



Musical legends Alauddin Ali and Runa Laila at work.

ALAUDDIN ALI

a mentor, a father, an inspiration

One of the greatest composers in the history of Bangladesh, Alauddin Ali breathed his last on August 9 at 5:50 pm. He was laid to rest at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectual Graveyard on Monday, after his Namaz-e-janazawas held at Khilgaon Taltola mosque and FDC. Alauddin Ali, who directed music for over 300 films, loved to spend time with his friends, family and peers. This pictorial is in remembrance of the beloved 8-time National Award winner.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Thousands of people paid respects to Alauddin Ali for one last time after his Namaz-e-Janaza at FDC.



Alauddin Ali at a studio.



A glimpse of Alauddin Ali at work.



Alif Alauddin as a baby with her parents, Alauddin Ali and Salma Sultana.



A young Alif Alauddin in a candid moment with her father, Alauddin Ali.



Linu Billah, Subir Nandi, Alauddin Ali and Richard Kishore.

Alauddin Ali's masterful creations

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

It is quite impossible to narrow down a few songs from a library of over 5000 pieces of excellence – that in itself speaks for the impact that Alauddin Ali had on the Bangladeshi music industry. Having started music direction at the age of 23, Ali won 8 National Awards for his illustrious career. Let us look back at some of his landmark triumphs.

O AMAR BANGLA MA TOR

During the struggle for independence, poet Abul Umrah Mohammad Fakhruddin envisioned verses that would portray the six seasons of our country. After Bangladesh became a sovereign nation, the poet showed it to Alauddin Ali, who was then working as an assistant to music director Anwar Parvez. Thus, the masterpiece *O Amar Bangla Ma Tor* was born in 1972, masterfully voiced by Sabina Yasmin. Till date, it is one of the most emotional patriotic songs that we have.

ACHEN AMAR MOKTAR

Even though Alauddin Ali's career as a music director for films started with *Shondhikkhon* in 1974, he got the recognition he deserved with the 1978 film *Golapi Ekhon Train E. Amar Ache Moktar*, written by Gazi Mazharul Anwar and voiced by Syed Abdul Hadi, is one of the highlights of the entire film. Directed by Amzad Hossain, the film went on to become one of the classics in Bangladeshi cinema.

AMAY GETHE DAONA MAGO EKTA

POLASH PHULER MALA

Runa Laila, one of the greatest voices of the sub-continent, prides herself on *Amay Gethe Daona Mago Ekta Polash Phuler Mala*. Written by Nazmul Islam Babu, the song portray's Ali's signature melody, enhanced by Runa Laila's emotional delivery.

BHALOBASHI BOLIBO NA AAR

The trifecta of Alauddin Ali, Amzad Hossain and Sabina Yasmin, gave us hits like *Ami Achi Thakbo*, *Ekta Kotha Bolar Chilo*, *Emonto Prem Hoy*, *Shomoy Hoyeche Phire* and *Noyone Eto Jol*, among many others. However, *Bhalobashi Bolibo Na Aar* is a romantic ballad that got through to the hearts of the lovers in the generation, and is still fondly remembered today.

BONDHU TIN DIN

An upbeat song highlighting Ali's folk influence in his music direction, *Bondhu Tin Din* was penned by Gazi Mazharul Anwar. Originally voiced by Runa Laila, another fabulous version of the song was sung by Alauddin Ali's daughter, Alif Alauddin.

KICHU KICHU MANUSHER JIBONE

Voiced by Andrew Kishore and Kanak Chapa, *Kichu Kichu Manusher Jibone* was written by Mohammad Rafiquzzaman. Audiences in the theatre watching the film *Shopner Bashor* lauded the song as much as they lauded the chemistry between Shakib Khan, Riaz and Shabnur on the silver screen.



PHOTO: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL

KIBA JADU JAANO

Kiba Jadu Jaano is special, even among the gargantuan library of Alauddin Ali's songs. The composer sang it himself, and his mastery and control over his own voice matched his skill in composition. Written by Nazrul Islam Babu, the song reflects on the untapped versatility of Alauddin Ali as a musician.

JETUKU SHOMOY TUMI THAKO KACHE

A beautiful duet by Agoon and Sabina Yasmin, *Jetuku Shomoy Tumi Thako Kache* has something quite intoxicating about it. Written by Pradip Goswami, the song propelled the film *Shoto Jonomer Prem* into being a commercial success.

“His melodies carried the essence of our motherland” - Gazi Mazharul Anwar

NARRATED TO SHARMIN JOYA

I knew Alauddin Ali from when he was very young. He was a talented, yet shy person. He was one of the best music directors of our country. A lesser known fact about him is that he produced the film, *Malabodol*. However, it wasn't commercially successful, and he did not produce any other film after that.

I used to visit Kolkata during festivals. One day, the owner of Concord Studio, Mr Chatterjee, asked me for some folk songs of Bangladesh (then East Pakistan). Alauddin was there at the time. I called him up and introduced him to Mr Chatterjee. At the time, I wrote the song, *Bondhu Tin Din*, composed by Alauddin and sung by Runa Laila. This song took Concord Studio to greater heights and is adored by listeners till date. Alauddin's melodies carried the essence of our motherland.

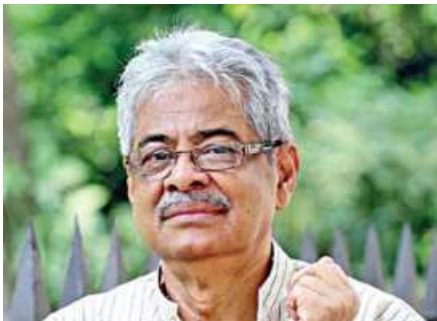


PHOTO: STAR

His name is right up there with legends like Altaf Mahmud. Satya Saha and Subal Das, among others.

