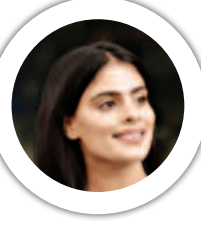


Kannada actress Shobitha Shivanna found dead, police suspect suicide

Kannada actress Shobitha Shivanna was found dead in her Hyderabad apartment on Sunday. Police suspect suicide, and an investigation is currently underway. Her body has been sent for a post-mortem at Gandhi Hospital.

A police official confirmed to ANI that her husband, Sudhir Reddy, discovered her lifeless body after forcibly opening the door.

Born on September 23, 1992, in Bengaluru, Shobitha was known for her roles in films like *Vandana* and *Jackpot*, and had taken a break from acting after her marriage in 2023. However, she was reportedly planning a comeback.



DIFF showcases Indian films despite KIFF excluding Bangladeshi projects

Bangladesh will not be represented at the upcoming Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF), which begins on December 4. The festival will showcase 180 films from 29 countries, but no Bangladeshi films are included.

KIFF Chairman Gautam Ghosh cited political shifts and visa issues as the reasons behind the omission. Despite this, Indian

films will be featured at Bangladesh's Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF) in January 2025.

DIFF organiser Ahmed Muztaba Zamal highlighted the festival's inclusivity, showcasing films from India, Pakistan, and China, though visa complications and sponsorship challenges have affected its scale this year.



Vikrant Massey announces retirement from showbiz

Actor Vikrant Massey, known for his performances in *12th Fail*, *Haasen Dillruba*, and *Sector 36*, has announced his retirement from the entertainment industry. Sharing the news via Instagram, Massey expressed gratitude for the support he's received over the years.

He stated, "It's time to reset and return home—as a husband, father, son, and actor." Massey confirmed



SHAKIB KHAN'S 'Dorod' to premiere in Malaysia

Shakib Khan's latest film, *Dorod*, will be released in Malaysia on December 6, with screenings expanding to 18 cinemas nationwide by December 7.

Directed by Anonno Mamun, the movie premiered in Bangladesh on November 15.

Distributors attribute the remarkable success of these films to Khan's increasing prominence among the Bangladeshi diaspora. Building on this momentum, Bangladeshi exhibition companies JetZG Enterprise SDN BHD and Happy Trip Travel and Tour have partnered to bring *Dorod* to Malaysian audiences.

The announcement was made at a press conference held on November 29, at the Royal Ruposhi Restaurant in Kotaraya, Kuala Lumpur.



that 2025 will be his final year in the industry, with two films—*Yaar Jigri* and *Aankhon Ki Gustaakhiyan*—remaining on his slate.

The announcement has left fans shocked, sparking speculation about his future career moves, including potential politics.



K-POP STARS GEAR UP for year-end comebacks with special releases

As 2024 draws to a close, K-pop fans can look forward to a series of exciting comebacks and special releases. BLACKPINK's Rosé, Stray Kids, TWICE, and SEVENTEEN's THE 8 are among the major artistes set to drop new music.

December will also see releases from BTOB, KARD, and NCT's Mark. Highlights

include BLACKPINK's Rosé's first studio album, *rosie* on December 6, and TWICE's 14th mini-album, *Strategy*. Special singles like *Last Kiss* by THE BOYZ and *When Winter Comes* by MONT will also be released. Year-end celebrations and award shows will add to the festive mood for K-pop fans.

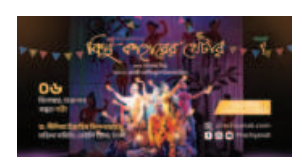
WHAT'S THE HAPS?

Kinu Kaharer Thetar at Mohila Samity

Prachyanat is bringing one of its most impressive stage shows, *Kinu Kaharer Thetar*, written by Manoj Mitra and directed by Kazi Toufiqul Islam Emon, to the stage at Bangladesh Mohila Samity's Nilima Ibrahim Auditorium at Bailey Road.

Date: December 6

Time: 7pm



NEWS

Two former Rab officials

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20 for further hearing and asked the prosecution to submit progress reports on the investigations that day.

During the hearing yesterday, the prosecution described Alep Uddin as the "mastermind" behind the forced disappearances.

"Alep Uddin has been named in most of the 50 complaints filed so far with the ICT regarding forced disappearance," a prosecution lawyer told the tribunal.

The complainant who was charged under DSA by Farooqi was picked up on October 27, 2018. According to the plaintiff, five-six plainclothes men caught him when he was aboard a vessel at the capital's Sadarghat Launch Terminal on his way to his village home in Pirojpur.

They handcuffed and blindfolded him and took him to an unknown place where he was brutally tortured. He was repeatedly questioned about his social media activities and posts criticising former prime minister Sheikh

Hasina and her son Sajeed Wazed Joy, reads the complaint.

He was also told that an order was issued to kill him. At one stage, his blindfold came off and he identified one of those beating him as one of his abductors.

One day, his blindfold was taken off and he was allowed to shower. He found that his clothes were blood-drenched and his face battered.

According to the complaint, he was put into a car on November 6, 2018, given two mobile phones and some money before being dropped off at a place. At that time, some vehicles inscribed with the word "Rab-10" reached there and he was picked up again.

After taking him to the ticket counter of Shyamoli Paribahan, the law enforcers handcuffed him, essentially staging an arrest. He was taken to the Rab-10 office where Farooqi met him.

"Forget the past. You have been arrested today. We have orders to kill you in a crossfire. I am going to

the Rab 2 office and I will take you there and kill you in a crossfire," the complainant quoted Farooqi as saying.

He was then sued under the DSA. The complainant who filed the case against Alep Uddin was allegedly picked up from Madhuban Hotel near the capital's Rampura Bazar on April 7, 2017, by some plainclothes men who claimed they were cops.

