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Obituary

The Dream Maker

FAIZUL KHAN TANIM and SRABONTI NARMEEN ALI

It was 4:30 a.m. on April 20th when a microbus full of musicians was driving in Comilla (Chouddogram) on its way back to Dhaka. The roads were bad and a tire burst, causing the microbus to roll into a ditch. Musicians from the band Black, namely Tony, Jon, Tahsan, Jahan and Meraz, a friend Tanim, the driver Iqbal were all badly injured. But there was one other person in the accident that didn't make it. Sound engineer and musician Imran Ahmed Chowdhury Mobin died instantly on impact. He was 36 years old.

He was described by close friend Thein Han Maung Titi, director of Ektaar Music and Managing Director of Sound Machine as a "brilliant student who led a bohemian life. He was a pensive man and a little introverted; people sometimes mistook him as being grumpy. But in actuality he was a dream maker."

Mobin had always had an inclination towards music but was officially exposed to the music scene in 1987, as a sound engineer for various concerts. He was responsible for putting together one of the most famous mixed albums in Bangladesh to date -- the LRB unplugged album titled *Pherari Mon*.

Mobin joined Sound Garden recording studio in 1994. He worked with artists from both the underground scene as well as mainstream, such as Miles, Feedback, LRB, James, Aurthohin, Cryptic Fate. He mixed the album *Charpotro*, which is known as the "making" of new rock bands in Bangladesh such as Artcell and Black. Although he had no official training he was still a pioneer in the world of sound engineering. "I can never imagine him as my -coworker," says Isha Khan Duray, a colleague of his from the Sound Garden recording studio. "He was my guru, my driving force behind what I am now. Although he was quiet and kept most things to himself, he was very friendly once he got to know someone. If I can recollect my working days he was extremely fun-loving, one hundred percent dedicated and *addabaji* was his favourite pastime. To my honest recollection, Prometheus' latest album was his last work."

Musician Maqsoodul Huq whose album *Nishiddho* and famous song "*Khuji Tomakey Khuji*", were mixed by Mobin as were "*Bauliana*", "*Deho Ghor*" of his band Feedback, also spoke highly of his musical talents. "Although I interacted with him a few times in the 1980's, I only started working with him closely in 1993, while he was mixing a milestone open air concert featuring bands like Souls and Feedback in the Chittagong M.A. Aziz Stadium. We started sharing our views on audio engineering and I found that he was an instinctive musician who had immense talent. It was also coincidental that we shared the same favourite sound engineer, Bob Clearmountain. Mobin was extremely professional. He would not give up any job until he was completely satisfied which is an amazing quality. He was a great troubleshooter as well. There are very few people in our industry who can locate and troubleshoot problems related to sound and musical instruments."

On top of that he was known for his amazing bass playing techniques which can be heard in Winning's album, *Ochena Shohor*



Fellow bassist Sumon or Aurtnonin says, He was one of the most creative bassists. I was once blown away by one of his pieces of studio work. He had such an amazing 'slap' [a bass playing technique]. When I went to congratulate him he surprised me by telling me that the entire portion was done by a guitar pick. Only a truly talented musician can do that. On top of that I still believe that he was the best sound engineers in the country and his talents and experience will be greatly missed. When I knew my band's work would be handled by Mobin Bhai, I could rest assured that the work would be professional."

They say that the greatest loss in life is in fact not death, but the talent that dies with the soul. It is unfortunate that the loss of the great talent Imran Ahmed Chowdhury Mobin, will leave a vacuum in the heart of Bangladesh's music industry for years to come.

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