

# Grateful for 60 YEARS of LOVE Runa Laila



**Runa Laila is a globally acclaimed artiste who has made her mark with various achievements including being honoured with the coveted Independence Award. This esteemed singer, famed especially in the subcontinent, began her singing career 60 years ago, observing six decades in music today.**

**Addressing the love, the songbird has been receiving all these years, she expressed, "Completing 60 years in music is a significant milestone in my career."**

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

She has captivated the hearts of billions with her songs, by performing in 18 different languages. Her contributions have elevated Bangladesh to a distinctive level of international recognition.

In honour of her 60th anniversary in the industry, the singer spared some time to The Daily Star to convey her thoughts.

"Frankly speaking, it is surprising for me to even think that I have been singing for 60 years as I continue to remain in this profession. I plan to keep singing in the future as well. For this, I



PHOTO: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL

she stated, "I have been singing for a very long time and consider myself fortunate to be able to still perform. Just a few days ago, I recorded two new songs. I have the unwavering support of my family, and I continue to receive love from people. For these reasons, I truly feel lucky."

Addressing the love, the songbird has been receiving all these years, she expressed, "Completing 60 years in music is a significant milestone in my career. Even after six decades, I continue to receive love from so many people. Their numerous heartfelt messages and words of devotion touch my heart profoundly, making me very emotional. It is difficult to express just how emotional I feel. I can't help but feel like repeatedly conveying my love and gratitude to everyone."

"Today, Channel i has organised an event to commemorate my 60 years in music. I extend my love and gratitude to them," she informed.

Finding it difficult to choose a particularly memorable encounter with fans because she has had so many wonderful experiences, she said, "Throughout my decades' worth of career in music, I have gained many fans and audiences, both at home

and abroad, who have shown me, immense love. It is hard to single out any particular experience because all of them mean so much to me. In one sentence, I extend my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to everyone. Although I am not physically close to them, I hold them dear in my heart as I remain indebted to them."

Elaborating on her plans with music, she communicated, "I still sing and continue to learn, as there is no end to learning music. I want to learn more. At this age, I realise that Allah has given me so much more than I could ever ask for. I don't seek anything more; I just want to continue giving through my songs."

In staying true to music and the coming days, she admitted, "Positive thinking has always been effective for me. Throughout my life, I have approached everything with a positive outlook. Even now, I focus on what can be achieved. I strive to create new songs and melodies, collaborating with new talents to help them progress. I have a deep appreciation for newcomers and their contributions."

"In 60 years of my musical journey, I hold deep love for everyone and extend infinite gratitude to all," she concluded.



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

am deeply grateful to Almighty Allah. Through my ability to sing, I have received love, respect, and admiration from people. I have won people's hearts over these years, and my love for the audience remains strong," she professed.

Claiming to be a lucky person,

## NEWS

### BPSA statement a threat against media freedom

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being run by print, electronic, and social media outlets are "partial, motivated, exaggerated, and misleading".

The Editors' Council, in its statement, said that by issuing a sweeping statement, the BPSA has brought forth the culture of "blame game".

It added that the authorities concerned could have gone to the Press Council following proper rules and regulations regarding any doubt over media's responsibility in publishing the news.

Instead of doing so, it resorted to the "blame game" by protesting the reports and issuing threats to the media in the name of "being extra cautious" while reporting on the Bangladesh police force in the future - this goes against independent media and impartial journalism.

The statement further said that the media also publish positive reports regarding the police force. However, the media, at the same time, also publish investigative reports with due professionalism on the accumulation of illegal wealth by the government officials in responsible positions.

The Council added that it expects continued support from the police force in the media's efforts to implement the government's anti-corruption policies.

#### DRU, BJC STATEMENTS

Two more journalist organisations - Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) and Broadcast Journalist Center (BJC) - yesterday criticised BPSA's statement, stating that such a response is detrimental to independent journalism.

In separate statements, they said the BPSA statement may encourage individual corruption and create an atmosphere of threat in society.