He was taken to a Rab-II "detention centre" in Narayanganj's Shiddhirganj, where he was hung upside down and tortured. After three months, he was moved to the Rab headquarters, where he was kept inside a tiny cell for another month, reads the complaint.

He was approached by Alep and another person to take Tk 30 lakh to keep mum about his abduction. As he refused to comply, he was sent back to jail.

During the hearing yesterday, Farooqi tried to talk to the tribunal, but it told him that he would be allowed to talk through his lawyer.

Tigresses

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and Sharmin against South Africa in 2017 -- as the hosts chased down a 186-run target in 37.3 overs.

With the win, Bangladesh completed their second-ever clean sweep in a three-match ODI series after handing a 3-0 thrashing to Zimbabwe in 2021. The win also helped the Tigresses leapfrog Pakistan on the Women's Championship table where they sit seventh, with 19 points from 21 matches -- a solitary point shy of sixth-placed New Zealand and three behind fifth-placed Sri Lanka. The top six sides, including hosts India, will get direct entry to the 2025 Women's Cricket World Cup.

Earlier in the day, Gaby Lewis led from the front with a captain's knock of 52, supported by Amy Hunter (23), Orla Prendergast (27) and some valuable lower-order contributions, as Ireland posted 185 on the board.

However, it was Bangladesh's spinners who dominated with the ball, claiming all 10 wickets. Fahima Khatun was the standout performer, leading the charge with three scalps, while the rest of the spin attack chipped in with wickets and suffocated the Irish batting.

EC to launch

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collected by the Election Commission in 2022. The rest registered at the EC office themselves, he said.

"However, according to statistics, about 45 lakh people are expected to be added as the new voters. So, 27-28 lakh people are yet to be registered."

The information collected from the door-to-door campaign will be included in the list of eligible voters for 2026, the election commissioner added.

At the same time, information will be gathered to drop the names of the deceased from the voter list.

Responding to a question, Abul Fazal said it may take up to six months to complete all the activities, including collecting information from door to door. It is not yet decided when the house-to-house data collection will start. An action plan will be prepared at the EC Secretariat in this regard.

However, the EC thinks that it will be able to begin this work after March 2, he added.

The new EC, led by Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin, took office on November 24.

Do not shelve LDC graduation

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The finance adviser earlier told the media that they are yet to take a call on the matter.

Meanwhile, a section of exporters is putting pressure on the government to shelve the graduation as the Bangladesh economy is in a fragile state from the pandemic, the Ukraine war, domestic political turmoil, global inflationary pressure and energy shock.

In its report, the white paper committee said that the recent concern about the inflated nature of certain critical indicators will have little relevance in this case.

The UN bodies will only revisit their calculations when a revised data set (including the GNI estimates) is available from government sources.

Notwithstanding the reservations expressed by certain exporters' groups, there is hardly any plausible reason, as of now, for Bangladesh to request a deferment of the exit date from the LDC group, it said.

"Under these circumstances, Bangladesh will be well advised to pursue a substantive and effective LDC graduation strategy. This will require putting forward a transition

plan to counteract the negative fallouts of Bangladesh's graduation out of the LDC group and enable the required structural transformation of the economy."

The postponement of Bangladesh's LDC graduation date will invite political backlash from the expected quarters, the white paper said.

A smooth transition strategy (STS) to support the LDC graduation trajectory of Bangladesh has already been developed.

However, concern remains regarding its coordinated implementation, including the challenge of institutional and policy leadership.

Bangladesh has, on two occasions (2018 and 2021), met the three sets of graduation thresholds set by the UN Committee for Development Policy (CDP), it said.

According to the recent triennial review by the CDP in February, the current status of Bangladesh remains comfortable despite the recent economic and political challenges.

Indeed, even the recent dampened economic performance during the current fiscal year is not expected to bring the country down below the stipulated thresholds, it said.

A school that supports children

FROM PAGE 12

well as hands-on training on basic computer skill, vegetables farming and handicrafts.

Jannatul Begum comes here with her 14-year-old daughter, Mohona, from Gozaria of Sorachor upazila of the district.

"My daughter has no legs and hands since birth. I took it as a challenge, and I bring her here for her lessons," she told The Daily Star on the school campus last week.

The school was established in 2015 in a makeshift structure by M Mahbubur Rahman Bhuiyan, a development worker currently based in Dhaka. Originally from Kishoreganj, Mahbubur himself has physical disability since a polio attack affected his left leg in his childhood.

In 2020, the school was shifted on its current campus, a four decimal of land donated by Dr Meherul Huda, who now lives in Australia. Originally from Kishoreganj, Dr Huda also donated some money to build the tinsed, brick-wall school having eight rooms.

Currently, there are nine teachers, one psychologist, and six staffers in the school, the headteacher said.

"People with disabilities face different problems. Stigma and discrimination are most common for



PHOTO: STAR

Children singing national anthem at Mrittika Pathshala in Kishoreganj.

them. Basically, we try to teach them to lead a normal life, as much as they can. The problem is we cannot do much. For example, many of these children need transport, but we cannot provide it," she said.

The school has no fixed income other than Tk 10,000 per month in rent from an auto-rickshaw that the school owns. Also, a number of private citizens make some small donations. As a result, the teachers and staffers don't even get paid regularly, said Afsana.

Mahbubur, who started the

school, said persons with disability face serious discrimination, and education is the only way to eliminate this discrimination.

"I set up this school to ensure their right to education," he said.

Speaking by phone from Australia, Dr Huda stressed the need for support for initiatives meant to improve the lives of children with disability.

"Fund allocation has to be increased to meet their special needs for education, health and integration into society, enabling them to live a meaningful life as citizens," he said.