

Amir Ali passes away

CITY DESK

Amir Ali, a Language Movement veteran, journalist, teacher, and researcher, passed away in London on November 28, said a press release.

Born on May 26, 1936, in Mymensingh, Amir Ali's ancestral home was in Kathuria village under Sharsha upazila in Jashore.

He received his BA and MA in English Language and Literature from Dhaka University, and later earned an LLB degree. He was imprisoned for participating in the Language Movement. He was among the founders of the then East Pakistani Chhatra Union.

He began his career as a columnist for the then Pakistan Observer newspaper. He later served as the head of the Department of English Language and Literature and as an associate professor at Jagannath College.

On March 27, 1964, he travelled to Britain for higher education. He went on to obtain a postgraduate degree from the University of Surrey, London, and an MSc in Sociology from Birkbeck College, University of London.

As a leading figure during the Liberation War, Amir Ali worked closely with Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury.

Iqbal Ahmad no more

CITY DESK



Prof Iqbal Ahmad, an educator and freedom fighter, passed away yesterday. He was 77, said a press release.

He is survived by his wife, a son, and two grandchildren.

His first namaz-e-janaza was held at Dhaka University Central Mosque, and the second janaza at Siddheshwari Girls' School Field on Bailey Road. Later, he was laid to rest in Banani Graveyard.

Born on September 20, 1948, in Narsingdi, he was the eldest son of Alauddin Ahmad, a former member of the National Assembly from Monohardi-Kapasid constituency in East Pakistan, and Jahanara Ahmad.

Ahmad earned his BSc (Hons) and MSc from Dhaka University, MSc in Industrial Administration from Aston University, UK, and MS in Industrial Relations from the Institute of Social Studies, the Netherlands.

He served for more than three decades at the Institute of Business Administration, Dhaka University, as professor and director, teaching in the DBA, MBA, EMBA, and BBA programmes and supervising MPhil and DBA students.

He also served on several private sector boards and, until his passing, was an independent director of Uttara Bank PLC. An active Rotarian and dedicated social worker, he authored notable works on Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations.

Anisul, Manju to announce

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new alliance, adding, "Everything will be made clear in the briefing."

In mid July, leaders of four JP factions appeared on the same stage at a memorial event marking the sixth death anniversary of party founder HM Ershad and called for uniting the Jatiya Party under one umbrella.

It was organised by

Pallibandhu Ershad Smriti Sangsad. Manju, who is also a former minister, joined as the chief guest, while leaders of Jatiya Party (Rashan Ershad), Jatiya Party (Kazi Zafar), and Jatiya Party (Matin) were also present.

The organisers said they came together on the same stage as part of a broader unity process on Ershad's death anniversary.

At the event, several JP leaders sought forgiveness for their past mistakes, saying they unconditionally apologised to the people.

On August 9, the JP formally split into another faction, led by Anisul Islam Mahmud, following a council session.

Founded in 1986 by HM Ershad, the Jatiya Party has a long history

of factionalism, having already split at least six times.

The five other factions are: GM Quader-led Jatiya Party (JaPa), Anwar Hossain-led Jatiya Party (JP), Andaleevo Rahman Partho-led Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP), MA Muktib-led Bangladesh Jatiya Party, and Mostafa Jamal Haider-led Jatiya Party (Kazi Zafar).

Over to the police last night. He was taken to Keshabpur Upazila Health Complex following the handover. Subsequently, Ujjal was taken to Jashore Central Jail.

Jailer Abid Ahmed said, the Jashore jail received Ujjal with a medical certificate stating "public assault" issued by the upazila health complex at around 9:30pm. Ujjal was then moved to the jail's medical centre around 10:30pm.

Suspecting internal bleeding, jail authorities shifted Ujjal to Jashore General Hospital when he fell ill again, where doctors pronounced him dead, said the facility's resident doctor, Bazlur Rashid.

The deceased's elder brother Afzal Hossain alleged that Ujjal was tortured.

Jashore district Jubo Dal Member Secretary Ansarul Haque said, "There is no approved Jubo Dal committee in Keshabpur. Ujjal's name was in the convening committee, but it was never approved. He worked as a party activist but was expelled due to controversial activities."

They have no knowledge of politics, no knowledge of history and no understanding of Bangladesh's evolution and development.

said noted photographer Shahidul Alam.

"This is unfortunate. If those in power fail to tolerate criticism, they will create their path to fall."

Progress is possible only through questions and criticism.

"Otherwise, the society will walk backwards," he added.

It is an alarming trend that the mystic baul singers and cartoonists, satirists are facing cases, said Din M Sumon Rahman, head of media studies and journalism at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh.

"It is unthinkable these important elements of society will face attacks so soon after the July uprising."

Satires, cartoons and memes are established practices in democracy through which people's anger against the powerful can be ventilated. Otherwise, people can take to the streets to oust the regimes.

"Now, we can see that the new elites are very fragile and get embarrassed by the criticism -- those wishing to establish moral supremacy cannot tolerate the free expressions," he added.

Cartoonist Ahsan Habib, meme researcher Faiyaz Ahmed, writer Firoze Ahmed and Supreme Court lawyer Priya Ahsan Chowdhury spoke among others.



