



Shaheed
Meherunnesa

Date of birth: 1 January, 2002
Date of martyrdom: 5 August, 2024
Division: Dhaka City
District: Dhaka

Short Biography

Profession: Female Student, Honors 3rd Year, Business Studies, Hazrat Shah Ali College, Mirpur
Place of Martyrdom: Alok Hospital, Mirpur, Dhaka

Martyrdom Details and History

Meherun Nesa Tanha was born in 2002 in Azimnagar village, Harirampur Police Station, Manikganj District. At the young age of 22, her life was tragically cut short. She was a college student and an active female leader of the July movement. Her father’s name is Mosharraf Hossain (64) and her mother’s name is Asma Akter (45). She had one younger brother named Abdur Rahman Tarif (19), who passed his HSC examination in 2024. Meherunnesa’s father was a driver and her mother a homemaker.

Context of Martyrdom

Throughout July, the quota movement was marked by arrests and mass killings. Across the country, there were widespread public and covert condemnations. When colleges and universities were closed and

students were ordered to vacate dormitories, the students retaliated by demanding that teachers vacate government residences. Students from universities and colleges in Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chattogram, Jahangirnagar, and elsewhere issued counter-notices to teachers and administrators, setting a precedent. The HSC examinations were ongoing. To prevent students from joining the movement, the government declared public holidays nationwide and shut down the internet, which halted online income and expenditure activities including freelancing. The banking sector became paralyzed. In response to calls from online expatriates like Dr. Pinaki Bhattacharya and Ilias Hossain, remittances were stopped to protest the arrests, disappearances, killings, and massacres committed by the Awami League. Due to the decline in foreign income, Sheikh Hasina was compelled to restore internet connectivity. Offices and courts became active again.

With the resumption of the suspended HSC examinations, students from prestigious institutions across the country – including Notre Dame College, Tamirul Millat Madrasa, Dhaka College, Residential Model College, Titumir College, Baitush Sharaf in Chattogram, Patenga Alia Madrasa – strongly demanded the implementation of the 9-point demands prepared under the guidance of the Islami Chhatra Shibir. They decided to boycott the HSC exams if justice was not served for the student killings. Notices for exam boycotts by college and madrasa HSC candidates began appearing online.

At the end of July, prominent journalist Ilias Hossain released videos exposing active participation in the July atrocities by Awami League leader Jahangir Kabir Nanak and Harun alias ‘Hawn Uncle,’ a notorious police DB officer and hotel owner in Patiyal. This caused widespread rumors, and the Awami League leaders’ corrupt pasts were sensationalized again as hot news. Consequently, on August 1, Harun was transferred from the intelligence branch to the DMP Crime and Operation Branch. On the same day, the government banned Jamaat-Shibir.

The Awami League realized that Shibir’s intellectual members were actively leading the anti-discrimination student movement. The movement was especially led by school, college, and university students. After internet shutdown, a female student led the siege of the Grameenphone center. The active presence of female students in the heated streets of Uttara, Mirpur, Badda, Rampura, and other districts was noteworthy.

Meherunnesa Tanha was a third-year honors student at Hazrat Shah Ali Women’s College in Mirpur. Her cousin, Akram Khan Rabbi, was martyred on July 19 during the anti-discrimination movement. Tanha, enraged, protested with placards and remained vocally active throughout July. On August 4, students and the public organized unarmed nationwide resistance. On August 5, fearing the announcement of a one-point demand, Sheikh Hasina fled to India with her corrupt younger sister.

The students, sacrificing their lives, marched towards the Ganabhaban (Prime Minister’s residence). Along the way, they faced police, RAB, BGB, Ansar, and armed Awami League supporters who fired indiscriminately, injuring and killing many. Meherunnesa Tanha boldly led the charge to occupy Ganabhaban. She was among the courageous students who took control.

Her father Mosharraf Hossain said, ‘I used to forbid her from joining protests but she never listened. Like any other day, on August 5, when Sheikh Hasina fled, Tanha went to Ganabhaban, took pictures, and posted them on Facebook.’ Her mother Asma Akter recalled, ‘That night around 8 pm, she brought flowers for me and said, ‘Look, I brought flowers from Ganabhaban for you.’ She asked for a glass of water after walking all the way, and I gave her water.’

