

# Sariful Razz spills the beans on 'Kobi' and co-star Idhika Paul

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With the ongoing promotion of his upcoming film, *Kajol Rekha*, directed by Gias Uddin Selim, actor Sariful Razz is notably absent from any promotional campaigns. The film is expected to be released in February, while Razz is currently shooting in Kolkata for another project, *Kobi*, directed by Hashibur Reza Kallol. In this film, he is co-starring with Idhika Paul, a renowned actress from Kolkata known for her role in *Priyotoma*.

The Daily Star caught up with Razz over the phone, where he shared his experience of shooting outside Bangladesh for the first time and more.

**How are you? Do you feel that you're missing out on participating in the promotional campaign for your upcoming film, 'Kajol Rekha'?**

I am doing great and having a lot of fun here in Kolkata as I am shooting for *Kobi*. Regarding the promotional campaign, we have a stellar cast actively participating in the publicity, so I don't believe my absence will be noticeable in that regard.

**How long have you been shooting for 'Kobi'? What made you sign this film?**

We've been shooting for 21 days, and we're almost done

with the project. I feel fortunate to be a part of this film, especially considering the challenges in my personal life. Kallol bhai played a crucial role in this regard, something no one else did for me.

There are several reasons for choosing *Kobi*. The shooting location and the plot depict a different culture in a different country, marking my first time working outside Bangladesh. Additionally, my co-star is an Indian actress, making it a completely new experience that intrigued me the most.

**We have the first look of 'Kobi'. Could you elaborate more on your role?**



I can't reveal much about it, but I assure you it's a unique role. I would request the audience to pray for me so that I can continue presenting good work to them.

**Since you have been shooting in Kolkata for about a month, have you been receiving offers from Tollywood?**

Nothing has been finalised yet. I am in talks for some projects, and once confirmed, I can discuss them. However, staying this long outside the country is tough for someone like me. I miss my country, my parents, and my son a lot. I miss the nightlife of Dhaka. For now, I want to complete the shoots for *Kobi* and come back soon.

**Idhika Paul earned fame and much love as Bangladesh's 'Priyotoma'. How is your experience working with her?**

She is a great artiste and a fantastic co-star. It's my first time working with a co-star from another country, and it's a new experience for me. Moreover, she is quite cooperative, and I believe the audience will like our chemistry.



## Taylor Swift surpasses Michael Jackson with highest-grossing concert film

Taylor Swift might not have secured a Golden Globe for her *Eras Tour* film, but she still made history. Before the singer's red-carpet appearance at the 81st Golden Globe Awards, *Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour* claimed its position as the highest-grossing concert and documentary film.

Swift accomplished this remarkable feat as her global box office hit film surpassed Michael Jackson's *This Is It*, the previous record-holder.

Last Sunday, *The Eras Tour* amassed a total of USD 261.6 million globally surpassing *This Is It*, which had a global total of USD 261.2 million.

## IMDb lists three of Deepika's films as most anticipated Indian movies of 2024



The Internet Movie Database's (IMDb) 2024 most anticipated Indian movies list includes various films from various languages, highlighting the competition amongst regional industries to keep pace with Bollywood.

As per the website, the list was curated by analysing the actual page views from millions of monthly visitors to IMDb globally. Notably, Siddharth Anand's *Fighter*, with lead roles played by Deepika Padukone and Hrithik Roshan is the most anticipated Indian movie of 2024.

Her other films which also belong to the top five movies on the list are *Singham Again* and *Kalki 2898 AD*. Besides, she secured the third position on the recently revealed IMDb Most Popular Indian Stars of 2023.

# NEWS

## Global powers' varied reaction, as expected

FROM PAGE 12 South Asia Institute at the Washington-based think-tank, Wilson Centre.

In the months ahead of the polls, China and Russia joined hands in repeatedly criticising the US statements and the visa policy on Bangladesh, saying that those were interfering in the internal affairs of Bangladesh.

The Chinese embassy statement that came after Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen's congratulations to Hasina on Monday says: "China will firmly support Bangladesh in safeguarding national sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and in opposing external interference."

It also says China will support Bangladesh in maintaining unity

and stability and in playing a more active role in international and regional affairs and promote high-quality China-Bangladesh Belt and Road cooperation and make its own contribution to realising "Smart Bangladesh".

