, and understanding, just like any other committed partnership.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Captain Holt's character was his refusal to conform to the expectations society placed on him as a gay man of colour. His identity was a part of him, not the sum of him. He shattered stereotypes effortlessly, showcasing that one's sexuality need not overshadow the complexities of their personality.

Through Holt, Andre Braugher presented a powerful message: LGBTQ individuals are as diverse and complex as anyone else, deserving representation that reflects the depth of their humanity.

Braugher's talent and dedication brought forth a character whose impact will endure, reminding us of the significance of authentic and comprehensive representation in media.

The loss of Andre Braugher marks not just the departure of an

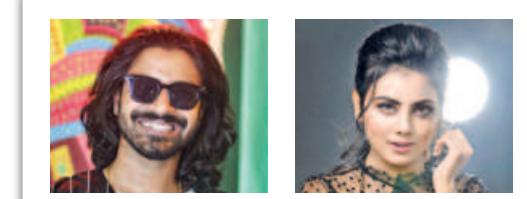
immensely talented actor but the end of an era. His absence leaves a void, a stark reminder of the impact a character can have on our lives.

As we mourn the passing of both a remarkable actor and the character he immortalised, we hold onto the memories and lessons imparted by Captain Raymond Holt.

Rest in power, Andre Braugher. Your legacy through Captain Raymond Holt will forever be cherished and remembered fondly by fans worldwide.



PHOTO: COLLECTED



Sariful Razz and Idhika Paul to pair up for 'Kobi'

Actor Sariful Islam Razz is geared up to captivate audiences once again, this time in the eagerly awaited film *Kobi*, helmed by director Hashibur Reza Kallol. The leading lady of the film is Kolkata's actress Idhika Paul, who previously shared the screen with Shakib Khan in the film *Priyotoma*. This project marks Idhika's second venture in the Bangladeshi film industry.

The ensemble cast of *Kobi* features an array of seasoned actors, including the renowned Misha Sawdagar, Kolkata's Khurshid Mukhopadhyay, Ananya Biswas, and several others.



TIRONDAZ
Repertoire to stage 'Konthonalite Surjo' after 7 years

Popular theatre troupe Tirondaz Repertoire is going to stage eminent Indian playwright, screenwriter, and dramatist Mohit Chattopadhyay's timeless play *Konthonalite Surjo* (A sun stuck on the throat) after seven years of hiatus.

The famous play is going to be staged at the Nilima Ibrahim Auditorium of Bangladesh Mahila Samity on Friday, December 15, at 5 pm and 7:30 pm.

The Deepak Suman directorial play is the sixth production of the troupe. Kazi Toufiqul Islam and Deepak Sumon, amongst others, will act in the play. The stage and light design of the play is done by Fayed Zahir.

NEWS

JP 'assures' AL it'll run

FROM PAGE 12

importance of Jatiya Party in the polls. This is because if we don't run, Awami League will be in big trouble over the credibility of the election at home and abroad," said a JP presidium member.

He said the JP was still haggling for 40 to 50 seats. The party in Tuesday's meeting also pressed for withdrawal of "AL independent candidates" from the seats to be shared with it.

The AL delegation, in response, said the PM wants the "party independents" to stay in the race so that the turnout improves.

The meeting decided that both sides would sit again today to discuss seat-sharing.

JP leaders said they were hopeful of reaching a decision on the matter in a day or two before conveying it to the PM for approval.

'JP WILLING TO RUN'

Briefing reporters at the AL president's political office in Dhamondi, AL General Secretary

Quader yesterday said JP conveyed to them that it was willing to take part in the polls and also to be a component of the AL-led electoral alliance.

"They didn't say that they will quit the electoral race. However, uncertainty [about it] may be there," he said.

Quader's counterpart Chunnu, on the other hand, said the JP was conducting electoral activities not to stage any drama but to participate in polls.