After collecting olives from nearby trees, a man sorts them into baskets in Naogaon's Kalikapur village, which saw a good yield this year. The produce is being sold to traders at Tk 20 per kg. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

The abuse that leaves no bruise

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HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

Controlling behaviour cuts across education, income, and geography. From villages to Dhaka's middle class areas, husbands dictate when women can leave home, how long they may be out, whom they may meet, and even when they must return.

The VAW Survey found nearly 40 percent of women need permission to access healthcare; 29 percent face mistreatment linked to in-laws; a quarter report insults to their parents; and 15 percent are restricted from recreational activities.

Women reported partners trying to stop them from seeing friends or family, demanding to know their whereabouts, showing jealousy when they spoke to other men, [monitored their behaviour], or enforcing permission to access healthcare.

Other forms included forcing women to wear a veil, restricting education or work, limiting outings, insulting parents, and monitoring social media.

Regional variations are stark: Khulna and Barishal report prevalence above 73 percent, while Dhaka has 63 percent. Rates are higher in disaster-prone regions (73.2 percent vs 65.3 percent), and urban areas outside city corporations exceed the national average at 70.4 percent.

Younger women are most at risk: 59.1 percent of girls aged 15-19 report current controlling behaviour, dropping sharply after age 60. Education and

wealth reduce vulnerability; 71.5 percent of women with no or pre-primary education report lifetime exposure, compared with 54.8 percent of graduates.

Raisul Islam, programme officer at the National Helpline Centre for Violence Against Women and Children, said that they received 19,584 calls related to psychological abuse in the first eight months of this year. "Most calls involve husband's domination, restrictions on movement, control over clothing, interference in personal freedom, and denial of financial support."

NORMALISATION OF PATRIARCHAL CONTROL

Fauzia Moslem, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, said women's subordination stems from the belief that they are meant to be controlled. "Many men feel entitled to decide if their wives can work, reflecting a patriarchal power imbalance. Controlling behaviour is a core feature of patriarchal masculinity that harms both women and men."

She said the behaviour has worsened over time. "Household competition and stress have increased, reducing empathy and placing greater pressure on young women. This mindset has been so normalised that many women do not even recognise it as violence. They assume it is simply how things are supposed to be."

Dr Sunjida Shahriah, physician and psychotherapy practitioner, said controlling behaviour often hides behind concern or family honour. "Small restrictions

accumulate over time, making women accept them as routine. With no visible injuries and low awareness, such abuse remains unseen, leaving survivors unsure if they are being harmed at all."

Although the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010 recognises controlling behaviour as psychological abuse, no other law does, explained Advocate Sifat-E-Noor Khanam of BLAST. "This makes it almost impossible to prosecute," she said.

"Implementation is negligible. Many women, social workers, and even lawyers are unaware of the law's provisions, leaving complaints filed under the wrong laws and courts unresponsive to psychological harm."

"Most women say the abuse began with small disagreements, then escalated over five or ten years. By the time they seek help, it has become unbearable and sometimes violent."

Highlighting the lack of state support, she said, "Victim Support Centres allow only five-day stays. Women don't just need shelter. They need a survival plan, income, and long-term protection. The state has left the biggest gap here."

Farhana Yeasmin, deputy commissioner of the Women Support and Investigation Division at Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said, "Women come to us only when violence becomes physical. By then, the psychological abuse has been ongoing for years."

"I've been in charge for a year and have not seen a single case filed for this type of abuse, not one."

THE INVISIBLE WOUNDS

Dr Shahriah said controlling behaviour leaves deep emotional scars, often more lasting than physical abuse. "Long-term coercive control triggers trauma, depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Gaslighting distorts memory and reality, while constant surveillance, insults, or financial penalties trap women in a mental prison."

Gaslighting is when someone makes you doubt your own memory, feelings, or reality so they can control the situation or shift blame.

She said survivors need trauma-informed, empowerment-focused care, including counselling to restore autonomy, psychoeducation to reduce self-blame, and life skills to counter economic dependence. "Support groups can help break isolation."

Advocate Sifat said solutions require systemic change.

She outlined three steps: educating children early about gender equality, establishing state-funded shelters so women can report abuse securely, and reforming the law to explicitly recognise psychological abuse with clear proof standards.

"Awareness alone is not enough," Fauzia Moslem warned. "Women must reclaim their skills and decision-making to break free from controlling environments, especially where control is subtle, relentless, and shatters their lives in silence."

EC meets today

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over to the police last night. He was taken to Keshabpur Upazila Health Complex following the handover. Subsequently, Ujjal was taken to Jashore Central Jail.

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Jashore district Jubo Dal Member Secretary Ansarul Haque said, "There is no approved Jubo Dal committee in Keshabpur. Ujjal's name was in the convening committee, but it was never approved. He worked as a party activist but was expelled due to controversial activities."

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period by one hour, from 7:30am to 4:30pm, as each voter will need to cast two votes -- one for an MP candidate and another for the referendum.

He said the EC had reviewed pre-schedule preparations at a meeting yesterday.

According to EC officials, there will be nine agenda items at today's meeting. These include overall preparations for the 13th parliamentary election and referendum, pre- and post-schedule activities, coordination with field-level administration, registration of political parties, and reviewing the NID correction application system and finalisation of the relevant SOP.

As the national election and the referendum on the July charter will be held simultaneously on a single day, the EC is considering setting up two marking corners in each polling booth where space allows, as well as increasing the number of booths in other polling stations.

The commission is also considering extending the eight-hour balloting to the 10:30pm.

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