

# TEENS and TWENTIES

## Guiding the Guitar Freaks

by Lavina Ambreen Ahmed

THERE are no dearth of music schools in the metropolis for those who are keen on taking Rabintra sangeet, Nazrul sangeet, tabla, Hawaiian guitar or even sitar lessons. But there are very few places here where a Spanish guitar buff can get proper training.

'Happy School of Guitar' is one of them. Run by the well known guitarist and composer Niloy Das, the school caters to all the aspiring guitarists, giving them a chance to test their flair.

Founded in 1988 at his home in 40/1 Green Road, the school has been going strong since its launching, attracting many a guitar enthusiast. The name of his school was decided in commemoration of his friend the talented musician, late Happy Akhand. One might visualize a place from which music emanates and the sounds of multiple guitar strings moving in unison vibrating the whole neighbourhood. In reality, the school is quite calm and serene. The guitar room has no furniture. A big beige carpet spread on the floor provides the eager learners a place to squat and learn the intricacies of the melodious instrument.

There are four guitars in the room, all belonging to the instructor himself. Few paintings adorn the walls. Surprisingly enough, there are also portraits of Tagore and Nazrul, a set of tabla and a harmonium in the room. When asked how these elements fit in with guitar school image, Niloy smiles, explaining that they belong to his parents. He comes from a musical background. His father Sudhin Das and mother Nilima Das are both connoisseurs of Nazrul songs and younger sister Suparna too is an up-and-coming Tagore song artist.

So, what prompted him into setting up the school? The musician simply states that guitar is and always was his main interest in life. "I picked up the chords in the early eighties and received training from a Korean named Lee Young for a while. After

At present, he has around fifty students. He divided them into two separate batches and gives lessons every Thursday or Fridays to each batch. The once-a-week lessons consisting of two hours of intensive guitar practice cost Tk 500 per month. His best student and assistant Ashim helps him out with the smooth running of the school. Though there is no specific time limit of the course, Niloy suggests that a beginner should complete a six-month basic training programme to get the hang of the instrument.

The age of his disciples vary, but most of them are in their late teens to early twenties. From time to time he gets 10-12 yr old kids. He laughs, "It's really tedious to teach the little ones, their small hands can hardly hold the guitar properly. Sometimes guitars have to be specially made for them." Are the parents of the guitar freaks supportive of their offsprings' interest? "Yes, in some cases, the parents often come to me and inquire about their son's progress," Niloy elucidates.

Incidentally, the school has attracted very few female students so far. And even then, the girls rarely complete their lessons. "Of course there are no rules prohibiting or discouraging the girls. So, probably the girls are not consistent or crazy enough about guitar to continue the classes," he observes. Well, well, do we detect a little chauvinism in his attitude? Are there any girls out there who can prove him wrong?

In any case, he is quite satisfied with his pupils. Many of them have potentials and are pretty serious about their music sessions with him. He believes that guitar like anything else requires regular practice and concentration to achieve perfection. Though a lot of his ex-students are now performing in the local bands the laid-back musician, who likes keeping a low profile, seems extremely reluctant to talk about them.

Future plans? Niloy wishes to expand his school and has

## Dhaka City Under the Lime Light

by Moin Rahman

A prima facie, Dhaka might seem the world's most ominous city — a city of chaos and rapacity. But for someone who hasn't been out to explore the night-time city of Dhaka "ain't seen nothing yet" of the charm and beauty of our ever changing capital. Known for the hustle and bustle of the city traffic, along with the tussle and jostle of the diabolically rapacious crowds of daytime Dhaka, a

kameez of eye-widening designs and hues are still fancied by women of all ages. This very clan sets the image of a city of serene beauty. The jubilant youths, the romantic couples, the haggling shoppers, the sharp-eyed chic searching patrollers, the ardent junk-food lovers, and the evening joggers, all become part of the nocturnal trek in an around

Dhaka city possesses that was never seen before.

As the lambent twilight sets in, Dhaka changes into a dynamic western city. It may not have the steamy discos and cabarets, posh cinema dromes, mega video arcades, and high-ways with service-stations that dwellers can roam about; but the city is definitely not lagging behind in terms of

pace itself in a haphazard and unequal manner. The city's progress in an anomalous manner is evident from both its physical traits and the socio-economic groups that it represents. A difference in the housing facilities of the posh Baridhara and Gulshan with that of the Maghbazar, old Dhaka and Shantinagar area would confirm the margin in the physical traits of the city. Similarly, a middle class work-



Dhaka, a city of enmeshed attraction. Photo — Anisur Rahman.

benighted Dhaka portrays scene that is imaginatively sleek and a perfect foil to the helio-zonic Dhaka.

The very moment the sun sets in, the city undergoes a dramatic metamorphosis. Sodium lights lit up to induce the metamorphosis of a dream city. Dhaka becomes a city of enmeshed attraction — a concoction of east and west. An insouciant populace dressed in colorful habiliments emerges from all spheres of the city to enjoy what the night-time Dhaka has to offer.