"We will run in the election. We are also keen to ascend to power by winning the polls," he told reporters at the JP chairman's office in Banani.

Asked about discussion with AL on seat-sharing, Chunnu said any issue, including sharing of seats, can be discussed as part of the election strategy.

"Last night [Tuesday], we discussed how to make the election free and fair, how the voters will go to the polling centres, how will be the law and order situation, and what will

be the roles of the administration, law enforcement agencies and the Election Commission," he said.

Asked whether AL trust their words, Chunnu said, "If they didn't trust us, then they wouldn't have invited us to their home and treat us so cordially."

About the meeting between JP chief patron Raushan and the prime minister, he said Raushan does not belong to the party.

The post of chief patron is ornamental and it does not carry any executive power, he added.

Speaking to reporters after Tuesday's meeting with the PM, Raushan said GM Quader "grabbed the JP".

"I have requested the prime minister not to forge any electoral alliance with Jatiya Party led by GM Quader," she said.

The leader of the opposition in parliament said she does not support Quader's activities regarding the national election.

Saboteurs derail express

FROM PAGE 12

In a statement, he demanded a judicial enquiry into the incident to find the perpetrators, their immediate arrest and exemplary punishment.

The BNP leader added that one or two media outlets were blaming the derailment on parties waging a movement for the restoration of democracy.

The incident happened on the second day of the 36-hour blockade enforced by the BNP and its allies to protest announcement of the polls schedule.

Immediately after the incident, train service on the Dhaka-Mymensingh route was suspended. In the morning, the railway authorities resumed service through an alternative route via Tongi.

Joydebpur Railway Station Master Mohammad Hanif Ali said the rescue and repair operation was going on as of 6:45pm.

At least nine trains operate run on that line and the derailment caused

schedule disruption, said railway officials.

The railways ministry formed a three-member probe body, led by a joint secretary to probe the incident, and it has been asked to submit a report with recommendations to prevent such accidents within three working days. Director (engineering) and director (mechanical) of Bangladesh Railway are the members of the committee.

The Gazipur district administration also formed a five-member committee to investigate the incident.

The committee has been asked to submit its report within three working days, said Abul Fateh Mohammad Shafiqul Islam, deputy commissioner of the district, after visiting the spot.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said they will be able to arrest the planner, and the masterminds behind the incident.

He said the incident took place in

an isolated place.

At the Secretariat, responding to a reporter's query about a letter of the railways ministry seeking deployment of police to ensure security of rail, the minister said there is a department -- Railway Police -- in Bangladesh Police. They would discuss and take steps to increase the manpower of the department, he added.

Before yesterday's incident, several stationary trains were set on fire during the ongoing anti-government movement.

Police raid

FROM PAGE 12

the BNP chairperson office to pay homage to the martyrs.

Contacted, OC Mazharul claimed that a police team went there to see what BNP activists were doing there.

He said they did not bring anything from the office or did not threaten anybody.

Reserves can hit \$24.3b this fiscal

FROM PAGE 12

financial and investment management are needed to increase spending efficiency and mitigate fiscal risks," Sayeh said.

If the IMF-prescribed tax reforms are implemented, Bangladesh's tax-GDP ratio is expected to edge up to 7.9 percent in fiscal 2023-24 from 7.4 percent at the end of the last fiscal year. Then next fiscal year, the ratio is projected to hit 8.4 percent.

The IMF board underscored that advancing financial sector reforms remains important to meet growing financing needs and support growth, which is projected to be 6 percent this fiscal year and 6.6 percent next fiscal year.

The government has revised down the growth projection for this fiscal year to 6.5 percent from 7.5 percent originally.

The IMF board also called for liberalising trade and enhancing the investment climate and governance, both of which will help bolster export diversification and foreign direct investment.

If executed, Bangladesh's financial account balance, which includes FDI, is expected to turn a corner this fiscal year; it will swing to surplus from

deficit at the end of last fiscal year, shows IMF's projections.

