

# Kalim Sharafi

Kalim Sharafi is a Bangladeshi Rabindra Sangeet singer and cultural revolutionary. He gave his ideas in several publications regarding politics, culture, and Tagore. He is regarded as one of the best Rabindra sangeet singers in the subcontinent .



Kalim Sharafi as a young man in 1949 and 1964 respectively.

Ironically, Sharafi was born into a family that was far from the world of music that he was destined to be in. Sharafi was born on May 8, 1924 in the village of Birbhum, West Bengal and his ancestors belonged to a family of pirs, based in Sonargaon (Sonargaon is the ancient capital of Isa Khan's kingdom in Bengal. In Current Days it is located near the city of Narayanganj, Bangladesh). Consequently, Sharafi was forbidden to practice music. In spite of that, Sharafi's love for music led him to defy his family's wishes and secretly patronise it as he grew up. He would listen to famous artists and musicians of the then pre-independent India and learn from them as well. "I was always a quick learner," says Sharafi. "As a child I used to find Rabindranath's compositions naturally melodic and heart touching and would grasp them easily."



With Ustad Alaiddin Khan and Artiste Zainul Abedin.

Sharafi has seen much of what has happened in the pre-independent India, says Sharafi. A political activist from a very early age, Sharafi was a part of the Quit India Movement in 1942, for which many activists were locked up for years. "I was picked up from my village," he says. "I was hardly 18 or 19 years old back then. The officials surrounded my home and took me to jail in their jeep." While he was being taken away, it seemed as if the quiet village had suddenly come alive. "Groups of hundreds were cheering for me, encouraging me in the movement and telling me to go on with the fight to free our country from these foreign clutches."

Sharafi is quite optimistic about the development that is taking place in the field of media and communications in the country today. The founder director of Bangladesh Television in 1964, Sharafi is one of the pioneers in introducing electronic media in the country. "I welcome changes and progressive ideas," he says. "The media has changed tremendously over the past few decades. We now have the resources to match our international counterparts. However, we seem to take these advantages for granted and misuse them to promote vulgarity and thoughts against culture. This unnecessary colouring should be stopped."



Working on a composition.

Yet he is very positive about changes in the field of media such as the digitisation of music and also the advent of western influence on band music in the country. "We have to move along with time to survive," he says. "There is nothing wrong with the practice of band music in Bangladesh. In fact, the fresh sound is welcomed and appreciated. However, in the name of change, we should not lose our integrity and respect for the culture in any case." Sharafi mentions the distortion of Tagore songs, which have been taking place in the past few years. "One can always experiment," he says. "All you have to keep in mind is to follow the swaralipi to sing Rabindra Sangeet," he says. According to many an expert, Rabindranath Tagore's compositions have several levels of

meanings. The blend of words, rhythm and melody has certain implications, which need to be pronounced and stressed in particular ways to bring out the true connotation of the lyrics.

A diehard communist, he talks about how communalism and political favouritism have taken over culture. During the pre-liberation period, Rabindranath's songs were banned from being broadcasted on the radio. Even after liberation, Sharafi was banned from both Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television. "It saddens me when people start comparing Rabindranath and Nazrul and putting forward absurd questions like why Tagore is placed higher than Nazrul, like they are two leaders of two political parties," says Sharafi. "Nazrul's poetry and music are incomparable to the creative works done by anyone else. How can two different works, belonging to two different worlds and eras be compared in this way? I bet even Nazrul would be embarrassed if he were alive today with the comparisons, considering the fact that he was a big Tagore admirer. It's a shame to see how some people simply don't understand the stupid comments that they make so bluntly in public. What's more disheartening is that these same clusters of so-called 'thinkers' end up influencing the people of our country."

## TRACK LIST

AAR\_REKHONA\_ADHARE  
AJI\_BIJANO\_GHARE  
AJI\_JHARER\_RATE  
AJI\_NIRALA\_KUNJE  
AMAR\_NA\_BOLA  
AMAR\_AAR\_HABENA  
AMAR\_MOLLIKA\_BONE  
AMAR\_NAI\_BA\_HALO  
AMI\_CHANCHAL\_HEY  
AMI\_TAKHAN\_CHILEM  
AMI\_TOMAY\_JOTO  
ANEK\_KOTHA\_BOLECHHILAM  
BADHU\_TOMAY\_KARBO\_RAJA  
BARISHA\_DHARA\_MAJHE  
BARO\_BEDANAR\_MATO  
BHUBANESHWAR\_HEY  
BORO\_ASHA\_KORE  
CHARAN\_DHARITE\_DIYO\_GO  
CHARAN\_DHWANI\_SHONI  
CHINILE\_NA\_AMARE\_KI  
DARAO\_AMAR\_ANKHIR\_AAGE  
DIN\_PORE\_JAY\_DIN  
EI\_LOBHINU\_SONGO\_TOBO  
JE\_RATE\_MOR  
KLANTI\_AMAR  
MALA\_HOTE\_KHOSE\_PORA  
MEGH\_BOLECHHE\_JABO\_JABO  
NIDRA\_HARA\_RATER\_E\_GAAN  
PATHE\_JETE\_DEKECHILE  
PORANO\_JANIA  
PROBHU\_AMAR\_PRIYO\_AMAR  
PURANO\_SEI\_DINER\_KATHA  
SHUNI\_OI\_RUNUJHUNU  
SOHENA\_JATONA  
SRABONER\_DHARAR\_MOTO  
TOMARO\_OSEEME  
TUMI\_EKTU\_KEBAL