

CLOSE-UP ONE TALENT HUNT

In quest of fame

WAHIDA MITU

Nusrat Sharmeen, an honours student of Lalmatia Girls College has learnt only one song for two months and memorised only three, came to take part in a talent hunt for singers from around the country.

She was looking for the opportunity to gain both fame and the lucrative prizes that the organisers will give the winner.

"Who does not hanker after fame, money and popularity that the top participants are to receive," Nusrat asked. "I think all participants here have more or less the same aim," she said.

Her mother in the waiting room was more anxious than the daughter as Nusrat knew just three songs.

"I was able to make her memorise only three songs. If the judges ask her to sing more than three, she will be in trouble. She will not be able to state the name of the music composer and lyricist of the song chosen by the judges," said Nusrat's mother.

Nusrat was one of the hundreds of youngsters from the country over queued in front of Biam Auditorium for their turn in the audition in the country's most famous music competition: "Close Up One-

Tomakei Khujse Bangladesh (Bangladesh is looking for you), jointly organised by Unilever Bangladesh Limited.

Different participants had different aims. Some came to become a star where some came to prove how perfect they are in the midst of many participants. Other came to judge for themselves the level of their singing, while some others did not want to miss the opportunity of meeting the celebrity judges.

A ray of hope glittered in everyone's eyes. They were anxious wondering if they would get the 'yes' card to qualify for the next round.

Shereja Munira Hashem, a second year student of Mohammadpur Preparatory Girl's College has been practising for nearly two months to take part in the competition hampering her studies.

"I want to take up singing as a career so my studies are not important at the moment," she said. "I am confident that I could bridge the gap in my studies later," she added.

"As I want to become a professional singer, it is essential for me to know where I stand, and I will find my answers from the judges," she said.

Moushumi Haq, who has been taking singing lessons



A participant being auditioned (above) while other hopefuls looking for quick fame wait anxiously to test their musical talents at the Biam Auditorium.

since she was a child, entered the competition only to become famous. "At present there are so many audiocassettes in the market, which people do not listen to. This competition will bring me the fame I dream of," Moushumi said.

She also said that since there was no registration fee and the number participants reached 55,000 before the deadline. Therefore the organisers had to stop

registrations before the last date.

"The only phone number that they gave always remained busy and I did not get a chance to register before the dead line. Later I went to ntv, who are the media partners of the programme and after a lot of cajoling and argument I was finally able to register," she said.

For Sadia Islam Lucky, singing is a hobby. She was one



STAR PHOTO

of the last 40 participants in last year's Close Up One competition and came back to participate again with full confidence.

"I think this year I will be able to make up my earlier drawbacks and move forward from where I stopped last year," she said.

Rabitah Sabah, a second year BBA student of Dhaka University said though most of the participants came here to

become a star she came here only to judge herself amid the large number of participants.

"The judges' comments will help us to decide what to do or what not to do while singing," said Rabiat.

She does not want to make singing her career; she wants it as an added qualification.

Nayan Majumdar, another participant entered the competition as he wants to make music his career. He thinks if he

won the competition, people will know him and this familiarity will help him a lot to move forward.

He only sings the songs written and composed by him. "I do not dare to sing songs that were written, composed and sung by others because I don't think I could bring out the emotions with which those famous singers rendered their songs," said Nayan.

Then there are others who

came to the audition just to have some fun.

Ratan Ahmed, who is a graduate student from Jagannath University, came to the competition with a very different purpose -- only to meet the judges!

"I have no experience in singing. I came here only meet the judges in the competition who are famous singers and composers," Ratan said.

DHAKA GATES

Will they really happen?

KAUSARUL ISLAM

Construction of the five proposed gates at entry points to the capital remains far from reality, as the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) is yet to finalise the working design and is still in search of a funding source.

DCC will check the status of the working design including the estimated budget for construction on Sunday. DCC sources said construction of five gates at the five entrances to the capital would cost a maximum of Tk 14 crore. Whatever the figure is DCC is yet to decide on the funding source, and if it fails to get outside funding it will source the project from its own funds.

