

# Music schools of Dhaka

Cultural Reporter

There are a number of music schools or schools of performing arts in this metropolitan capital of ours. In most of these, singing and dancing is taught. In some classical music and instruments.

There was a time when such schools were really non-existent. BAFA or Bulbul Academy of Fine Arts was the first such school. It was the brain child of Late Bulbul Chowdhury, a dancer.

Chayyanaut, the brain child of some Tagore song lovers of the country, Wahidul Haq, Sajida Khatoon, Late Saidul Masum and artist Shamuzzaman Khan was formed in the early sixties. But in those days its activities were very limited. Today, it has earned name and fame as the best place for learning Rabindra Sangeet. Over the years a number of students have graduated from here and are singing such songs.

Many Chayyanaut students are now its teachers or have opened music schools of their own. It is an institution which has maintained its quality and improved with time.

Recently, things have improved much at Chayyanaut and it has become very difficult to complete the course and get the diploma unless one is really serious about singing. A number of students join the first year class every year but by the time they go to 3rd or 4th year, half of the class has already left learning. About a 5th of those who enroll in first year manage to complete 5th year and get the certificate. Now students not only sing and sit for the viva exams, they have written exams too and classical music is a must.

Chayyanaut has started course in classical music from this year. Students have already been selected. Teachers trained from var-

ious parts of India will be teaching classical songs to these students.

Mr Kalim Sharafi has also set up a school like other singers. A decade back, it was very good but now Sangeet Bhavan has lost its reputation. Most teachers who teach here are not very serious because they have schools of their own. Often they are absent too.

Nazrul Academy has cut a niche for itself in the world of music. The brain child of Late Poet Talim Hossain, it is still training new singers to master the art of Nazrul Sangeet. Most of the teachers here are very dedicated and masters Nazrul Sangeet.



A scene from a drama staged by BSCIC staff.

Khalid Hossain has his own school of Nazrul Sangeet and other songs. Razir Chowdhury Banna, Sadi Mohammed, Papiya Sarwar, Ferdousi Rahiman and Ferdous Ara all have singing schools at home. Not all of these schools are good. Most of them have a very commercial outlook.

Said Suchi, "I used to go to a singer of repute and pay her taka one thousand a month for four

days a month. Often she was not at home when I was supposed to be taking lesson from her. But at the end of the month she would send me the pay envelope. It was me who used to feel shy to pay her for the days she did not teach but she was never shamefull of it. On the contrary she took it as her right.

Said Shiplu, "I used to go to a teacher of modern Bangla songs with an excellent classical background. He was not Bengali, so I thought I would get to learn a lot of ghazals from him but believe me, after two years of private tuition from him, I found myself in the same boat. I did not learn much. My teacher did not teach

and wait for her to return. She usually does not return quickly. She comes when it is time for me to return home.

This is not an exceptional case. I have found my friends too facing the same problem. Their teachers also are not serious about them. Infact I think very few singing teachers have any personality or are bothered about their students. I also feel that they fear that, if they teach properly they will lose their tuitions very quickly. In order to keep the money rolling they became insincere. But this is not what we expect from them.

Said Jahid a student who has been leaving singing for more than a decade. "I have been to a number of teachers to learn music. But everywhere I was disappointed. Actually I did not learn as much as I should have. So I changed from one tutor to another but today I find it was not worth doing so. I haven't progressed the way I should have.

In our neighbouring state of India, teachers love to teach their students. They feel proud to groom them but in Bangladesh teaching music or singing is very much a commercial enterprise. No one wants to groom future singers. Our teachers should change their outlook and be broader. They should not forget that one day they will die and leave the world behind but if they leave back talented students, they will live in them and the world will be a gainer by this.

## Poush Mela

Cultural reporter

BSCIC has arranged a three DA Poush Mela-2002 from the 18th-21st of this month.

The mela will be open from 10 a.m to 10 pm on all three days.