



# REMEMBERING Andrew Kishore

Andrew Kishore, who was battling cancer for months, passed away on July 6, 2020. The Daily Star reached out to some of the most prominent artistes in the country, who shared their feelings about the legend.



## RUNA LAILA (Singer)

Eminent singer Runa Laila was among the many who paid tributes to Andrew Kishore over social media, after the news of his demise. "With a heavy heart, I bid goodbye to a stalwart in our music industry," she wrote in a Facebook post. "Andrew Kishore, whose melodious songs and soul stirring voice have made him immortal, will continue to inspire the coming generations."

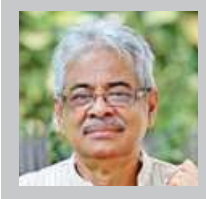
PHOTOS: STAR

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

## GAZI MAZHARUL ANWAR

(Director, producer, lyricist and music director)

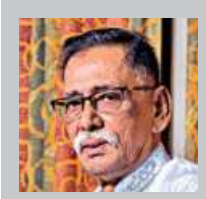
Andrew Kishore had the perfect playback singing voice. He understood the language of cinema exceedingly well.



I worked with him for the first time on the song, *Chole Amar Cycle Hawar Break Uira Uira* from the film, *Nantu Ghatak*. It was a huge success. Since then, we collaborated on more than a hundred compositions. He was a hardworking and dedicated artiste. I have many great memories with him. Every year on Christmas, he sent a cake to our house. He was like a younger brother to me. I miss him immensely.

## ALAM KHAN (Music Director)

I composed Andrew's first film song, and I collaborated with him on some of his last songs as well. I met him back in 1987, after my friend and radio producer Dulal, told me about him. Andrew was a great singer. He started off as a playback singer with the song *Rajkumari Shundori*, from the film,



*Mail Train*. Sadly, that film was never released. Soon after, he sang *Ek Chor Chole Jay*, in the film *Oshanti*. It was an instant hit. I composed *Hayre Manush Rongin Fanush*, *Kake Bole Bhalobasha*, *Jiboner Golpo Ache Baki Olpo* and *Tora Dekh Dekhre Chahiya*, among many of his other popular songs. *Fuler Gondher Moto Theke Jabo Tomar Rumale*, penned by Syed Shamsul Haque, was the last song that Andrew and I collaborated on.

## RAFIQUL ALAM (Singer)

I lived about eight minutes away from Andrew's house in Rajshahi. We both studied at Rajshahi Government College and Rajshahi University, but he was four years younger than me. After he was diagnosed with cancer, Andrew knew he wanted to be buried in Rajshahi. He loved his hometown. His mother was a doctor at a Christian Missionary hospital in Rajshahi. All the children in our family were born under her supervision. Much like me, Andrew came from a culturally rich family, and we bonded over many shared interests. After Bangladesh's independence, he came to Dhaka to perform in a folk festival. I was working at Bangla Academy at the time, and he came to meet me frequently. His playback singing voice set him apart from others. He was an exceptional artiste.



## SYED ABDUL HADI (Singer)

I was at a loss for words when I got the news. Andrew's demise has left a void in the industry. We will be hard pressed to find another artiste like him.



I worked with him on several occasions. He was like a younger brother to me. Sabina Yasmin and I met him in Singapore in March. He was ecstatic to see us. I was hopeful about his recovery, but sadly, he left us too soon.

## SABINA YASMIN (Singer)

My first collaboration with Andrew was on an Alam Khan composition. Since then, we did numerous songs and stage performances together. Andrew was my brother and my friend. Initially, he didn't pay much heed to his deteriorating health. I remember he fell ill after a show in Australia. I called him up, and requested him to go to Singapore for his treatment. At the time, he didn't listen to me. I wish he had. When he eventually went to Singapore, I talked to him regularly,



and he always asked me to pray for him. I was hopeful that his health will improve with time. I met him at the hospital in Singapore in March. After that, we did a show together, where he sang *Jiboner Golpo* and we performed *Shob Shokhire Paar Korite* together, in Singapore. He arrived at the event in a wheel-chair. After he returned to Bangladesh, I checked up on him regularly. Syed Abdul Hadi and I requested him multiple times to come to Dhaka for his treatment, but he was adamant about staying in Rajshahi. One day, over the phone, he asked me to forgive him and to look after his wife and children when he is gone. I kept telling him that everything will be alright. That was our last conversation. I still haven't fully come to terms with the fact that he is no more.

