



'Was about to do a song with him, we ended up marrying'

ABANTI SITHI

I'm actually in the plane, heading to Sylhet! I will be staying at my in-laws' for the time being, and I am very excited. Amith is with me as well.

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

Even though she started her journey in Close Up One in 2006, Abanti Sithi finally gained the recognition that she deserved in 2018 in Kolkata's Sa Re Ga Ma Pa in 2018. Besides her prodigious singing prowess, she is also known as the 'whistle-queen' because of her pitch-perfect whistling skills. From a simple cup to a foil-paper, Sithi can make random paraphernalia sing as well. She has entered a new phase of life, and talks to The Daily Star while on the runway to Sylhet.

Congratulations on your wedding! How did you meet?

Thanks a lot! I met my husband, Amith Dey, through music. He is an amazing musician. We were supposed to collaborate for a song made by Mithun Chakra, but that didn't end up happening. We did keep contact after that, and the wedding talks were done by our respective families.

However, we did finally make a song as husband and wife, called *Benarasi Sari*.

There's a lot of noise over the call. Are you at the airport?

I'm actually in the plane, heading to Sylhet! I will be staying at my in-laws' for the time being, and I am very excited. Amith is with me as well.



PHOTOS: COURTESY



You guys looked amazing together at the ceremony.

You are too kind. Honestly, a lot of people were disappointed at the ceremony, as they couldn't click pictures with us. I heard that many had even left because they were so angry!

Will you take a small break from music to spend time with your husband?

I will lay off the stage shows for a while. Amith will leave for London soon, and I want to spend as much time as possible with him. We will soon go to Nepal for our Honeymoon.

What upcoming work of yours are you the most excited for?

It has to be Gias Uddin Selim's *Kajol Rekha*. I have voiced quite a few songs for the musical film, and I have also dubbed for a character named Pakhi! I am looking forward to the release of the film.

You've been a multi-instrumentalist, singer and now even a voice artiste. Any plans on coming on-screen as an actor?

If I start acting, what will the actors do! They'll be out of work! (laughs) In all seriousness, I do get a lot of offers, but this isn't something that I'd like to pursue right now.

Shah Rukh Khan leads UK's top 50 Asian Celebrities list



Shah Rukh Khan has achieved another milestone by securing the top position in the list of Top 50 Asian Celebrities in the World. The official list was revealed on Friday, with Alia Bhatt claiming the second spot and Priyanka Chopra securing the third position.

Diljit Dosanjh and Ranbir Kapoor also feature prominently amongst the top celebrities on the list published by the UK's weekly Eastern Eye.

The list is based on top celebrities and their significant contributions, breaking barriers and serving as inspirations over the years.

Ferdous receives recognition from Film and Art Society

In a momentous event held at BFDC on Saturday, actor Ferdous Ahmed, renowned for his contribution to Bangladeshi cinema, was honoured by the country's film and artist society. This recognition comes after the actor announced his participation in the upcoming national parliamentary election from the Dhaka-10 constituency.

The ceremony witnessed the presence of several esteemed personalities from the industry, including actresses Anjana, Sujata, Ilias Kanchan, Riaz, Nipun Akter, director Kazi Hayat, Delowar Jahan Jhantu, Mushfiqur Rahman Gulzar, amongst many others.

Expressing his gratitude, Ferdous stated, "Receiving this honour fills me with immense joy. The unwavering support of my friends and



colleagues has deeply moved me. With the endorsement of the Honourable Prime Minister, I am humbled to represent the Dhaka-10 constituency."

NEWS

Tigresses keep making history

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Then Nahida's three-for and a couple of strikes each from spinners Sultana Khatun, Rabeya Khan and Fahima Khatun bundled out the hosts for a mere 131 in 26.1 overs.

This victory comes right on the back of a drawn T20 series against the same opponents.

Before waving the Bangladesh flag high in South Africa, the Nigar Sultana-led side had defeated Pakistan in ODI and T20 series at home, won a

bronze medal in the Asian Games and drawn an ODI series against India.