"Statements reveal that the Asian power spoke of their geopolitical project -- the Belt and Road Initiative while the US on advancing the vision of the Indo-Pacific. This means that the geopolitical competition of the global powers will only intensify," Kabir, also a former ambassador, told this correspondent.

It was not surprising that the statements of the Western nations were different from those of the Asian giants, said Shahab Enam Khan, professor at Jahangirnagar

University's international relations department.

"This is clearly an ideological aspect. The important issue is how we address the concerns coming from the West," he said.

Bangladesh needs China, India, Japan, as they have been instrumental in the infrastructure development and regional connectivity.

It also needs the US, the UK and the EU as those are major export markets for Bangladesh, Khan said.

Bangladesh needs to strengthen its internal cohesion by reducing the gaps among the major political parties, cutting corruption and improving economic strength, Kabir said.

"If we have divisions in the political arena and corruption continues to

dominate the financial space, we will not be able to address the geopolitical tension."

He also suggested that Bangladesh needs a fine level of professional diplomacy for maintaining balance among the global powers.

"Global media, as well as the Western countries, have been continuously critical of Bangladesh's affairs. We need to engage more diplomatically and address these concerns as we are more connected to global trade today."

Asked about the possibility of the US taking any punitive actions such as sanctions, Kabir said: "It is difficult to say anything about it. I think the US is assessing in detail the electoral violence and intimidation. Any action will depend on the final assessment."

## The golden voice falls silent

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Rashid Khan's musical journey began under the watchful eye of his uncle, Ghulam Mustafa Khan. His debut concert, at the age of 11, marked the onset of a stellar career that spanned decades and left a lasting impact on the classical music landscape.

In 1980, at just 14, Khan joined the prestigious ITC Sangeet Research Academy in Calcutta, following his mentor Nissar Hussain Khan. He then went on to becoming an icon and integral part of Kolkata's cultural life.

His foray into experimental collaborations, including fusion performances with Western instrumentalist Louis Banks, showcased a versatility that set him apart.

Beyond the confines of classical purism, Khan advocated for the fusion of Hindustani classical music with lighter genres, believing it to be essential for reaching newer generations.

Upon the news of his death, tributes poured in from all corners.

Priyanka Gope, an associate professor at DU's music department, shared her deep connection with Khan's work, calling him the "biggest inspiration" during her journey with classical music.

"When I started my musical journey, I didn't have the privilege of witnessing any live performances by classical musicians. My introduction to the world of classical music came through a cassette of Ustad Rashid Ali Khan, provided by my guru.

"I found myself immersed, listening to his renditions day and night, marveling at how effortlessly he could navigate such intricate compositions," she told The Daily Star yesterday.

"As a student at Rabindra Bharati University, I eagerly seized every opportunity to attend Ustad Rashid Ali Khan's musical sessions. Eventually, I had the honour of sharing the stage with him not once, but twice, serving as a background choir. This experience remains a highlight of my musical journey."

Chief Minister of West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee, in her X handle, mourned the death of Khan. "Deeply saddened by the tragic

demise of Ustad Rashid Khan, one of the greatest exponents of Indian classical music of our times. A hugely respected vocalist with unparalleled genius in creating music, he made us proud by settling here and making Bengal his home....

"Ustad Rashid Khan got our highest civilian award Banga Bibhusan and our Sangeet Mahasamman too ... My profound condolences to Soma, Armaan Khan, and Ustad's whole family as well as to the countless students and admirers that he leaves behind in the whole world..."

Meanwhile, sarod maestro Ustad Aamjad Ali Khan, in a Facebook post, wrote, "I am so saddened to know that Ustad Rashid Khan is no more. He was an artist who earned the respect and love of one and all. A child prodigy, Rashid Khan was one of the most loved and gifted vocalists of the country. God's blessings were upon him. His voice was full of charm, emotion and appeal. Be it Khayal, Thumri or Bhajan, there was magic in the singing."

"His passing away marks a huge loss to the world of vocal music. I am sure and hope that his son and numerous disciples will continue the tradition and legacy that he has left behind. My deepest condolences to his family and disciples. May his soul rest in peace."

In 2007, when his song "Aaoge Jab Tum" in "Jab We Met" broke all records, he was met with a flurry of offers. Khan was cautious in accepting them.

He released his debut ghazal album, "Ishq Lamhe", in 2013.