## SAMINA CHOWDHURY (Singer)

I truly believed that Andrew Kishore could conquer cancer – he had the blessings of millions and he was supposed to live a longer, beautiful life. He was a true musical legend, and a kind-hearted man, who always encouraged young artistes. This is a tragic loss for our industry. I convey my condolences to his family. May Allah grant him *Jannah*.



## Revisiting playback legend Andrew Kishore's iconic songs

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

We recently lost one of Bangladesh's most recognisable voices with the demise of Andrew Kishore. Having started his playback singing career with the 1977 film *Mail Train*, Kishore went on to lend his voice to thousands of songs, in the span of over four decades. Although his importance to our music industry can be talked about for days on end, his greater legacy is that of a person who took music as not just a profession, but as a sacred devotion. That being said, here are only a few of Andrew Kishore's iconic songs.

**BHALO ACHI BHALO THEKO:** While Salman Shah and Shabnur's acting in *Tomake Chai* brought tears to the audiences' eyes in the theatres, they left humming *Bhalo Achi Bhalo Theko*, sung by Andrew Kishore and Kanak Chapa at the peak of their careers. Composed by Ahmed Imtiaz Bulbul, the evergreen song is a love-letter to the musical generations to come.

**PORENA CHOKHER POLOK:** The 1997 hit song, *Praner Cheye Priyo*, brought together the duo of Andrew Kishore and Kanak Chapa. This Ahmed Imtiaz Bulbul masterpiece was enriched by the singers' incredible voices, as well as Riaz's unending charm on screen.



Andrew Kishore sang thousands of songs in the course of his storied career.

**BEDER MEYE JOSNA:** The year was 1989. Commercial Bangla cinema, even though past its 'golden age', was still flourishing – and one song was consistently playing on radios across the country – *Beder Meye Josna*. Andrew Kishore, paired with Runa Laila, gave a stellar performance on par with actors Ilias Kanchan and Anju Ghosh in the track. This song is adored among the masses to this day.

**DAK DIYACHEN DOYAL AMARE:** It is, perhaps, iconic that the lyrics of *Dak Diyachen Doyal Amare* resonates the most with the artiste's final days. Even though Andrew Kishore knew that he did not have long to live due to his cancer, he wanted to spend his last days in his hometown of Rajshahi, with his family. Composed by Alam Khan, the song was featured in the film *Pran Sojoni*.

**HAYRE MANUSH RONGIN FANUSH:** Another classic composition by Alam Khan, *Hayre Manush Rongin Fanush* highlights the futility of human beings and the actions that we do to inflate our ego. Originally featured in the film *Boro Bhalo Lok Chilo*, the song went on to galvanise the two Bengalis, instantly becoming one of the most covered Bengali tracks in the generation.

**AMAR SARA DEHO:** The 1984 film *Noyoner Alo* featured fine performances from Zafar Iqbal, Kajori, Suborna Mustafa and Raisul Islam Asad. *Amar Sara Deho* from the film is arguably one of the most soulful performances from the then peaking Andrew Kishore, mirrored on screen by Zafar Iqbal. Directed by Ahmed Imtiaz Bulbul, the song remains one of Kishore's finest works.

**AMAR BUKER MODDHEKHANE:** Another song from *Noyoner Alo*, *Amar Buker Moddhekhane* tugs at your heartstrings. The timeless classic established that the Ahmed Imtiaz Bulbul and Andrew Kishore could do no wrong when paired together. Zafar Iqbal and Suborna Mustafa's soulful acting further injected life in the melodious song.

**AMAR BABAR MUKHE:** "Shedin theke, gaan e amar pran" (Trans: From that day, music was my life and soul). *Noyoner Alo* gifted the audiences another classic, *Amar Babar Mukhe*. The song, relatable to any artiste who loves his craft, is hard to listen to without tearing up a little.

