

# Syed Shamsul Haq dies

Ershad Kamol

was 80.

INDEPENDENCE Day award-winning poet-playwright Syed Shamsul Haq died at the capital's United Hospital on Tuesday evening. He

He had been suffering from lung cancer.

The multifaceted writer proved his talent in all mediums including poetry, plays, short story, *Continued on page 2 Col. 5*



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*Continued from page 1*  
novel, essay, screenplay, play-back and others.

He won Bangla Academy Award in 1966, Ekushey Padak in 1984 and Bangladesh's highest civilian honour Independence Day Award in 2000 for his contribution to Bangla literature.

He is survived by his widow Anwara Syed Haq, son Ditio Syed Haq and daughter Bidita Syed Haq.

Syed Shamsul Haq's body will be kept at Central Shaheed Minar from 11:00am to 1:00pm today for people to show their respect to the writer, said Shammilito Sanskritik Jote president Golam Kuddus.

His namaz-e-janaza would be held at the Dhaka University mosque after the zuhr prayers, he said.

Syed Shamsul Haq will be buried at the graveyard near Kurigram Government College as per his wish, Kuddus said.

Syed Shamsul Haq was born in Kurigram on December 27, 1935. His father Syed Siddique Husain was a homeopath and mother Halima Khatun was a homemaker.

He started writing at an early age and penned over 200 poems before completion of his matriculation. He enrolled at Dhaka University's English department but did not complete his study.

His first story titled Udayasta was published in 1951 in the literary magazine

named Agatya, edited by Fazle Lohani.

He went to Mumbai in 1951 with an aim to be a film director but returned Dhaka within a few days when the Language Movement peaked in 1952.

He in an interview told New Age that it was the Language Movement that made him a writer.

He, the youngest writer to be honored with the prestigious Bangla Academy Award, achieved it at the age of 29 in 1964.

In his kaleidoscopic writing career spanning over 60 years Syed Shamsul Haq wrote several books of poetry including Ekoda Ek Rajje (1961), Baishekhe Rachita Panktimala (1969), Biratihin Utsob (1969), Protidhonigon (1976), Apar Purush (1978), Kabita Samagra in three volumes (2007), Ek Ashcharja Sangamer Smriti and others.

During his last days, Haq used to write Bangla sonnets for different dailies.

He wrote 40 novels including Stabdhatar Anubad, Baro Diner Jiban, Tumi Sei Tarobari, Simana Chhariye, Neel Dangshan, Nishiddho Loban, Koyekti Manusher Sonali Jouban, Nirbasita, Khelaram Khele Ja, Megh O Machine, Anya Ek Alingan and others.

He wrote short stories, many screenplays for mainstream films and hundreds of playbacks including Hayre Manush Rangin Phanush,

Tumi Ashbe Boley Kachhe Dakbe Boley, Chander Shathey Ami Dibona Tomar Tulana and others.

As a playwright Syed Shamsul Haq created a new trend in contemporary Bangla drama by introducing verse plays such as Payer Away Paoa Jay, Nuruldiner Sara Jiban, Ekhane Ekhon, Eersha, Narigon, Khatta Tamasha, Judhha Ebong Judhha, Banglar Mati Banglar Jal and others.

He also translated some western classics including Shakespear's Macbeth, The Tempest and Troilus and Cresida, and Ibsen's Pyr Gynt.

In separate messages president Abdul Hamid, prime minister Sheikh Hasina, education minister Nurul Islam Nahid and cultural affairs minister Asaduzzaman Noor expressed deep shock at the death of the great writer.

Terming him a powerful writer, president Hamid in his condolence message said that Syed Shamsul Haq's death was an irreparable loss to Bangla literature.

The powerful writing of Syed Shamsul Haq, a soldier of pro-liberation forces, will show the path to the nation forever, the message reads.

Prime minister Sheikh Hasina from the USA expressed profound shock at the demise of the celebrated litterateur, poet and dramatist Syed Shamsul Haq.

Terming Haq as a conscience of the nation, the

prime minister said the country lost 'a writer who was devoted to the truth while she personally lost one of her well-wishers at his death'.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir in a condolence message said that it would not be possible to make up the loss caused at the death of a prolific writer like Syed Shamsul Haq.

Cultural arena also expressed deep shock at his death.

Eminent actor-director Ataur Rahman, who directed 11 plays penned by Haq, said, 'He was the most celebrated poet-playwright after the Rabindranath era. He chose writing as a profession and was a very successful man.'

'He continued writing till his death and would survive through his magical writings. He was my mentor and friend,' Ataur said.

International Theatre Institute's honorary president Ramendu Majumdar said, 'A huge void had been created at his death.'

Thespian Mamunur Rashid said, 'He established a permanent position in Bangla literature through his writings.'

Poet Nurul Huda termed Syed Shamsul Haq as the leading architect of contemporary literature. 'We on behalf of Kabita Bangla announced him the best contemporary poet. He will live for good,' Huda said.