My daughter Dithi Anwar, who is also a singer, worked with Alauddin during his final active days. His spirit will remain alive through his creations. As a nation, it is our responsibility to honour and respect his work.

“He taught me everything that I know about music” – Foad Nasser Babu

NARRATED TO ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

We often see performers or anchors mentioning the names of the music composer or lyricist before presenting a song. However, legends like Alauddin Ali require no introduction.

I feel like every artiste from the music fraternity wanted to see him one last time. However, the pandemic has raised many safety concerns, and coming to see him at Birdem General Hospital could have posed health risks for many. Legends like Syed Abdul Hadi, Sabina Yasmin and Linu Billah, among many others, called me repeatedly for updates. Sabina apa is a cancer survivor and Hadi bhai underwent a heart bypass surgery recently. I am not too fit either, but I did not want to miss the chance of seeing Alauddin Ali one last time, since we have been working together over the past 40 years. Every interaction

with him felt like a music class. Even though he was a star, his humility was unparalleled. Back then, we did not have many opportunities to learn the technical aspects of music. As a result, his studio became my school. He was my friend and my teacher. He taught me everything that I know about music. Never did the smile on his face take a break.



PHOTO: COURTESY

“He was a master of his craft” -Runa Laila

NARRATED TO SHARMIN JOYA

I was rehearsing the songs of the film *The Rain* (1976), directed by S M Shafi.

Alauddin Ali was assisting music director Anwar Parvez for the project, when we first met. I worked with him for the first time in Kolkata in the 80s, on an album produced under the banner of HMV. Numerous hits came out of that album, including *Shukh Re Tui Ar Koto Kal*, *Janigo Phurabe Raat*, *Chole Gekhho Tumi*, and *Barir Manush Koy Amay*, among others.

He was a master of his craft. *Bondhu Tin Din*, considered one of his most popular songs, resonated with Bengali and Indian audiences all over the world. *Buke Amar Agun Joley*, which we recorded in the early days, is a fan favourite till date. In the later years, we did numerous albums and film songs together, most of which are still adored by listeners. The beautifully melodious song, *Amay Genthe Daona Mago Ekta Polash Phuler Mala*, created history. It is my most favourite number that we worked on together.

Around two years ago when his condition was a bit stable, he came to my house and we had long conversations about our old memories. I went to see Alauddin Ali when he was admitted at the Aysha Memorial Hospital. He could recognise me, but couldn't talk. That was the last time I saw him. I will miss him dearly.



PHOTO: STAR

“He was one of the best music directors in the subcontinent”

- Sabina Yasmin

NARRATED TO SHARMIN JOYA

I have sung around 16000 songs in my career so far, among which around 4,000 were composed by Alauddin Ali.

He played the violin exceptionally well. In 1973, he was offered his first film as a music composer, but the film was never finalised. However, he had approached me to sing a song for that film.

O Amar Bangla Ma Tor was our first song together. I sang the song on BTV and radio several times. It is still considered one of the best patriotic songs that we have.

At that time, Alauddin Ali was signing one film after another, and was at the peak of his career. Amzad Hossain, Alauddin Ali, Syed Abdul Hadi and I had great chemistry, and we came out with several award-winning projects. Most of my awards are for Alauddin Ali and Amzad Hossain's creations.

Alauddin Ali was incomparable. He was one of the best music directors in the subcontinent. The last time we worked together was in Focus Studio for a film directed by Chhatku Ahmed. Coincidentally, it was Andrew Kishore and Alauddin Ali's



PHOTO: STAR

last recording with me.

He was a pleasant person who enjoyed every moment of life. Once on my birthday, we were recording at Sruti Studio. He remembered that it was my birthday, and bought a cake for me from Sheraton. He was an extremely busy composer, and his studio was his second home.

I stayed in touch with him throughout his final days. Though he could hardly talk, he always asked me to sing the song *Shomoy Hoyecheh Jawar Mon Keno Jete Chay Na*, from Amzad Hossain's film *Adorer Shontan*. I even sang this song for him when he was in the ICU. May Allah grant him the best place in *Jannah*.

“I admire his versatility as a composer” -Naquib Khan

NARRATED TO ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

Alongside designing magical melodies and being one of the finest music composers of the sub-continent, Alauddin Ali was also an amazing lyricist. He spear-headed the renaissance of modern Bangla music blending folk and classical elements in the modern genre. Many of his compositions also show influences of western music, merged together, creating history. He entered the music industry as a violinist and went on to assist maestros like Altaf Mahmud and Anwar Parvez, and many of his compositions still radiate their essence. I also have had the privilege to play with him when I came to Dhaka from Chattogram in 1983, and before, he used to love our double chamber Organ 'VOX super continental' (keyboard) of the band Souls and often visited my house when he came to Chattogram. One thing that I enjoy about his compositions is his selection of notes and chord progression, we usually see sad songs composed in minor chords. Breaking this monotony, he went on to create unique sweet melodies and love songs in minor chords for example his song, *Shesh Korona Shurutei Khela*. His way of working was also very old-school where the artiste would be called for rehearsals, only then would he step into the recording studio. I admire his versatility as a composer as he left no genre untouched -- be it love songs, patriotic compositions, or simple sweet melodies.



PHOTO: COURTESY