Dressed in stylized clad, a strong overtone of both eastern and western garbs can be found donned by the extremely choosy and fastidious denizens. Ranging from tight jeans to sweatshirts worn by men, the female counterpart evidently prefers short and long skirts, frocks, mellifluous sarees, lahinghas, and trousers and T-shirts; though salwar

the city.

One who has never been out to experience such an odyssey or is dubious about the cosmopolitan metamorphosis, only needs to explore the 'hotspots of the night-time fever. In the vicinity of the Baily Road, the New Market and the Gausia, in and out of Dhanmondi and DOHS, on the waterfront, in front of the TSC and the Rokeya Hall, in the newly built Eastern Plaza and not to mention Aarong, and the city's ever sprawling junk food outlets — are the very hotspots or the so called 'niche' of the Noishachari (night travelling) Dhakaities. Even a cursory look by an otherwise night-time introvert at these rendezvous points is bound to make a profound impression about the night time city of Dhaka on him/her. It will show the onlooker a dimension that the lime-lit

exquisite shopping malls, self-served fast food restaurants, attractive theatres and theatrical plays, as well as open air concerts and soothing romantic places. Furthermore, the absence of highways and service stations does not stop the patrollers to cruise around with their Mercedes, BMWs, Nissans, and Toyotas. Though the action-packed city of Dhaka remains bumper to bumper, the night-time hustle and bustle is completely different and of a tranquil beauty than that of the mornings and noons where it can degenerate into a mind-wrenching menace.

The city of Dhaka is undergoing a nouveau-modern transmutation accoutred by a nouveau riche society.

Being the capital of a developing country which has very recently been exposed to the outside world's cultural and economic influence, Dhaka is

ing group would find it hard to conceive the income and wealth of the so called 'rich Dhakaities'.

The working class Dhakaities are generally dormant to changes in their routine lifestyle. Their heavy inertial ethos make them averse or even hostile toward any novelty or iconoclastic change. This fundamental reality remains the key to the 'bandwagon effect' of a fast developing city.

The night-time Dhaka portrays a picture where both the city and the city dwellers are dynamic and protean. The reason behind this is that the main troupe of the nocturnal journey comprises the dynamic youths of Dhaka who are ardent for any change — a change that would pave a way to a more modern and an electrifying capital.

tomb in Sarajevo — the birth place of their romance. This was the least that could be done for them — to pay tribute and respect to the love which was not allowed to last long. It has not yet been found out as to who killed Bosko and Admira and I suppose no one will ever know. Yet how easily had the two fresh young lives been snatched away — how simply.

When the cause of the war had been ethnic hatred and religious intolerance, Bosko and Admira in their quiet way and with their naive belief tried to show that tolerance and togetherness can win if mutual feelings are strong in the human heart. But they did not know that human heart had also become savage and destructive.

They had undertaken a great risk — something which few people dare to take. But they knew that they had to do it. Otherwise love would be shamefully defeated.

The effects of ethnic hatred and religious intolerance which has found its way in the former Yugoslav republics are devastating. Innocent people had to and still pay high prices — people like Bosko and Admira who really have no wish to be a part of the war. We have become sick and tired, weary and disgusted with watching all the bloodshed and misery. The world has become a place where a beautiful thing such as love which has taken nine long years to develop is killed in one day within a few seconds! Fate responsible? Maybe. But unless this earth polluted with violence, corruption, and political dawdling is secured clean, nothing is ever going to change for the better. Incidents like this one will be an everyday picture with even the last remaining thing-hope, the only star in the lonely sky, beyond reach.

## They are Human Beings Not Human Targets

by Ahsan Latif

ANYONE who has visited the Vietnam Memorial in Washington understands the feeling of being overwhelmed by the volume of names — they are just too many to bear. Now imagine a hundred of these Memorials. The earth would sink beneath the weight of such sorrow. Yet it would take many more than hundred memorials to list the names of those killed in the Holocaust or any holocaust for that matter. Mankind should learn from these experiences, the value of human life and the futility of human atrocity.

Holocaust, like many other wars that will be discussed in this article, is centered around ethnic conflict and hatred. It all begins with one race considering it to be 'superior' than the other race. In the case of World War II, the Germans considered the Poles an inferior race. They invaded, abused, tortured and destroyed the social structure of the Poles. This can be seen in what happened in the concentration camps — in fact that is more gruesome and horrible than genocide. It was a calculated and pre-organized murder of millions of people, specially the Jews.

The Holocaust terrified the entire world. It taught about man's capacity for evil, about the dangers of intolerance and obsession for madness. To paint the old picture in a new canvas, Steven Spielberg introduced 'The Schindler's List' — a movie based on the true story of the hundreds to thousands who luckily escaped death because of one man popular for his infamy in gambling, drinking and womanizing, Oskar Schindler. The movie brought to attention the carnage at Auschwitz, specially the cold blooded murder of millions of Jews.

