

Shimana passes away at 39, showbiz mourns tragic loss

Model and actress Rista Laboni Shimana breathed her last yesterday at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), succumbing to severe complications from a brain haemorrhage at the age of 39. The talented artiste, who rose to fame through the 2006 Lux-Channel i Superstar competition, left behind two children, eight-year-old Shreshtho, and three-year-old Sworgo.

Actor Chanchal Chowdhury expressed his condolences on his social media, stating, "Shimana... You've crossed from life into the realm of death...! May you find eternal peace in the infinite beyond. Our hearts ache with sorrow for you. Countless memories linger...!"

ZAHID AKBAR

The heartbreaking scene at the Channel i building around noon saw Shimana's children innocently playing near a condolence book, unaware their mother's untimely demise had forever altered their lives. "Look, Mom has come. Let's go and see her, Sworgo," Shreshtho remarked as the ambulance carrying his mother's remains arrived. Little did they know, this would be the last time they ever saw her.

A little distance away, we could hear the heartbreaking cries of a devastated mother. She was still numb from the loss of her daughter. Unable to control her emotions, she hugged Salahuddin Lavlu and wept inconsolably. She couldn't grasp losing her daughter at such a young age. "I really can't believe she is gone just like that. Why did it have to be her?" she sobbed, tears rolling down her cheeks. Her trembling hands clutched her daughter's photo, unable to comprehend the tragedy.

Shimana's colleague, director Salahuddin Lavlu, lamented, "She messaged me a month

ago, saying she wanted to return to work. I told her I wasn't working on anything at that moment but would let her know as soon as I started something new. Now, I will never be able to cast her, as she has left us too soon." Lavlu had directed Shimana in the acclaimed drama *Sakin Sarisuri*, which brought her widespread recognition for her role as Kakoli.

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Director Chayanika Chowdhury shared a photo of the late actress' children, captioning, "I'm at a loss for words...My heartfelt prayers go out to the two children. May she find peace in the afterlife, and may the One above watch over her children. I pray that all motherless children around the world find comfort, care, and happiness." The talented actress emerged in the

entertainment industry through the 2006 Lux-Channel i Superstar contest. In addition to her television work, she made her silver screen debut in Tauquir Ahmed's film *Daruchini Dwip*. In terms of her recent work, she appeared in Biplob Haider's *Roshni* last year, playing the role of a journalist, after a six-year break due to family commitments.

Shimana's battle began around two weeks ago as she suddenly fell ill on the night of May 21. Around 11:30pm, she was rushed to a private hospital in Dhanmondi, where it was discovered that she had suffered from a brain haemorrhage. The following day, she was transferred to another hospital in Dhanmondi for better treatment. Eventually, on doctors' advice, she was admitted to the National Institute of Neurosciences and Hospital in the capital's Agargaon, where she underwent brain surgery on May 25.

Despite undergoing surgery, her condition remained critical, leading to her transfer to the BSMMU, where she was put on life support last Wednesday (May 29). Tragically, she passed away around 6am yesterday.

The first *janaza* was held at 12:30pm at the Channel i building on the same day. She was laid to rest at her family graveyard in Nakla upazila, Sherpur, later in the evening.

As the nation mourns the devastating loss of the 39-year-old's talent and vibrant spirit, Shimana's colleagues and loved ones struggle to come to terms with her tragic and untimely passing, ensuring her legacy lives on.



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

Arjun Rampal to walk on ramp in Dhaka this month

Bollywood heartthrob Arjun Rampal is set to visit Dhaka this month, after 14 years. The actor, known for his fantastic performance and charismatic personality, has impressed audiences worldwide and made a name for himself.

Arjun Rampal will be in Dhaka on June 7 to attend the upcoming fashion show titled *BHN Experiences Presents Blue Drops by Zurhem*.

Zurhem announced the news on their social media with a personalised video from the actor, confirming that he will be walking the runway in Dhaka this month.

This event is being exclusively organised for Zurhem's loyal and frequent customers, and attendees must register to attend the fashion show.



Sabina Yasmin returns home after months of treatment abroad

Legendary singer Sabina Yasmin has returned to Bangladesh after undergoing treatment for three and a half months at Singapore General Hospital.

The singer arrived back in Dhaka on May 31 and is currently recuperating at her home.

Recently, a family source confirmed to the media that the singer's health is stable. However, she will need to return to Singapore later this month for regular medical check-ups.

Yasmin initially travelled to Singapore last February for a routine medical examination. During the check-up, doctors discovered a dental issue, necessitating surgery on February 7.

NEWS

Tigers' injury woes in WC continue

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The pacer went through the grind in an indoor session on Monday, trying to get back his rhythm.

