

Veteran Bengali actor Anjana Bhowmick passes away at 79

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Online Desk: Veteran Bengali actor Anjana Bhowmick passed away on Saturday morning following a prolonged illness, according to the Indian Express newspaper.

The renowned thespian was admitted to a hospital in south Kolkata on Friday night due to respiratory problems, Hindustan Times reported, mentioning that she was 79 years old at the time of her passing.

Bhowmick, who was the mother of actors Nilanjana Sengupta and Chandana Sharma and the mother-in-law of legendary actor-producer Jisshu Sengupta who is married to Nilanjana, had been unwell for some time due to age-related reasons. She had been bedridden for the past five to six months, as reported by India Today. Her family was by her side when she passed away.

Born on December 30, 1944, as Arati Bhowmick in Cooch Behar, Bengal Presidency, she hailed from a family with a background in acting, as her father Bibhutibhushan Bhowmick was also a thespian. She reportedly completed her schooling in Kochbihar and later pursued her education at Sarojini Naidu College for Women in Dum Dum and graduated from the University of Calcutta after moving to Kolkata.

At the age of 20, Anjana Bhowmick made her silver screen debut in 1964 through Pijush Bose's 'Anustup Chanda'. She adopted the name Anjana for her first film, which brought her significant recognition. Her second film, Hiren Nag's 'Thana Theke Aschi,' was with Bengali cinema heavyweight Uttam Kumar, and both performers earned immense praise for their work. Their on-screen chemistry was widely appreciated and they collaborated on several subsequent films such as 'Raj Drohi' (1966), 'Nayika Sangbad' (1967), 'Chowringhee' (1968), 'Kokhono Megh' (1968) and 'Roudra Chhaya' (1973) too. Anjana's performance with Soumitra Chatterjee in the film 'Mahasweta' (1967) was also highly acclaimed.

Bhowmick married Navy officer Anil Sharma and settled in Mumbai. They welcomed their first child Nilanjana in 1975, followed by their second child Chandana in 1982.

Expressing his sadness over the demise of Bhowmick, Bengali writer-director Srijit Mukherji wrote on X (formerly Twitter), "Anjana Bhowmick was my favourite actress from the Golden Age. Her spontaneity and timing was exemplary and her chemistry with Uttam Kumar was the finest, and I say this keeping Suchitra Sen, Supriya Devi and Sabitri Chatterjee in mind. Rest in peace."

Anjana Bhowmik had been ill for a long time and was having old-age related health issues. She was reportedly bedridden for the last five to six months, and was looked after by her daughters Nilanjana and Chandana. Director Srijit Mukherji, Arindam Sil and other celebs from Bengali cinema also joined Jishu and Nilanjana at the hospital after Anjana's death.