

# XEFER RAHMAN

## RISING STAR

*Xefer isn't a household name just yet, but if the numbers of her followers are anything to go by, then it certainly won't take long before she is one. She belongs to the new and upcoming generation who doesn't rely on traditional means to establish themselves. Using social media channels, she has launched her career in the media. She started out doing covers for popular songs on YouTube and now, she is at the cusp of releasing her own debut album. Star Showbiz caught up with Xefer, the YouTube sensation to find out more about her work, her inspirations and her future.*

**1) How long have you had this thirst for singing? Tell us a little bit about yourself and your background.**

It has only been 4-5 years that I am into music as a singer. Before this I was just a listener. The whole thing started randomly a few years ago through YouTube. I didn't really have any plans regarding music when I first recorded my songs/videos for YouTube, in fact, I don't even have any formal musical training either. I have been listening to a lot of western music from my childhood and that influenced me to try out recording on my phone and that's how it all started. With time I got better and people around me motivated me a lot. For example, my elder brother taught me how to use a recording software through which I could record my voice on my own without any professional help. I have been lucky to have a great surrounding that has nurtured me.

**2) Why choose YouTube as the starting platform? Why not try a more mainstream approach?**

I couldn't think of being mainstream back then, maybe I didn't know what I was capable of. I am self-taught so I thought YouTube is the easiest way to reach audience sitting at home. I didn't have any sort of links in the music industry. Moreover, I didn't see any Bengali singer doing covers on YouTube back in 2011 when I started so I wanted to try it out. Now through YouTube, a lot of mainstream artists have discovered me and I am working with them. I would like to mention one name out of many others because he was the first person with who I worked and that is Fuad al Muqtadir. The moment he got in touch with me, he really just changed my entire thinking process regarding music. The inspiration has been a major stepping stone in making me who I am today.

**3) What kind of songs do you sing? How are the**

**Bengali people responding?**

I sing pop and rock songs and I like to play with a lot of genres, so it really depends on my mood. So far I have received positive responses from the audience.

**4) Over here, parents aren't all that supportive about media related careers. How supportive are your parents of your work?**

I have been really lucky in that area. My parents, my brother and my relatives have always supported me and it feels incredible to have a supporting family like this. Because I know how difficult it is in Bangladesh for girls to try something alternative and it breaks my heart. Everyone deserves to be able to explore what they want to do in life. I get a lot of messages from various female fans about their stories and how they can't play music or sing since their parents don't support them. They seek my advice so that they can break through... it really saddens me when I put myself in their shoes. I really want this situation in Bangladesh to change! Every career track has its own drawbacks, we shouldn't vilify the media as a society like this.

**5) Which is one of your most popular YouTube video?**

That would be "Dirty Diana", a Michael Jackson cover that I did a few months back. That cover went pretty big. Nagib Hawk did an excellent job with the music and videography of that cover. It got a lot of exposure and the biggest twist for me was that the BBC Asian Network contacted me all the way from UK and took my interview after that cover!

**6) Tell us a bit about some of your present work.**

At the moment I am doing a couple of things. I am doing shows, jingles and recently I also sang for a movie. The biggest news of all is that I am done recording my debut album, produced by Nagib Hawk.

**7) Tell us about your debut album.**

I must thank Nagib Hawk for this album because it wouldn't have come into being this fast without him. I am glad to have a producer/ music composer like him who supports me a lot. My album is mostly an English album actually, although there are a few Bangla songs in it as well. The first album was quite a learning process for me. I hope my fans like it!

**8) What do you think of the current scenario of the Bengali music industry?**

I see two separate sets of musicians in Bangladesh. There are people who are making great music, trying out different things and I really appreciate these artists a lot. On the other hand, we have people who are just the opposite and are resistant to change.

**9) What are your plans for the future?**

I am not a good planner and I like to go with the flow and see where it takes me. The only thing I care about is making good music.

**10) If you had the opportunity, how would you inspire the new generation, especially girls, to do music like you?**

Since my root is YouTube/ social networking sites, I would recommend girls to harness the power of the social media and let the world see your talent. This source lets you be your own boss! If people think you are gifted, and if you get positive responses, then nothing can stop you.

Catch The Uncut Version Of Showbiz's Cover Interview And More On Radio Shadhin 92.4 Fm Every Saturday, 11 Pm Onwards.

By Showbiz Desk.