"In recent times, some reports were published on the unusual asset amassment by some former and current officials. We don't think they were published with any specific intent," said the DRU statement.

"Journalists publish responsible and information-based news, and all the news about some of the current and former police officers is a continuation of that. The language in which some quarters and organisations are reacting to the news is against independent

journalism.

"If an official is involved in corruption, it's his personal matter; it's not a decent job of the Police Service Association to blame the media over this. Rather, it could encourage personal corruption."

Meanwhile, BJC in its statement said, "At a time when it's necessary to continuously improve the environment of independent journalism in the interest of the public, such a statement targeting the media from an association of professionals will create a culture of threat in the society."

"Police officials, on different occasions, have said the institution will never take responsibility for any individual's wrongdoing. By making such a statement, isn't the institution taking on the responsibility of the individuals?"

BJC further said that issuing such a statement without any investigation into whether the media reports are true or false calls the BPSA's professional responsibility into question.

In the statement, BJC said if the reports about the former and current police officials are untrue and not based on evidence, the individual concerned can go to the Press Council to seek legal action.

Instead, the BPSA's statement terming all the reports "motivated" is tantamount to interference in independent journalism, it added.

On Saturday, Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists and Dhaka Union of Journalists also protested the BPSA statement, terming it a threat to independent journalism.

#### TIB'S RESPONSE

International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday strongly condemned the BPSA statement, calling it a direct threat to press freedom and an attempt to suppress the media's voice.

In a statement, the TIB said the association's statement appears to be a deliberate attempt to hinder the exposure of corruption, particularly in the recent cases of former top police officials who have amassed significant wealth, and an attempt to shield them.

TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said, "The statement by the police association dismissing the recent reports of

corruption involving former officials raises a red flag. It's not unreasonable to say that such a statement by the police officers' association potentially indicates a systematic effort to shield those accused within the force."

"On one hand, this statement by the country's law enforcement officers' association is a direct threat to press freedom and an attempt to suppress the voice of the media. On the other hand, it's a clear violation of the citizens' constitutional right to information. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the BPSA is attempting to 'bury its head in the sand like an ostrich' by essentially denying reality."

He blasted the BPSA's claim that reporting corruption tarnishes the police image. He pointed out that media reports detailing extensive investigations into corruption by former top police officials are being met with the weak argument of "tarnishing the police image".

"This raises concerns about the police forces' capability and integrity to stop corruption. A more constructive approach would have been a prompt announcement of an internal investigation or support for an independent probe into these serious allegations. Such a move would demonstrate the force's commitment in tackling corruption."

About the BPSA statement regarding the police force's contribution, Iftekharuzzaman said, "We always recognise and appreciate the police's contributions in various struggles, disasters, and crises, starting from the war of independence in Bangladesh. However, we can't recognise their abuse of power and corruption, and let their contribution be used as a licence to commit crimes or as a tool to protect criminals. This raises serious ethical concerns about the law enforcement agency."

Referring to the home ministry's letter to the information ministry, the TIB said it is as an ominous signal not only for media freedom in the country but also for the entire accountable democratic system.

The TIB reiterates the need for the home ministry and the BPSA to perform their constitutional duties and carry out thorough inquiries into these claims with transparency.

### Brazil start

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title before accepting the Brazil job in January.

Dorival had a lot on his plate with the national team as, while Brazil waited for Ancelotti, they went through a spell in the wilderness during which they had historic negative results.

They suffered defeat in three consecutive World Cup qualifiers for the first time, their first loss to Uruguay for 22 years and saw the end of a 58-match unbeaten home streak in the qualifiers, which led to their worst campaign ever with seven points from a possible 18 after six rounds.

Add to that the loss of talisman Neymar, with a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament and meniscus in his left knee on international duty in October, and Brazil hit rock bottom.

With no Ancelotti and a team in turmoil, Dorival turned his attention to recovering the confidence and self-esteem of a young and revamped squad in which Vinicius Jr claimed the responsibility of carrying the load as Brazil's key player.