On Sunday, Bangladesh got off to a flying start as the opening pair of Fargana Hoque (35) and Shamima Sultana (34) scored 56 runs in the first powerplay.

The momentum got a bit stifled after the first 10 overs and the team lost both openers with the score on 110 inside 27 overs.

Murishida, who came into bat at number three, then formed an 80-

run stand with Nigar (38) and an unbeaten 60 run stand with Shorna Akter (27 off 28) to power Bangladesh to their best-ever tally.

Chasing 251, South Africa lost a couple of wickets inside three overs.

Anneke Bosch (16) and Sune Luus (31) showed some resistance and took the score to 50.

Nahida then dismissed both batters in quick succession and before long the match was in Bangladesh's grip.

Kuwait emir Sheikh Nawaf passes away

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brother, Sheikh Sabah, who had ruled for more than a decade and shaped the state's foreign policy for over 50 years.

Sheikh Nawaf was seen by diplomats as a consensus builder even though his reign was marked by an intense standoff between the government and elected parliament, which had hindered key structural reforms in the oil rich Gulf state. In

recent months, consensus returned between the government and the parliament.

Kuwait, holder of the world's seventh-largest oil reserves, borders Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and lies across the Gulf from Iran. It was invaded and occupied by Iraq in 1990, sparking the first Gulf war several months later in 1991 when the United States and other nations defeated Iraq and liberated Kuwait.

Since he took over in 2020, Sheikh Nawaf maintained a foreign policy that balanced ties with those neighbours, whilst domestically eight governments were formed under his rule.

Under Kuwait's constitution, the crown prince automatically becomes emir but assumes power only after taking an oath in parliament. The new emir has up to a year to name an heir.

BNP leaders come out for Victory Day march

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On December 10, the party formed human chains across the country to mark Human Rights Day. However, the programme was foiled in nine districts by police and ruling Awami League men.

Speaking at yesterday's rally, Abdul Moyeen Khan, another member of the BNP standing committee, said the AL government has turned Victory Day into the "day of defeat".

"Fifty-two years ago, Bangladesh became independent by winning the Liberation War. The victory was for democracy. But the current government has killed democracy and destroyed the economy through corruption.

"The government has snatched people's voting and democratic rights and put the protesters behind bars. Thus, they have turned the Victory Day into a day of defeat," he said.

Moyeen said if the government is courageous enough, it should step down to pave the way for a free

and fair election under a non-party neutral administration.

Nazrul said the January 7 election under the AL government would be a farce.

"This country did not become independent for holding such farcical elections. People don't want to see this election and they won't vote."

The BNP leader said the AL is fielding "dummy candidates" to make the polls look competitive. "The way the candidates are being nominated makes it obvious to everyone who will become MPs."

Nazrul said new cases are being filed every day against the BNP leaders and activists to harass them.

During the rally, the road stretching from Nightingale intersection to Bijoynagar was filled with thousands of BNP leaders and activists who carried banners, festoons, placards, and portraits of the top leaders.

The Victory Day procession, taken out from in front of the BNP central office, ended in Shantinagar.

Earlier in the morning, party leaders placed wreaths at the grave of BNP founder Ziaur Rahman in the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

HARTAL TOMORROW
The BNP yesterday called a nationwide dawn-to-dusk hartal for tomorrow.

The 12-hour hartal will begin at 6:00am, said BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi at a virtual press briefing.

This is going to be the fourth hartal to be enforced by the opposition party since October 29, along with 11 blockades.

Adani acquires

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Adani had forayed into the media business in a big way in March last year when it acquired Quintillion Business Media, which operates the business and financial news digital media platform BQ Prime.

Thereafter in December, it took nearly 65 percent stake in broadcaster NDTV.

Perry died from 'acute effects of ketamine'

REUTERS, Los Angeles

"Friends" star Matthew Perry died from the "acute effects" of the powerful sedative ketamine that, combined with other factors, caused the actor to lose consciousness and drown in his hot tub, according to an autopsy released on Friday.

