

GRAPE VINE



PHOTO: COLLECTED

BADHON'S FIRST MUSIC FILM

Lux Channel i Superstar star Azmeri Haque Badhon will be seen in a musical film for the song *Joy Hok Joy Hok*, written by Kazi Nazrul Islam. The song will be sung by Sushmita Anis, while the music composition is being done by Arnob. For the video, Mohsina Akhter was behind costume design and Piplu R Khan directed it. The video will be released on celebration of the day of Independence. Badhon said, "This song was written so long ago by Kazi Nazrul Islam, but it still feels relevant to this day. This song is very inspirational and makes me want to stand up against any oppressive powers. This is the first musical film that I have appeared in."

Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub

SHAKIB KHAN'S NEW MISSION

Shakib Khan will be seen in the upcoming film *Antaratma* alongside Kolkata-based actor Darshana Banik. The story for the film is written by Sohani Hossain and it is directed by Wajed Ali Sumon. The script is being written by Ferrari Farhad and the film will be released under the banner of Taranga Entertainment. The shooting for the film will take place in Pabna. Shakib Khan said, "This is a very family-oriented film. I worked in a film like this after a long time. I hope the audience will like it." Shakib Khan's last film, *Nabab LL. B.*, was released in theaters last December.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub

A hopeful beginning

Na Bola Kotha famed singer Eleyas Hossain gave voice for the first time to a film song, *Moner-Dukkho*, along with singer Konal. The song is from the movie *Jao Pakhi Bolo Tare*, directed by Mostafizur Rahman Manik. It is written by S K Dip and composed by J K Majlish. Eleyas said, "This is a very memorable event for me. I am really happy to begin my playback journey with such a wonderful song. I hope that the audience will appreciate it." The leads of the movie are actor Mahiya Mahi and Shipon Mitra.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

COVER STORY

KONAL'S TRIUMPH

A voice that reverberates power and passion, singer Somnur Monir Konal is one of the artists who lent her voice to the song, "Through The Tiger's Eye". To commemorate the 50 years celebration of Bangladesh's Independence, Daniel Seidl, a former Executive Director of the Bangladesh German Chamber of Commerce, came up with this initiative under 'Artists4Desh'. In this special interview with Rafi Hossain, Konal shares insights about the song and her experiences working for it.

RAFI HOSSAIN: Today, we're here with Konal.

Thank you for being with us today.

KONAL: I'm really glad to be here and talk to you.

RAFI HOSSAIN: Tell us about your new project.

KONAL: The project has been created to celebrate the golden jubilee of our country's independence. The song, *Through The Tiger's Eye*, is a part of the initiative under the *Artists4Desh*. Most of the organisers are foreigners, and one of them is Daniel Seidel. He is originally from Germany, but he spent twenty years in Bangladesh as a diplomat and also worked for the people here. So, he has a special connection to Bangladesh, which is why he was inspired to begin this initiative. This is a global project, which involves songs, photo exhibitions, concerts, and books being released. This is targeted to audiences globally to promote the celebration of fifty years of independence of Bangladesh, and to teach about Bangladesh. The idea was actually inspired from the 1971 Concert for Bangladesh. We have included a part of the original song by George Harrison in our song to pay homage. Even though it is a small role, I am honoured, humbled, and proud to be a part of it. I was first approached by Daniel, who introduced me to our music director and producer, Robert Bartha. Afterward, ten different artists from ten countries came together to create the song. Most of them were Europeans and I was the only one from Bangladesh.



RAFI HOSSAIN: I find that many songs nowadays are not as memorable as older songs used to be. Why do you think that is?

KONAL: I find there to be two reasons behind this. First, we have to give new songs more time to see if they are sustainable or not. We have all been listening to old songs for years now, which is why we find them to be more memorable. Second, previously the means of listening to songs were limited. Now, we have YouTube, phones, foreign songs, etc. As a result of this, we are competing globally against established international singers, which has both advantages and disadvantages. Moreover, many low-quality songs are being promoted instead of better alternatives. By this, I mean lyrically pleasant songs. Many media are responsible for this, not just artists themselves.

RAFI HOSSAIN: Like many parts of the entertainment industry, the television industry is also suffering. What are your thoughts on that?

