

Neeraj Pandey's 'Khakee: The Bengal Chapter' Faces Plagiarism Row Over Assamese Song



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Prantik Deka 25 March 2025 9951 views

Acclaimed director Neeraj Pandey's web series 'Khakee: The Bengal Chapter', presently available on OTT platforms, has faced criticism for purportedly utilising the melody of a famous Assamese song without acknowledging its original composers. The song "Moina", presented in the fourth episode of the series, bears resemblance to "O Moina Kon Bidhatai Sajile", a classic piece from the 1969 Assamese blockbuster movie 'Dr. Bezbarua', directed by Brajen Barua.

Notably, the web series does not specify if the melody was obtained with permission, raising issues about unauthorised usage. Film critic Utpal Datta has strongly condemned this work for its plagiarism, urging the creators to recognise the original source.

“This is a blatant case of disrespect to the artist,” Datta stated. “It is unacceptable for a celebrated writer-director like Neeraj Pandey to use an iconic Assamese melody without giving due credit. Such acts undermine the contributions of pioneering regional artists and disregard the rich legacy of Assamese cinema.”

Datta emphasised the cultural significance of ‘Dr. Bezbarua’, calling it a milestone in Assamese film history. “The film’s music has been deeply cherished for decades. Lifting a tune from it without acknowledgement insults its creators,” he added.

While music director Jeet Ganguli has not commented on the controversy, background music director Sanjay Chowdhury has told Datta he was unaware of the issue. Datta requests the film-tv and music unions to demand corrective action from ‘Khakee: The Bengal Chapter’ makers.

“This is not the first instance of Assamese music being appropriated without acknowledgment,” Datta noted. “Even legendary composer Naushad was once accused of borrowing a tune from Assamese musician Yogesh Bharali. Such practices must stop, and we must collectively protest to ensure that regional artists receive the recognition they deserve.”

Datta says “The creators of Khakee: The Bengal Chapter must acknowledge the original song and its composer. This is about preserving the integrity of our musical heritage.”

As the controversy gains momentum, it remains uncertain whether the show's makers will address the demands for appropriate attribution. Meanwhile, the resurfacing of "O Moina Kon Bidhatai Sajile" has rekindled public interest in 'Dr. Bezbarua', reminding audiences of the timeless beauty of Assamese cinema and music.

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