While Bangladesh Cricket Board's medical department were hopeful of Taskin's recovery when talking to The Daily Star earlier last month, there may be a risk involved in Taskin pushing himself too far. Fellow quick Shoriful Islam, meanwhile, is unlikely to play the Sri Lanka fixture after having injured his bowling hand during the warm-up fixture against India on June 1 and needed six stitches afterwards.

Bangladesh's batting has already been under fire in recent series, and with the most promising among the three departments in the Tigers' dugout still in doubt for World Cup games, the backup options would also be kept ready. Bar Hasan Mahmud, there are no other options for the recovering speedsters.

Given Bangladesh's first two World Cup matches are against Sri Lanka and South Africa, failure to win any of those two affairs can make or break their tournament, leading to certain elimination from the first round.

Meanwhile, criticism of wickets and grounds in the USA has been a big talking point among experts. Whereas Canada and the USA played out a high-scoring game in Dallas, the venue for Bangladesh's first game, Sri Lanka were thumped by South Africa in New York where the ground was inadequately prepared and the wicket made for a low-scoring affair. Cricket commentator Harsha Bhogle went as far as saying that cricket will not gain ground in the USA, with playing surfaces and outfielders of that quality.

There are plenty of questions for the tournament organisers to answer in this regard. However, with wickets unlikely to alter in the next few days, Bangladesh are faced with multiple hurdles as they seek to regain lost confidence.

Benazir may not appear

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IGP and his family had left the country.

On May 28, the ACC issued a notice to Benazir Ahmed and his family for interrogation over the allegations that he amassed illegal wealth through corruption. According to the notice, Benazir Ahmed was summoned on June 6, his wife Zeeshan Mirza and two daughters on June 9.

Sources said, considering how things stand, it is unlikely that Benazir Ahmed will appear before the ACC for questioning tomorrow.

Meanwhile, Benazir's lawyers did not provide any information about the whereabouts of the former IGP and his family and refrained from commenting on whether he will appear before the ACC.

Sources at immigration police confirmed to The Daily Star that Benazir Ahmed and her family members left for Singapore on a Singapore Airlines flight on the night of May 4.

A reliable source close to Benazir

The murder plan

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In his statement, Tanvir further said the killing was planned as per the instructions of Aktaruzzaman, who had been in India for some time and then returned to Bangladesh.

The last meeting, which firmed up the murder plan, was held at a restaurant named "O2" near the Kolkata Airport, in the presence of Aktaruzzaman. He is now in the USA, court sources said.

Amanullah, Mostafizur Rahman, Jihad Howlader, Tanvir, and Siam, among others, were present at the meeting.

About how the lawmaker was lured, the sources said Tanvir had assured Azim that arrangements were made to pay back all the dues of his business.

On Monday, another arrestee, Celesty Rahman, confessed before the court.

Meanwhile, a Bangladesh police team, which went to Nepal on June 1 following information that another suspect, Siam Hossain, was arrested, returned home yesterday. Nepal police arrested Siam, acting up on Bangladesh's alert.

However, there are complications in bringing back Siam due to the absence of an extradition treaty between Bangladesh and Nepal.

Siam might be handed over to India instead, where a murder case

said that Benazir went to Singapore with some of his wife's medical documents. However, he did not confirm whether Benazir is currently in Singapore or any other country.

Moreover, it is uncertain how the corruption charges against Benazir will proceed as he is not in the country.

Speaking on the issue, ACC Chairman Mohammad Moinuddin Abdullah told The Daily Star, "We have requested him [Benazir] to submit a statement on the corruption allegations raised against him. He is expected to come and speak on his behalf. That is what we are hoping for."

"We don't really know where he is right now. We have not issued any travel ban against him or any of his family members," he added.

"The investigation team is probing allegations of corruption against Benazir Ahmed. If they think they need to summon him again to get his statement, they can do so. The investigation committee is completely independent."

was also filed against him for the lawmaker's killing, sources said. Harun Or Rashid, additional commissioner (DB) of DMP, who led the police team in Nepal, yesterday said both countries (India and Bangladesh) have the same intention in this regard.

"We are exchanging information. Whether Nepal hands over the accused to India or to us, there will be no problem in the investigation. The Indian police team came to interrogate the three arrestees - Aktaruzzaman, Celesty, and Tanvir - in Bangladesh, while we went to India to interrogate Jihad Howlader."

He further said that Siam was close to the mastermind Aktaruzzaman.

"If Kolkata police gets Siam in its custody, it will be very helpful in getting more evidence. We'll also get the chance to interrogate him ourselves."

Addressing reporters at the airport, Harun said Siam went to Nepal via Muzaffarabad after abducting and killing the lawmaker in Kolkata, adding that MP Azim's phone was activated in Muzaffarabad as Siam used it to make some calls.

