

Hassan Abidur Reja Jewel

A beloved face in music lost

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK



Hassan Abidur Reja Jewel, a revered figure in Bangladesh's music and television industry, passed away yesterday, leaving behind a rich legacy spanning over three decades. Known for his soulful voice and exceptional production skills, Jewel emerged as a prominent artiste in the early 1990s when band music was burgeoning in the country.

Yesterday, his *janazah* was held at Azad Mosque in Gulshan after Asr prayers. The second *janazah* was held at 6pm on Channel i's premises, and he was later laid to rest at Banani Graveyard.

We honour the life and legacy of this esteemed artiste, who succumbed to cancer at the age of 56 after a courageous 13-year battle.

Jewel's childhood was marked by frequent relocations across Bangladesh, shaping his diverse cultural exposure. Encouraged by his parents, he began singing at a young age, starting formal lessons in first grade and performing on stage by fourth grade. Despite his passion for music, Jewel ensured it wasn't his sole source of income, pursuing a career in television production to balance artistic pursuits with practical considerations.

His debut album was released in 1992, marking the beginning of a prolific career that saw 10 albums over 28 years. His collaborations with legendary guitarist Ayub Bachchu, who composed seven of his albums, left an indelible mark on Bangladeshi music. Jewel's influence extended beyond the studio; he also captivated audiences on stage, even though his later years were devoid of new releases. Yet, music remained an integral part of his life, a constant companion through highs and lows.

Among his numerous songs, Jewel held a special fondness for *Amar Ache Ondhokar*, penned by Sayed Awlad and composed by Bappa Mazumder, with musical arrangement by Ayub Bachchu. This track, the title song of his 1995 solo album, held a special place in his heart.

In 2015, with Bachchu's permission, Jewel reintroduced *Amar Ache Ondhokar* with a new piano arrangement, showcasing his deep voice in a fresh, stripped-down format. This rendition was shared on his YouTube channel with a lyrical video and the story behind its creation.

Before Ayub Bachchu's passing, Jewel reflected on the album's creation in an interview with the rock legend, recounting, "The album was set to release on Eid, but Boss (Ayub Bachchu) couldn't find time. So, I came up with an idea and got Boss off the hook for four days. We then checked into a hotel in Shanti Nagar. Boss, Tutul, and Fanti (the drummer) got to work with great enthusiasm. Boss would take a lyric, grab his guitar, and compose a tune. Fanti would handle the rhythm section, while Tutul recorded keyboard layers and music sequences."

The team completed 11 songs by the afternoon of the second day, leaving only the title track, composed by Bappa Mazumder. Upon hearing the demo of it, Bachchu approved, stating, "The melody and lyrics are great, Julu! It's perfect for you. Let's do it. Call Bappa." This collaboration resulted in one of Jewel's most cherished songs, blending Mazumder's composition with Bachchu's arrangement.

His notable productions include *Ek Bikele* (1994), *Amar Ache Ondhokar* (1995), *Ekta Manush* (1996), *Beshi Kichu Noy* (1998), *Bedona Shudhui Bedona* (1999), *Firtee Pothe* (2003), *Dorja Khola Bari* (2009), and *Emon Keno Holo* (2017). Among his 10 solo albums, *Ek Bikele* gained the most popularity, earning him the moniker 'Ek Bikeler Jewel'.

His passing has left a void in the industry, as expressed by fellow artistes and fans.

Singer Elita Karim posted,

"Dearest Jewel *bhai*, may he rest in peace. May the Almighty grant him the highest honour in heaven. He was one of the finest human beings in the music industry, and I am so glad that I had the opportunity to actually say this to him a while ago."

Singer Konal reflected, "Jewel *bhai*, our industry's musical jewel, and a gem of a human being, left us for the heavens. I lost one of my mentors today."

Debashish Biswas, Khijir Hayat Khan, Rafiath Rashid Mithila, and Adnan Faruque Hillol, among others, also expressed their deep sorrows.