His other popular songs include, "Tu Meri Aashiqui", "Dhadkanein Meri", "Saawan Ki Boondein", "Allah Hi Rehah", "Cheene Re Mora Chain", "Bol Ke Lab Azaad Hain", and "Bhor Bhayo", "Marwa", "Poore Se Zara Kam Hai", and more.

As the world mourns the loss of a musical luminary, Ustad Rashid Khan's contributions to Indian classical music remain a timeless inspiration.

His voice may have fallen silent, but the echoes of his melodies will resonate through the corridors of classical music for generations to come.

## Post-polls violence continues

FROM PAGE 12 immediately who killed Barun," he told The Daily Star around 8:00pm.

Independent Nasser Shahrear Zahedee, who won in this constituency, could not be contacted over phone for comments.

Shahin Uddin, officer-in-charge of Jhenidah Sadar Police Station said, "An activist of Awami League was hacked to death by criminals around 7:00pm. We cannot say anything more about the murder immediately. We are investigating."

In Pirojpur, a man sustained stab injuries as the followers of AL lawmaker-elect for Pirojpur-1 SM Rezaul Karim and defeated independent AKMA Awal clashed in Nazirpur upazila on Monday night.

Injured Lajju Sheikh, 30, of Raghunathpur village, is Rezaul's man, said locals.

The clash broke out when supporters of Rezaul attacked the houses of Awal's supporters in the village around 8:30pm, said witnesses.

Awal's supporter Shanto Khan, also a former Bangladesh Chhatra League leader, alleged that they first came under attack by some 30-40 supporters of the AL nominee.

However, Babul Khan, a close

aide to the AL candidate, denied the allegation and said their rivals attacked them first and stabbed Lajju indiscriminately.

Lajju's father Moslem Sheikh filed a case accusing 30 people, and police arrested two of them, said Md Ziauddin, inspector of Nazirpur Police Station.

Two union parishad chairmen were assaulted allegedly by the supporters of AL lawmaker-elect for Rajshahi-1 Omor Faruk Chowdhury.

Nizamuddin Babu, chairman of Talondo union of Tanore upazila, alleged that some 12 men of Omar Faruk attacked him in Tanore Bazar yesterday noon. He filed a case in the afternoon.

One was arrested in this connection, said Abdur Rahim, OC of Tanore Police Station.

In another incident, Mashidul Gani Masud, chairman of Godagari Union Parishad of Godagari upazila, came under attack in Rajshahi city on Monday night.

"I tried to lodge a case with Boalia Police Station in the city. But police recorded it as a general diary," he alleged.

Contacted, Humayun Kabir, OC of the police station, said, "The incident was not as big that a case had to

be filed. Besides, the complainant wanted to record a GD, not a case."

Omor Faruk said the incidents occurred as local leaders are fighting with each other over personal enmity.

"I asked all sides to show patience and work together."

In Tangail-4 constituency, Latif Siddique, along with several hundreds of his supporters, blocked the Tangail-Mymensingh highway for around two hours yesterday, demanding release of his six supporters, who were detained over attacking their rivals on Monday night.

Four of the six detainees were released, said Md Sharfuddin, additional superintendent of Tangail police.

Meanwhile, two defeated AL candidates in Tangail yesterday alleged that their rivals have unleashed terror in their respective areas after winning the polls.

Mamunur Rashid Mamun of Tangail-5 and Kamrul Hasan Khan of Tangail-3 yesterday made the allegations at separate press conferences in Tangail Press Club yesterday.

However, neither independent lawmaker-elects of Tangail-5 Sanowar Hussain and Tangail-3 Amanur Rahman Khan Rana could be

contacted over phone for comments.

In Barishal, at least 72 people, wounded in post-polls violence, were undergoing treatment at Barishal Sher-e Bangla Medical College Hospital, said Saiful Islam, director of the hospital.

[Our correspondents from respective districts contributed to this report.]

## UN worried

FROM PAGE 1 arrest of opposition leaders," said Florencia Soto Niño, associate spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, at a media briefing yesterday.

She said the UN secretary general is obviously concerned about reports of incidents of violence before and during the elections and he calls on all parties to reject all forms of violence and to ensure human rights and the rule of law are fully respected.

"This is essential for the consolidation of democracy and economic prosperity there," she said. Florencia said it is essential for the Bangladesh government to foster an environment of democracy. "Respect and reject all forms of violence, and obviously ensure that human rights are respected there."