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PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

# MILLIONS MOURN

## Manik Mia Avenue, other roads overflow as people bid farewell to Khaleda Zia

SAJJAD HOSSAIN and ZYMA ISLAM

The entire city stood in solemn tribute to Bangladesh's first female prime minister yesterday.

From Agargaon in the north to Shahbagh in the south, mourners filled thoroughfares and alleyways to say goodbye to BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia.

State honour brought gun salutes, floral wreaths, and a guard of honour, but the truest farewell came from people standing kilometres away, their palms outstretched to the heavens.

People across the country joined their counterparts in Dhaka, united in collective grief.

For someone who had devoted a lifetime as one of Bangladesh's strongest advocates of democracy — a lawmaker who had never lost a single election — her final moments above ground were the finest show of the people's mandate.

The gathering for her namaz-

e-janaza at the South Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban began around 7:00am, with BNP leaders and activists arriving from across Dhaka and other districts.

foot — turning the entire area into an ocean of mourners.

They spilled over onto the alleyways connected to Manik Mia Avenue and then spread to

**For someone who had devoted a lifetime as one of Bangladesh's strongest advocates of democracy, her final moments above ground were the finest show of the people's mandate.**



From early morning, people from all walks of life continued to pour in — some travelling by bus, truck, train, private car, motorcycle or whatever mode of transport they could find, while others walked on

Sobhanbagh, Farmgate, and by the time the janaza began, the tailback of the bereaved stretched to Shahbagh. Elderly citizens, women, "She was

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### She rests next to her husband at Zia Udyan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP chairperson and three-time former prime minister Khaleda Zia was yesterday laid to rest with state honours beside the grave of her husband, former President Ziaur Rahman, in Dhaka.

Her only surviving son, Tarique Rahman, placed her body in her final resting spot, which she visited just three months ago after a gap of seven years.

Tarique, the acting chairman of BNP, laid the first soil on her grave, followed by male members of her family, senior BNP leaders, high-ranking government officials and the heads of the three armed forces.

The emotional burial took place around 4:30pm at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. At the

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### From rooftops to streets, the city unites in tribute

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People from all walks of life converged in overwhelming numbers at the Jatiya Sangsad complex and its surrounding areas yesterday to attend the namaz-e-janaza of BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia, turning the zone into a vast landscape of mourning, prayer, and remembrance.

From early morning, streams of people arrived on foot, by rickshaw, and via public transport, filling Manik Mia Avenue and adjoining roads. By noon, the crowd flowed in from Dhanmondi 32, Mohammadpur, and Karwan Bazar, extending beyond the main avenue to Holy Cross College Road, Bijoy Sarani, Jahangir Gate, Farmgate, and Shahbagh.

Roads and alleys in the surrounding areas were also packed with mourners, some holding BNP flags and Khaleda's placards.

Markets came to a halt as shopkeepers joined the crowd, while pedestrians remained in place as movement became difficult. Many climbed rooftops, terraces, overpasses, and bridges for a better view,

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### 'Please pray for my mother's eternal peace'

#### Says Tarique at janaza

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday sought prayers for the eternal peace of his mother, three-time former prime minister and party chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Around 3:00pm, just ahead of the janaza prayers, he said, "I am Tarique Rahman, the elder son of late Begum Khaleda Zia... Please pray for my mother so that Allah grants her Jannah [heaven]".

He addressed the massive crowd at the funeral as he stood beside his mother's coffin, which was draped in the flag of Bangladesh.

His speech was announced through

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BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman and his family members stand in solemn silence as his mother Khaleda Zia is being buried next to his father president Ziaur Rahman, the founder of the party, at Zia Udyan yesterday.

PHOTO: BNP MEDIA CELL

### Foreign dignitaries pay last respects

**They conveyed their deepest condolences on behalf of their governments and expressed confidence that Khaleda's vision and values would continue to guide the development of Bangladesh's foreign relations.**

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign dignitaries, including top officials from India and Pakistan, paid their last respects to former three-time Bangladesh prime minister Khaleda Zia at her funeral in Dhaka yesterday.

They conveyed their deepest condolences on behalf of their governments and expressed confidence that Khaleda's vision and values would continue to guide "At

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