Jewel's departure marks the end of an era for Bangladeshi music, but his contributions and the memories he created will continue to resonate with his fans and loved ones.



PHOTO: GR SOHAIL & STAR

Shweta Tiwari to star in Karan Johar produced web-series



Shweta Tiwari was once a household name, popularly known for her role as Prerna in the Indian television series *Kasautii Zindagi Kay*. The actress recently joined forces on a Karan Johar-produced web-series.

In a recent interview with an Indian newspaper, she talked more about the project, "I've signed with Dharma Productions for an upcoming series where I play a don-like character in a saree who smokes cigarettes (laughs). The role seemed challenging, which is why I'm excited about it."

Besides, she is set to reprise her cop role in *Singham Again*, which stars Ajay Devgn, Kareena Kapoor, Deepika Padukone, Ranveer Singh, and Arjun Kapoor.

Jimmy Kimmel not returning to host Oscar



Jimmy Kimmel, a four-time Oscar host, has turned down the offer to host the 2025 Oscars. He is tied with Whoopi Goldberg and Jack Lemmon for fourth in hosting duties, behind Johnny Carson (5), Billy Crystal (9), and Bob Hope (19).

People Magazine reports that Jimmy Kimmel has declined to host the 2025 Oscars, so he won't be on stage for the 97th Academy Awards. Kimmel previously hosted in 2017 and 2018; the ceremony had no host from 2019 to 2021.

The 97th Academy Awards will be broadcast live at 7pm (ET) on ABC on Sunday, March 2, from the Dolby Theatre at Ovation Hollywood.

NEWS

One bullet

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In Shonir Akhra's Rayerbagh area on July 20, Jisan was hit by a bullet, which pierced through his eyebrow and exited through his skull. He died on the spot.

This, however, was not the end to the tragedy.

Unable to bear the pain of losing her husband, Mishiti had stopped eating from the very day he was shot dead.

Nine days later, she died by suicide.

"She couldn't bear the thought of living without him," said Jisan's father Babul Sarder, a Bangladeshi working in South Sudan for the past nine years, after travelling from Rangpur to Dhaka following Mishiti's burial in her family cemetery yesterday morning.

"She went into shock after my son was killed and was starving herself. She clutched onto his clothes and cried continuously."

Babul had always hoped his son would join him abroad for a better future.

But Jisan was adamant not to leave Mishiti behind. Though this frustrated Babul, he ultimately accepted his son's decision.

Jisan was a hardworking young man and made around Tk 700 a day by supplying drinking water.

On the day of the clash, his mother pleaded him to stay home. Jisan, however, insisted on going to work, hoping to earn his daily income.

When he got caught up in the clash, he took shelter in a nearby shop. It was just when he peeked outside to check if the violence had stopped that he was fatally shot.

Babul was in South Sudan at the time and rushed back to the country when he heard of his son's passing.

"My son often wanted to buy a bike but I didn't allow it fearing what if something happened to him ... there would be no one to carry my coffin after I died, as he is my only son. I never imagined that I would be the one carrying my son's coffin instead."

"In Sudan, even the poorest people have AK-47s, but they don't kill innocent people like birds. But my son was killed like one," Babul cried.

"Nobody from the government or police even came to offer their condolences or apologise for such a tragedy in our lives but I saw our prime minister shedding tears over the metro rail, which was built with remittance from people like us."

"The metro rail stations can be repaired but can she give back my son and daughter-in-law?"

"I have left justice up to the Almighty," he added, his voice choked with the grief he must bear for the rest of his life.

Judicial probe

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The inquiry commission has been expanded. The commission can [probe] incidents that took place up to July 21. A notification in this regard has already been sent," Anisul said.

It was decided in the meeting that the ongoing curfew in four districts would be relaxed for 13 hours every day for four days from today, said Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan.