With two months to prepare for matches against England and Spain, Dorival relied on his players' grit and pride, fixing up a team that was more feisty than colourful.

They got a 1-0 win over England at Wembley and fought back to draw 3-3 with Spain at the Bernabeu earlier this year.

In both games his hero was teenage sensation Endrick, who became the youngest to score at Wembley aged 17 and a few days later got the equaliser against Spain, leaving Real Madrid fans salivating as he is will soon join the European champions.

The Copa America will be the first time Dorival has had time to work extensively with his players, who face Costa Rica following a three-week training camp in Florida before taking on Paraguay and Colombia in Group D.

With most of the attention on world champions Argentina and Lionel Messi, now playing in the MLS, Brazil will start their Copa America campaign without great expectations - something Dorival will be familiar with from his experience at club level.

### A strategic mishap

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Eights. But ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan was of the opinion that the said freedom could never kick in as the batters' willow rarely did the talking.

"Obviously, we have a shortage of runs as a batting unit. So, the freedom we needed, the confidence we needed, I don't think it was there," Shakib said at the press conference after the game against India.

What has the coaching staff done to improve batting efforts?

Nic Pothas had previously handled the Tigers' batting unit before David Hemp took over the responsibility. It is, however, clear that batting has decayed in recent times and has not been helped by the surfaces at home. Even though those surfaces had been prepared as per the team management's wishes, Bangladesh batters have fared well neither on sporting tracks, like the one in Antigua, nor on the more difficult and slower tracks in this World Cup.

In fact, when push came to shove, they dropped one pacer, Taskin Ahmed, from the lineup to make room for an extra batter - wicket-keeper batter Jaker Ali. Taskin has been able to set the aggression of the bowling unit on various surfaces recently but the advantage that the management felt could be availed by making this change, was not evident. The extra batter did not mean Bangladesh went for the game head-

on, evident from yet another meek Powerplay effort while in chase of a 197-run target.

If attack and freedom to attack were what Bangladesh went for, strategically, they barred themselves from going on the attack with their strongest department which is their bowling. Instead, they stacked the lineup with the underperforming batters against India.

The Tigers' think tank also read the pitch wrong and it led to massive ineffectiveness in their bowling effort. Questions were raised as to why Bangladesh opened with spinners from both ends against two of the best players of spin like Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli.

Understandably, Shakib did not take responsibility for the decision to bowl first and also use spinners so extensively in the Powerplay, mentioning that it is "the coach and captain's decision." However, Shakib did mention that the team management's decision could be based on their perception of playing on a slower surface.

After Afghanistan's historic win over Australia yesterday - which kept the Tigers afloat in the mega event - their skipper Rashid Khan outlined that their coaching staff are often reminding them of specific plans discussed in team meetings. Bangladesh, on the other hand, looked desolate, without a particular strategy they could exploit.

### 40 top, mid-ranking cops transferred

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Majumder is to retire on July 19, and Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU) Additional Inspector General SM Ruhul Amin on July 30, according to the police database.

Sources said there are discussions regarding the extension of Mamun's tenure for another six months.

However, two new names - Additional Inspector General (admin and operations) of PHQ Kamrul Ahsan, Additional Inspector General (crime and operations) of PHQ Md Atikul Islam - prominently came up for the next possible IGP.

A highly-placed source at PHQ said Kamrul Ahsan is ahead in the

race.

Another source said Krishna Pada Roy is expected to replace Banaj Kumar Majumder as the new PBI chief.

Md Saiful Islam, chief of the Metro Rail Police wing of the PHQ, will replace Krishna Pada Roy as the new CMP commissioner, reads the home ministry order.

Md Jamil Hasan, DIG of the Barishal range, against whom corruption allegations recently surfaced in media reports, has been transferred to the Highway Police unit. PBI DIG Eliash Sharif will replace Jamil as the new Barishal Range DIG.