The report from the Los Angeles County Medical Examiner came nearly seven weeks after Perry, 54, who publicly acknowledged decades of drug and alcohol abuse, was found by his live-in assistant floating face down and lifeless in the jacuzzi of his Los Angeles home.

Toxicology tests found ketamine, a short-acting anesthetic with hallucinogenic properties, in Perry's body at high levels well within the range typically associated with general anesthesia used in monitored surgical care, the report said.



"Matthew Perry's cause of death is determined to be from the acute effects of ketamine," the autopsy concluded.

Coronary artery disease, the effects of the opioid-addiction medicine buprenorphine, also detected in his system, and drowning were listed as contributing factors in his death, which was ruled an accident.

The concentrations of ketamine in Perry's body would have overstimulated his heart rate while depressing his breathing, likely leading him to lapse into unconsciousness before his face slipped below the water in the hot tub, the report said.

"The exact method of intake in Mr. Perry's case is unknown," the report said, adding that trace amounts of the drug showed up in his stomach. No recent needle marks were found on his body, it said.

Kamal donated Tk 31cr

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decrease is only about 38 percent of their total movable properties.

Their immovable properties, on the other hand, collectively rose by Tk 11 crore.

The finance minister also leases his property to Padma Bank Ltd, which owes him Tk 2.4 crore in rent.

All banking and non-banking financial institutions are under the jurisdiction of the finance ministry.

Meanwhile, he said that his wife owns the building on plot-II on Road 103 of Gulshan-2, but its worth is only Tk 35 lakhs. The building on that plot is at least eight storeys.

AHM Mustafa Kamal also said in his affidavit that he lent his wife, Kashmiri Kamal, Tk 82.23 lakh and his daughter, Kashfi Kamal, Tk 76 lakh. Then he himself borrowed Tk 1.7 crore from his other daughter, Nafisa Kamal.

The worth of Kashmiri Kamal's postal certificates and fixed deposits soared by Tk 9.03 crore and currently

stands at Tk 25 crore.

Her cash in hand also increased from Tk 5 lakh to Tk 1.73 crore in the past five years.

The finance minister founded a conglomerate called Lotus Kamal Group, which has businesses in the real estate and textile sectors, among others.

Tazul's assets swell 2.5 times

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His income from residential properties also saw a 600 percent increase, and he is currently earning Tk 1.69 crore a year in rent.

Tazul Islam is contesting the 12th parliamentary election from Cumilla-9.

The minister did not provide any financial details about his dependents or partner in the affidavit.

He took loans worth Tk 4.1 crore and almost its entirety is from Jamuna Bank.

EC to survey polls readiness in districts

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enforcers in Rangpur on December 19.

They will hold a similar programme in Rajshahi on December 20.

After that, Rashida will hold a similar programme in Natore on December 21, Pabna on December 21, Sirajganj on December 23, Jaipurhat on December 24, Naogaon on December 25, Gaibandha on December 27, Kurigram on December 28, Lalmonirhat on December 29 and Nilphamari on December 30.

Anisur Rahman, another election commissioner, will visit Habiganj on December 21 and Brahmanbaria on December 22.

Ahsan Habib Khan, the other election commissioner, will visit different districts of Jahore and Khulna.

Zero dengue deaths

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hours," he added.

In the past 24 hours, 179 new dengue patients were hospitalised.

As of yesterday morning, 1,678 dengue patients were undergoing treatment in various hospitals across the country. However, a total of 315,624 patients have been released from hospitals this year.

Hasina has assets

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There is still an active legal case against her, which was filed in 2006 with the Paltan Police Station. The case was filed under sections 143, 323, 325, 326, 302, 307, 109, and 114 of the penal code. The sections pertain to unlawful assembly, battery and assault, and manslaughter.

The High Court had ordered the case to be re-investigated since the prime minister was not initially named in the first information report but rather included later when the charge sheet was submitted.

The premier has established 56 community clinics, retrofitted 117 primary schools, and built 30 bridges in her constituency. She also established 17,000 deep tube wells and 13,600 rainwater harvesting systems for the community.