He further said they have received important information and footage from Kathmandu Police about Siam, which will be useful in the investigation.

Benazir, Aziz have nothing to do

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"Who had created former IGP Shamsul Huda and SP Kohinur?" he said.

Quader said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir might have forgotten that his party's acting chief is a convict on the run.

On the other hand, Hasina is well-known at home and abroad as an honest politician, and there is no scope for raising question about her honesty, he said.

The AL general secretary said Khaleda has been sentenced on corruption charges and she can receive treatment at home as her jail term has been suspended due to the generosity of the prime minister.

"This BNP is now talking about corruption and money laundering," Quader said.

He said BNP is now trying to portray their corrupt convicted leader Tarique Rahman as a good person.

Quader said Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (SHUJAN) and BNP make comments in the same tone. "Are TIB and SHUJAN the B-team of BNP?"

The meeting was moderated by Dhaka City North AL General Secretary SM Mannan Kachi, with its President Sheikh Bazlur Rahman in the chair.

Flood situation worsens further

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Floodwater enters the city through drains and canals as the rivers surrounding the city are overflowing, said Sajlu Lashkar, public relations officer of Sylhet City Corporation.

Amid this situation, Zakiganj and Kanaighat upazila parishads go to polls today.

"The flooded polling stations have been changed. We have taken all out preparations to hold the elections," said Returning Officer Imrul Hasan, who is an additional district magistrate of Sylhet.

Meanwhile in Sunamganj, hundreds of people have been affected by the flood in the district. Many roads have been submerged, disrupting communications, said locals.

14-party allies vent anger

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and corruption, for which the government is to ultimately blame, they said.

"Since Awami League alone is in power, why should the partners take responsibility for the government's misdeeds?" one partner asked.

Top leaders of several allies also expressed their frustration over the government's inaction and silence about market manipulation and corruption, especially in the banking sector, when the culprits are already identified.

The meeting was held at Amu's Eskaton residence in the capital. It was a follow-up meeting after AL chief Sheikh Hasina, also the prime minister, sat with them on May 23.

At the beginning of the meeting, Amu informed the AL's plan to go for united programmes to counter anti-state and anti-government propaganda, but the alliance partners rejected the idea, said meeting sources.

After the meeting, Amu told reporters that there were some confusions among some alliance partners, and that they will organise joint programmes after "resolving the disputes".

In response to Amu's proposal for joint programmes at the meeting, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haq Inu, Jatiya Party (Manju) Chairman Anwar Hossain Manju and Tarikat Federation Chairman Syed Nazibul Bashar Maizvandari said they do not even know how the AL view this partnership.

They added that they now wonder whether the alliance exists anymore or whether it is relevant now.

AL leaders are now raising questions about the partners' organisational strength and vote bank, but the alliance was formed out of a political necessity, and that AL termed the alliance its "ideological" partners, they said.

Inu alleged that candidates from the 14-party were not allowed to win in the January 7 national election as part of a pre-planned strategy.

AL shared only seven seats with its three partners in the election, down from 16 in the 2018 polls.

Maizvandari demanded an explanation as to why the partners were not offered their desired seats

and what problem would the AL have had if some of the partners won some seats.

He said they are aware how the election was conducted and how many of the AL candidates actually won the election, according to meeting sources.

Some 14-party leaders told Amu that the AL is now seeking to go for joint programmes since the government is facing some difficulties on multiple fronts, but they will be "thrown aside" again once the crisis is over.

Manju, a seven-time lawmaker from Pirojpur-2, said he was defeated by a so-called AL independent candidate, whose family had questionable roles during the 1971 war, through use of police force.

"Awami League always talks about the spirit of the Liberation War, but in many cases its activities don't match its claims," he said.

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader is expected to sit with the alliance partners on June 12 in efforts to bridge the gap.

Pressure

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Biden added that he had a "major disagreement" with Netanyahu over the post-conflict future of Gaza, and said Israel had engaged in "inappropriate" conduct during the offensive.

But for now, the Gaza offensive raged on unabated yesterday, with the Israeli military reporting more air and artillery strikes and ground combat against Hamas, and Palestinians bemoaning more civilian deaths.

Overnight bombardment hit targets in Gaza City and the southern Rafah area, said AFP reporters and witnesses.

Four bodies were retrieved from a bombed house in the Bureij camp in central Gaza, and three more from the rubble of a destroyed building in Gaza City, Gaza's civil defence agency said.

Israel's military offensive in the Gaza Strip has killed at least 36,550 Palestinians and wounded 82,959 since October 7, the Palestinian enclave's health ministry said yesterday. A total of 71 Palestinians have been killed and 182 wounded in the past 24 hours, the ministry said in a statement.