KONAL: I cannot fully blame the audience for the downfall of the industry. As an audience myself, Bangladeshi television channels do not attract me or keep me glued to the television. This is because most of the shows are not out of the box. What I, myself, have learnt from working with the industry is that most of the financing is now directed towards the marketing department rather than the creative department. I don't know the real cause behind this, but the use of the same actors and similar storylines make the shows very uninteresting. One channel I have to name, however, is *Duronto TV*. They are very organised and their content is really enjoyable as well. They showed that it is possible to draw the audience if you have unique ideas and proper strategies and execution. I often attend special shows during Eid alongside many senior artists, and we always expect interesting questions, but don't receive any. Similar to *Duronto*, we also need channels dedicated to music and artists, and alongside that a team is needed to constantly come up with new ideas to make improvements. Only then can we expect to see positive changes.

RAFI HOSSAIN: Do you want to add anything about any recent show or program you watched?

KONAL: A few days ago, my husband was watching a show and I happened to catch a dialogue that used very foul language. The character saying it was being portrayed by an actor who is somewhat of an idol today, especially for the younger generation. I think the impact of the work we create is often

overlooked, instead of understanding it and using it to inspire and teach people. If the people our future generation idolises are spreading negative messages or encouraging vile behaviour, then it will definitely prove to be detrimental for our country in the following years. I would also ask the youth to choose their icons carefully.

RAFI HOSSAIN: I believe that music has become about likes and views nowadays, but no one, in reality, knows the songs that are labelled popular. Why is that?

KONAL: I have something to add regarding this. Oftentimes, we judge a song's popularity based on how many people know it in Dhaka. However, if you look outside the urban sphere and into rural areas, you'll find that there are many fans and followers of artists and songs there that are not as well-known here. For instance, I went to Chuadanga recently and people mentioned songs to me that had millions of views on YouTube. Even though I believed there would not be an audience for such songs, in reality, they do exist outside of our own area.

RAFI HOSSAIN: What do you have to say regarding the feedback people provide on all kinds of artwork in our country?

KONAL: There is a need for proper critiques. Constructive criticism is an important aspect of every artist's work, and it is impossible to make improvements without it. I would truly appreciate it if there were individuals pointing out my shortcomings and guiding me towards solutions. I was a judge on a children's music show, and there are such marvellous singers and talents in our country, which is something that I always love to see. Bangladesh has so much potential, and all we need is to nurture it.

RAFI HOSSAIN: Any last message for your fans?

KONAL: I have very recently recovered from a family tragedy, for which I had taken a break from work to get some peace of mind. I began working with a few recordings, and have recently worked on some playbacks as well. Thanks to the Almighty, I already have some more projects lined up for me. One of my projects was a song in Kobori apa's film under Sabina Yasmin's composition and direction. I also want to thank my followers for the constant support they give me. Lastly, thank you for having me today, Rafi bhai.

Shreya Shomoyeeta

POPCORN HIGHLIGHTS

Here are some binge worthy movie and TV series you can spend your time watching while you stay at home social distancing, keeping yourself, as well as others, safe.

BEHIND HER EYES



Behind Her Eyes is a British supernatural psychological thriller web series on Netflix. It has been based on the eponymous novel by Steve Lightfoot who also created the series, and has been directed by Erik Richter Strand, produced under the banner of Sony Pictures Television and Left Bank Pictures, and stars Eve Hewson, Tom Bateman and Robert Aramayo, among others. The series follows the life of a mother whose life changes completely after starting an affair with her boss, while also becoming his wife's friend. It was first released on February 17, 2021.

TELL ME YOUR SECRETS

Tell Me Your Secrets is a thriller drama television series on Amazon Prime Video. It has been created by Harriet Warner, who also produced the series alongside others, directed by John Polson, and stars Lily Rabe, Amy Brenneman and Hamish Linklater, among others. It features three individuals who are dealing with their disturbing pasts to find the truth. The series originally premiered on February 19, 2021.



Sisyphus: The Myth

Sisyphus: The Myth is a South Korean science fiction and thriller television series. It has been directed by Jin Hyuk, produced by Park Joon-seo and Park Sang-eok, and stars Cho Seung-woo and Park Shin-hye, among others. The story, which involves time travel, follows an engineer who is looking to learn more about his brother's death. It was released on February 17, 2021.



Shreya Shomoyeeta