

From Lahore to Global Stages: Nazakat Ali Khan's Journey as a Music Promoter and Tabla Maestro

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RKI Special Report

Nazakat Ali Khan, born into a humble family in Lahore, Pakistan, developed an early attachment to music thanks to his father's love for qawwali and Sufi poetry. Growing up, Nazakat and his siblings were respected naat reciters, often winning school competitions for their melodic performances. By the time he reached matriculation, his passion for music had evolved into an

obsession, leading him to pursue it formally, despite initial resistance from his family.

Nazakat's musical journey began under the guidance of the late Mr. Sajjad Ali, a distinguished tabla player and disciple of the legendary Ustad Shaukat Ali. Initially a singer, Nazakat soon discovered his true calling as a tabla player, and under Mr. Sajjad Ali's mentorship, his skills flourished. His first major break came when he accompanied the renowned Ustad Hussain Bakhsh Gulu (late), an experience that was met with great appreciation from the audience and solidified his path in music. From then on, Nazakat's career took off as he collaborated with esteemed artists like Ustad Imtiaz Ali Khan, Ustad Fida Hussain, Ustad Babar Niazi, and Ustad Ghulam Abbas.

In 1998, Nazakat Ali Khan moved to Doha, Qatar, where he founded the Punjab Music Group (PMG) alongside other music enthusiasts. As Chief Organizer, Nazakat worked tirelessly to promote South Asian music in Qatar and beyond. PMG, still active after 26 years, has been instrumental in providing a platform for artists from various genres, introducing over 400 new singers and performers across countries such as the UAE, Bahrain, Oman, Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Japan.

Nazakat's dedication to promoting music goes beyond simply organizing events. He also holds annual tributes like "Rafi Night" and "Ghazal Night" in memory of his father's favorite artists, Rafi Sahib and Mehdi Hassan Sahib, keeping his father's legacy alive. Music, for Nazakat, is more than

just an art form—it is a way of life, a tool for nurturing the soul, and a means of spreading peace.

Despite the global success, Nazakat remains grounded in his roots, often recalling the support of his late father. He continues to pray for the flourishing of art and artists in Pakistan, believing that a passion for music keeps people away from life's disturbances and nurtures sensitivity.