Regarding the martyrdom, her mother said, ‘I told Tanha there is unrest all around. Where is your brother? She replied, ‘I don’t know where he went.’ I told her to call her brother. When he answered, he said trouble was near New Market and advised her to return home by the back road. Just after saying that, Tanha collapsed to the floor. I saw the floor was soaked with blood. Blood was coming from her

chest and mouth. I called her father, who rushed home, took her to a local hospital, but the doctors declared her dead.â€

Her father said, â€œWhen her mother called me saying Tanha was shot, I was downstairs. I ran home and saw my daughter lying on the floor bleeding. I gave her some water. She called â€˜mother, mother,â€™ but didnâ€™t open her eyes or look at me. Later we took her to Alok Hospital but nothing could be done. My daughter left me. I am a helpless father; my daughter died in my arms and I could do nothing.â€

Family Legal Case

Recently, her father Mosharraf Hossain filed a case at the International Crimes Tribunal against former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and 40 others.

Economic Condition

At the beginning of 2022, to support her family and pay for her studies, Tanha started working as a sales assistant at a girlsâ€™ clothing showroom in Rakkain City.

Her father, a private car owner and driver, supported the family. Although financially constrained, Mosharraf maintained a happy household. With a monthly salary of 16,000 taka, the family could not survive. Therefore, Tanha worked in the showroom near their house from 4 pm to 9 pm to cover her education costs and also support the family.

Aid Received

She received a check for 500,000 taka from the July Foundation and 200,000 taka from Jamaat-e-Islami.

Family Statements

Mosharraf Hossain said, â€œWe donâ€™t do politics, nor do we understand it. My daughter was not political either. After Friday prayers on July 19, my nephew Akram Khan Rabbi was in a procession on Mazhar Road, Mirpur. He had just taken his MBA exam. He had a prayer mat in his hand and committed no crime. But police shot him first in the hand, and after he fell to the ground, shot him in the stomach. They kept his corpse in the morgue for three days. It was decomposed and returned to us without a proper funeral.â€

He added, â€œAfter Rabbiâ€™s killing, my son and daughter began to change. Tanha wrote on placards, â€˜I will not let my brotherâ€™s blood go in vain,â€™ and stood in the streets with them. I demand a proper investigation and punishment of the culprits. My innocent daughter was murdered. My heart is empty. I want justice for my daughterâ€™s killing.â€

Regarding expectations from the caretaker government, Mosharraf said, â€œWe want a safe future for our family. My small income is not enough to run the household. I am old now. I appeal to the government to take necessary steps considering my sonâ€™s future and to arrange a job for him. Also, those killed in the anti-discrimination movement should be officially recognized as martyrs.â€

Asma Akter said, â€œMy daughter loved spicy food, especially Bombay chili. Every Friday she cooked pilaf and meat herself. Now whenever I cook pilaf and meat, I remember her. They used to sleep together in one room as siblings. After Tanhaâ€™s death, her brother cannot sleep properly, eat, or talk.â€

She added, â€œWe hoped that after finishing her studies, my daughter would get a job and a good home for marriage. All my dreams are shattered. Sometimes I mistakenly call out, â€˜Tanha, come eat.â€™ Then I realize how can she come? In a blink, I lost everything. Now no one tells me, â€˜Mom, I got my salary, what do you need?â€™â€

Her maternal uncle Faruk Khan said, â€œTanha was our only niece, so we all loved her dearly. My son (her brother Rabbi) was martyred in the movement on July 19. After that, Tanha stayed at my house to look after her uncle. She came to her own house on the morning of August 5. I regret letting her go; if I hadnâ€™t, we wouldnâ€™t have lost both my son and niece.â€

News Link

<https://www.probahobangla.com/fitcher/9625>

<https://www.bssnews.net/bangla/stories-of-mass-upsurge/173111>

<https://www.somoynews.tv/news/2024-12-29/QJSL5AKV>

Overview of Information Related to the Martyr

Name: Meherun Nesa

Date of Birth: 2002

Occupation: Student, Honors 3rd Year, Business Studies, Hazrat Shah Ali College, Mirpur

Father: Md. Mosharraf Hossain Khan (66)

Mother: Asma Akter (40)

Brother: Abdur Rahman (19), Student, HSC, Mirpur Degree College

Permanent and Current Address: 55/2, Purbo Baishtek, Ward-04, Kafrul, Dhaka

Location of Incident: Veranda of own residence

Attackers: Police and Jubo League

Time of Injury: Date: 5 August 2024, Monday; Time: 9:00 PM

Nature of Injury: Gunshot wound to the chest

Date, Time, and Place of Death: 5 August 2024, Monday; Time: 9:00 PM; Alok Hospital

Location of Martyr's Grave: Purbo Baishtek Cemetery

Proposals:

1. Provision of monthly and one-time financial aid
2. Employment arrangement for younger brother

Quranic Verse

They rejoice in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty. (Al-Imran 3:170)

Hadith

A martyr will be able to intercede for seventy relatives in Paradise. (Sunan Abu Dawood 2520)

Prayers offered: 0

Memorial Photo Gallery