Typically, a deficit in the financial account means more investments are flying out of the country than coming in and is a major factor behind the running down of foreign exchange reserves.

In the first four months of the fiscal year, the deficit in the financial account stood at \$3.96 billion, in contrast to \$1.27 billion a year earlier, as per the latest data from the central bank.

The current account deficit -- which occurs when a nation sends more money abroad than it receives -- is projected to widen further this fiscal year and progressively more in the succeeding years.

The deficit in the trade balance -- which occurs when the country is importing more goods and services than it is exporting -- will improve slightly this year and then worsen in the next two fiscal years, as per the IMF's projections.

The public sector debt-GDP ratio is projected to surpass the psychological 40 percent mark from this fiscal year onwards; it will hop to 41.4 percent in fiscal 2023-24 from 39.8 percent at the end of June last year.

The external debt-GDP ratio is projected to climb to 18.1 percent this fiscal year from 17.7 percent.

Economists though emphasised on reforms if the projections laid out by the IMF in the statement are to be met.

Some assumptions might have played a role behind the optimistic projections for foreign currency reserves, said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

"The IMF might have thought that once the election is over, some of the export proceeds that have not been brought into the country owing to the political uncertainty will flow in. This may add \$5 billion to the reserves."

About \$12 billion of the export proceeds of fiscal 2022-23 are yet to be brought into the country, according to the BB.

Another \$1.5 billion might come from multilateral partners such as the IMF, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

"However, some of the assumptions might not be translated into reality. So, ultimately, we will have to address policy reforms to overcome the current economic challenge."

Otherwise, achieving the projected numbers for reserves will be difficult, Hussain added.

The IMF has attached some major reforms with the third and fourth instalments of the loan, said Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute.

"It will be tough to pass the review for the instalments if the conditions are not met," said Mansur, also a former economist of the IMF.

"The IMF's recommendations should be viewed as something necessary for the economy," said Selim Raihan, executive director of the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling.

If the recommendations are accepted positively, reforms will be meaningful.

"Otherwise, I am worried that there might be half-hearted and incomplete efforts. If the reform process is done unwillingly, influential quarters that have prevented the government from bringing about changes will exert their pressure. Then, we will not get the expected outcomes."

A strong political will is imperative, added Raihan, also a professor at the University of Dhaka's economics department.

They can't oust govt by killing people: PM

FROM PAGE 12

derailed in Gazipur, leaving a man dead and several others injured.

"It is an attempt to kill the people by derailing the train bogies. They want to overthrow the government by killing the people. What can they achieve from a movement by killing people?" wondered the PM.

She said BNP continues arson violence and is announcing strike (hartal) and blockade programmes every other day. Their strikes and blockades have become synonymous with burning buses and trucks, she added.

"What will be the future of the country if they carry out such activities at a time when we are offsetting the brunt of the global economic recession?" asked Hasina.

The premier said instead of these destructive activities, BNP should go to the people.

She said people's votes would decide who would come to power.

"We're not trying to hang onto power. We're developing Bangladesh as long as we are in power. No one

can deny that the country witnessed development. Today, Bangladesh has changed radically [because of the development work]," she said.

"Those who plan to kill people by uprooting rail tracks or burning people alive have nothing called a sense of humanity in them. So, it is the people who will have to resist it."

"There is no clemency for them. They will have to face punishment. I would like to ask the people to also stand against them," she said.

About the Israeli attack on Palestine, Hasina said Bangladesh has already sent relief items, including dry foods and clothes, for Palestinians and will send more relief goods for them.

The new FBCCI committee, with Mahbubul Alam as president, was elected in August 2023 for the 2023-25 tenure.

FBCCI Senior Vice President Amin Holey and three Vice Presidents, Khairul Huda Chopol, Mohammad Anwar Sadar Sarker, and Josphoda Jibon Debnath, are among the newly elected officer bearers.