The curfew will be enforced from 8:00pm to 7:00am in Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur, and Narsingdi, he said.

Apart from Asaduzzaman and Anisul, Industries Minister Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun; Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury; State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mohammad Ali Arafat; State Minister for Labour and Employment Md Nazrul Islam Chowdhury; and State Minister for Posts, Telecommunications, and Information Technology Zunaid Ahmed Palak also attended the meeting.

Secretaries of different ministries, the inspector general of police, director general of Rab, and top officials of law enforcement and intelligence agencies were also present.

Responding to a question, Asaduzzaman said law enforcers were arresting people based on evidence.

"We are not arresting any innocent person. We are arresting those who we have been able to identify with intelligence information, footage,

and witnesses' accounts," he said.

"We are not making any mass arrests."

He said those involved in the violence have committed seditious acts and action must be taken against them in accordance with the law.

Education Minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury said they want to reopen educational institutions gradually after considering public safety and the risks.

"We have repeatedly said that public safety is most important when it comes to the question of reopening educational institutions ... We want to open the educational institutions step by step in consultation with all authorities," he said.

Primary schools will be opened after assessing security risks and then the decision will be made regarding secondary schools, he said.

State Minister Palak said the government will inform people about reopening social media platforms, including Facebook and TikTok, by 11:00am today.

"We wrote to TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook seeking explanations, verbally and in writing. TikTok responded. They said they intend to show up and respond verbally and in writing tomorrow [Wednesday]. As far as I know, Facebook and YouTube have not responded."

He said, "We have written to these organisations [TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook] to appear before the BTRC at 9:00am, 10:00am, and 11:00am tomorrow."

Landslides kill 123 in Kerala

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unaccounted for, state authorities said. Local Asianet TV put the death toll higher at 119.

Yesterday's landslides are the worst disaster in the state since 2018 when heavy floods killed almost 400 people.

"There are still people who are trapped under the ground and those who have been swept away," Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan told reporters. "The rescue operation will continue with all possible strength and means."

More than 3,000 people had been moved out of the area and accommodated in 45 relief camps in the district, he said, adding that hundreds of personnel, including

army soldiers, using drones and sniffer dogs were searching for survivors amid heavy rains, reports Reuters.

Vijayan, a survivor who gave only one name, said he woke up in the middle of the night to feel the ground shake and see electric poles fall.

"A couple of neighbours and I ran to nearby houses where we heard cries for help and took some of the injured to safety," he told Asianet.

"My father, mother, sister and her daughter were in the house and as I went towards them the next landslide hit with a roaring sound," he said. "I clung to a window bar as I saw my mother and sister disappear under the mud. I couldn't do anything."

Jamaat, Shibir

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The petitioners said Jamaat was a religion-based political party, and it did not believe in independence and sovereignty of Bangladesh.

Jamaat later filed an appeal with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court challenging the HC verdict. The SC upheld the HC verdict declaring Jamaat's registration illegal.

The party secured the registration on November 24, 2008, after making many changes to its charter in line with the EC requirement.

Families of the Liberation War martyrs and war crimes trial campaigners have long been demanding Jamaat be tried as a party for committing crimes against humanity in 1971. Even the war crimes investigators found proof of committing crimes against humanity by the party and recommended charges be pressed against it.

Law Minister Anisul on many occasions had said the government would amend the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act-1973 to try parties. But the act is yet to be amended.

Controversial Islamist thinker Sayyid Abul A'la Maududi founded Jamaat in undivided India under the British colonial rule in 1941.

The government of independent

Bangladesh had banned five communal outfits, including Jamaat, which not only opposed the nation's independence but also actively helped Pakistan occupation forces commit genocide and other crimes against humanity.

The banned parties were given the green light to do politics during the rule of late president Ziaur Rahman after the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975.

The international crimes tribunals in their judgments described the Jamaat's role in 1971.