**BHENGECHHE PINJOR:** The strikingly upbeat song rocked the audience who went to watch the 1987 film *Bhai Bondhu*, featuring Zafar Iqbal and Ilias Kanchan. Composed by Alauddin Ali, the song was a staple in parties, hangouts and concerts leading up to the nineties. An instant mood-lifter, the appeal for the song is everlasting, much like the majority of Kishore's repertoire.

**TUMI MOR JIBONER BHABONA**  
Salman Shah and Shabnur brilliantly portrayed a love-struck couple in the film *Anondo Asru* in 1997. The film featured the memorable romantic ballad, *Tumi Mor Jiboner Bhabona*, sung by Andrew Kishore and Salma. Composed by Ahmed Imtiaz Bulbul, it is yet another testament to Kishore's versatile and melodious voice.

## Friendships to remember

Falguni Nandi and Alif Alauddin, daughters of legendary singers Subir Nandi and Alauddin Ali, reflect on the close bond their fathers had with Andrew Kishore.



Falguni Nandi



Alif Alauddin



Andrew Kishore visited Alauddin Ali regularly, when Alauddin Ali had fallen ill.

## FALGUNI NANDI

Andrew *Kaku's* wedding reception was in Dhaka and I attended the ceremony with my parents. I was very young, but I remember that day vividly. Often, several singers, including Andrew *Kaku* and my father gathered for musical evenings at Linu Billah's house, and I have great memories of those days. We are very close to *Kaku's* family. He would send us a cake every Christmas. He never had any rivalry with anyone in the industry, and he always encouraged other artistes. I have heard many stories about *Kaku* and my father, but I will share one memorable anecdote. When *Kaku* was just starting out as a musician, he and my father went to record a Debu Bhattacharya composition together, on a rickshaw. As they were going to the studio, people on the streets started recognising my father. Seeing that, *Kaku* hoped that crowds will recognise him in the same way someday, and will be cheering



Subir Nandi and Andrew Kishore were together in many intimate musical evenings.

for him. He and my father were more like brothers than colleagues. I hope that both of them are at peace now, wherever they are.

## ALIF ALAUDDIN

Andrew uncle was a great artiste. His demise is a tragic loss for the industry, and for our family. I have known him since I was a child. He paid frequent visits to our house, and he spent hours with *Abbu* at his studio. They were very close. *Abbu* is now recovering at home. But when *Abbu* was in the hospital, Andrew uncle came to visit him regularly, despite the fact that he wasn't keeping well himself at the time. He was there for *Abbu* through thick and thin. They worked together on different projects and causes, including copyright issues and getting musical artistes their royalties. It feels as though we have lost someone from our own family.

Statements taken by Shah Alam Shazu

## "He was a truly humble man" - Hanif Sanket on Andrew Kishore

AS NARRATED TO ZAHANGIR ALOM:

Hanif Sanket remembers eminent singer Andrew Kishore as a humble person, who never acted like the superstar that he was.

Andrew Kishore was one of my closest friends. Kishore, Humayun Faridee, Anwar Hossain Bulu and I would regularly meet up, and I have great memories of those days. His death is a huge, personal loss for me.

Kishore and I toured several countries together for professional reasons. He never acted like the superstar that he was - He was

a truly humble and simple man, with a kind heart.

Introducing him on the small screen through BTV's *Ityadi* was an immense artistic responsibility for me. *Poddo Patar Pani Noy* was the first song he recorded for *Ityadi*, and his career's last song, *Bangladesher Akashay Jei Uthlo Phute Chander Hashi* was featured on the penultimate iteration of *Eid Ityadi*.

He called me from Singapore in June. He said, "Dosto, I am ready to fly. Pray that I don't have to suffer much."

I truly believed that he will be with us a while longer. As I reflect on what Andrew's friendship means to me, I realise that the loss of some people is so painful that it cannot be explained in words or in writing. Rest in peace, my friend!



Hanif Sanket and Andrew Kishore on the set of 'Ityadi'.



Andrew Kishore shooting a song on 'Ityadi'.

PHOTOS: COURTESY