"We would keep on looking for a sponsor; and even if we fail I don't think funds are a major factor here. We might get a special allotment from the DCC mayor," said a DCC official.

DCC's chief town planner Sirajul Islam, said that after Sunday the project might see a speedy development if there is

are obstacles in the design and estimated budget.

"If we find the project cost feasible for DCC on Sunday, we will send it for the mayor's approval and once he approves it there will not be much delay," he said.

Development' on February 7, 2005.

But in the last 18 months DCC could not give the work order for the project. DCC officials said the tender process took a longer time than expected as they were looking for designs that will

jury board.

The first tender was only open to architectural institutions, but the second and third tenders were open for all involved with designing including architects, architectural institutions, and students of

Aminbazar in Gabtoli. The third will be at the Dhaka entry point on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway and two more near Bridges 1 and 2 of the Buriganga River.

Inbound travellers to Dhaka wonder why there is no gate to welcome guests to the city.

"You have made your city beautiful but this beauty is not reflected at the entrance. The gate could be an icon that gives the first impression to visitors about the city," said Manisha Ganguly, an American citizen who travelled twice to Bangladesh in recent times.

The DCC beautified the city in the last two years, successfully involving a number of private organisations in the process without spending a single penny of theirs. It also hopes to get a sponsor for the gates, said another DCC official.

It must be mentioned that DCC demolished the "Dhaka Gate" at Banani that was built in the 80s in Banani to widen the road to reduce traffic congestion in the city.

One of the gates will be constructed in Uttara near the Tongi Bridge, followed by one at Aminbazar in Gabtoli. The third will be at the Dhaka entry point on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway and two more near Bridges 1 and 2 of the Buriganga River.

The jury board that was formed to select the designs and examine architectural and engineering sides finalised the five individual designs two months back.

The idea to build five 'Dhaka Gates' at the five entrances to the capital started at a meeting of 'Good Governance and

highlight the Bengali culture and tradition.

"The first tender that was floated asking model and design ended on February 15 this year. But we found that models and designs submitted are not up to the mark. Then we had to call a second tender," said Islam, also a member of the

architecture and fine arts.

After the third tender DCC selected five designs submitted by H1 architects, Dots Design Limited, Architect Kamrul Amin, Rafia Abedin, Farhana Shams and Nawshad Ahsanul Haque.

One of the gates will be constructed in Uttara near the Tongi Bridge, followed by one at



In spite of being blamed for the traffic gridlock, rickshaws are still the most favourite transport among the city dwellers mostly because of lack of a proper transport system in the city.

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Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts
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Email: bf@bdonline.com

Cezanne Art Gallery
UAE Moitri Complex, Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani Dhaka
Tel: 8826578, Email: cezanne@bangla.net

Drik Gallery
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Tel: 9120125, Fax: 9115044, Email: office@drik.net

Gallery Chitrak
House-21, Road-4, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka
Tel: 8620345, Email: chittrak@agnl.com

National Art Gallery
Segunbagicha, Dhaka-1000
Tel: 9562801-4

Shilpa Rag
House 15, Road 16, Dhanmondi, Dhaka, Tel: 8117085
Fax: 8117085, Email: shilparg@vassdigital.com

Shilpangan
House-25, Road-5, Dhanmondi, Dhaka, Tel: 8614246

Tivoli Art Gallery
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9561580, Fax: 88-02-9560587

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Polwell Market-Friday
BCS Computer City-Friday
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Rajlaxmi Complex-Friday
Stadium Market-Friday
Bangabazar Market-Friday
National Museum-Thursday
Ahsan Manzi-Thursday.
New Market-Tuesday
Gausia Market-Tuesday
Mouchak Market-Sunday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Dhaka Zoo-Sunday
Farmview Super Market-Sunday
Muktijuddha Jadughar-Sunday
Dhaka Zoo-Sunday
Shishu Jadughar-Sunday