Several top leaders of Jamaat have been executed over committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

Some judgments also said Jamaat played a leading role in creating Pakistan occupation army's auxiliary forces like Al-Badr, Razakar, and Al Shams, and formation of peace committees that actively took part in atrocities against Bangladeshis.

Jamaat was banned twice before, in 1959 and 1964 in Pakistan, for its communal role.

In 1971, the party took stance against the nation's independence and massacred pro-liberation activists.

Jamaat represented in parliament after its candidates won seats in 1986,

1991, 1996, 2001 and 2008 national elections.

In 2001, BNP-Jamaat formed the four-party alliance government.

The AL, Jamaat, and several other political parties waged a joint movement in 1996 to press home the demand for holding general elections under a caretaker administration.

WHAT JAMAAT SAYS

Protesting the decision to ban the party, Jamaat Ameer Shafiqur Rahman in a statement yesterday said the government's decision is "illegal and unconstitutional".

"Jamaat-e-Islami is an established democratic political party, which has participated in all credible elections in Bangladesh. The party had representatives in parliament," he said.

The Jamaat chief said people will not accept the government's decision.

SIX ORGS BANNED SO FAR

Previous governments through executive orders banned five organisations between 2003 and 2009. They are Shahadat-e-Al Hikma (banned in 2003), Jagroto Muslim Janata Bangladesh (2005), Jamaat-ul Mujahedin (2005), Harkatul Jihad Al Islami (2005), and Hijubut Tahrir (2009).

Purbo Banglar Communist Party was also banned for its terrorist and anti-social activities.

Police drives, arrests continue

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Replying to a query, Biplob said law enforcers would be withdrawn from duty and prosecuted to the full extent of the law if there was any proof that they were demanding money from detainees or their families for their release.

Asked about video footage of police shooting unarmed citizens, he said, "Every incident has to be judged individually. For each case of police firing reported, the context under which it happened will be reviewed. We will ensure a fair investigation in each case."

Among those arrested in 29 districts in the 36 hours till 6:00pm yesterday, two are in Thakurgaon, five in Madaripur, six in Rangpur, three in Feni, four in Sylhet, four in Tangail, one in Moulvibazar, three in Habiganj, 20 in Rajshahi, 10 in Bogura, six in Gaibandha, nine in Narsingdi, 23 in Narayanganj, one in Khulna, 17 in Pabna, five in

Mymensingh, four in Kishoreganj, two in Netrokona, five in Satkhira, one in Cox's Bazar, seven in Cumilla, two in Natore, 46 in Chattogram, two in Lalmonirhat, five in Nilphamari, eight in Noakhali, five in Laxmipur, three in Brahmanbaria, and six in Barishal.

MORE ON REMAND

A Dhaka court yesterday placed former Jubo Dal general secretary SM Jahangir and BNP's Vice-Chairman Barkatullah Bulu's son Omar Sharif Md Imran, alias Saniat on a five-day remand each in connection with a case filed over the vandalism of the Mirpur-10 Metro Station on July 19.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Farzana Shakila Sumu Chowdhury passed the order after DB inspector Shikder Mohitul Alam produced them before the court with a 10-day remand prayer.

The same court rejected the bail petition of BNP's International Affairs

Secretary Nasir Uddin Ahmed Ashim and sent him to jail on completion of his three-day remand in the same case.

Besides, the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Saifur Rahman placed Bangladesh Jatiyo Party (Manzu) Chairman Andaleev Rahman Partho on a fresh three-day remand in a case filed over the attack on Setu Bhaban in Dhaka on July 18.

The same court sent Rezaul Hasanat David, chairman and CEO of Viyellatex Group, to jail on completion of his five-day remand in the same case.

On July 25, Partho and David were placed on a five-day remand each in the same case.

The same court yesterday placed Nazmus Shakib and Tauhid Ibn Badar, students of Titumir College, on a four-day remand each in the same case after they were produced before the court with a 10-day remand prayer.