What makes humans different than animals is their intelligence, the ability to adapt to a new environment and learn from it. Any kind of ethnic war or genocide should not have happened after the World War II experience. But is that true? Absolutely not. As I write this article, there are ethnic conflicts in Bosnia, Rwanda, Kashmir etc. In Rwanda, hundreds of thousands of people were mas-

sacred in a matter of several months. Many more died due to lack of medical service, food and diseases. And all these because one politician declared that one tribe is better than the other. Is this anything different from what happened in the former Republic of Yugoslavia.

Neighbours, who were best friends, are now the greatest enemies because one politician, Slobodan Milosevic, said so. When will people come to their sense? Hundreds of war occurs in the past and are still happening and all because of one or two politicians in each country. These leaders, who are supposed to establish peace and justice in the country bring happiness among the people are doing just the opposite. Why should thousands of Jews, Serbs, Croats, Muslims, Hutu's Tutsi's, Kuwaitis etc die because of the irrational decisions of one or two men in power. The oppressed have the right to enjoyment and happiness as much as the oppressor.

The United Nations, established to mediate problems among international nations have become a scapegoat for wealthy nations to oppress the poor ones. Instead of intervening for the benefit of humanity they intervene to serve economic and strategic interests of the wealthy nations. The roles and ideals that was once envisaged in the United Nations as the leader of all nations is a stark reality. The politicians are the havoc in nations.

Positioning in the minds of people that another culture is 'inferior' is dependent on how susceptible the people are to the voices of the leader, army elite etc whoever is in power. The more illiterate and uneducated the mass, the easier to convince them of a stereotype and vice versa. Our efforts should be directed to educate people to appreciate culture and ethnicity. It is only when people see other culture as a collection of not very different people from oneself will they refer their neighbours as human beings and not human targets.



Members of Warfaze

## Warfaze — effulgence in the dark

by Adnan Muhammad Alamgir

WARFAZE is one of the top bands in Bangladesh today. Already it has secured a worth mentioning popularity, for its new style of songs. 'Warfaze' was set up in 1986 by Kamal, Mir, Naimul, Bappi and Helal, though later without Kamal all the members left the band. Now the line up of the band is: Kamal (guitarist) Sunjoy (Vocal); Russel (key board and guitar); Babna (Bass and Vocals). Warfaze has published two albums. The first album was released in June 1991, in the name of self title — 'Warfaze' and the second album 'Aubak Valobasha' was published in September 5,

1994. The first album was mostly arranged with soft rocks. But in this new album a trend of heavy metal music and rock songs was noticeable. With their fantastic lyrics and euphoric music they are bound to create waves of success.

Warfaze meaning 'Niruk Jodhya' or the brave soldiers, has all young members. They have 20 stage programme to their credit so far. Their songs are a melodious and are about human beings and their nature. Warfaze gives us something new and vibrant, something different from old. Indeed Warfaze is an effulgence in the dark.

## For You

by Someone, Somewhere

You may be a million miles away —  
You may have a heart of chrome —  
Yet all my love will forever be yours —  
For in my heart, Cupid shall roam.

I'd always close my eyes when I saw a girl —  
Her beauty has me mesmerized —  
I'd always scream scorns at women  
But now I can't — I'm anesthetized

Now all I can do is dream about you  
Think of your Aphrodite smile  
My heart's now bleeding, pierced by amour's arrow  
And I imagine your face all the while

Please listen to what I've got to say  
Tahnyah please hear, please take heed  
If I've got your love I've got  
Everything, to live, I need.

## "Till Death Do Us Part"

(Based on a true story)

by Farhana Yusuf

but Admira was a Muslim girl. They lived in Sarajevo with their parents and both graduated from the same secondary school in the year 1985. For these people, life was simple.

Being a Serb or a Muslim hardly mattered to them. They believed that so long as they loved one another and wanted to be together, nothing could part them. But when war broke out, their lives all of a sudden did not seem to be what it was like before. Their belief in staying together and tolerating everything, whatever it was, patiently, suddenly found itself weaponless in a dangerous battlefield. When thousands of civilians, including Bosko and Admira's friends, neighbours, and relatives were killed because of their different nationalities, these two innocent young lovers realized how strong the ethnic hatred was on the two sides.

It also made them realize that they could have very little chance of surviving unless of course both of them could hide themselves in a safe place. Bosko's mother had long left for Serbia but Bosko stayed back because he couldn't bring himself to go without Admira. What if he never sees her again? He couldn't bear to think about that! Life without Admira might as well be a life like a dead man! Admira's parents lived in Sarajevo but Admira knew she also had to give her love a chance by taking a risk. It was decided she and Bosko would go to Serbia where Bosko's mother would find a way to protect her Sarajevo was hardly a safe place for any of them and

once they would reach the safety zone, they would be quite safe. So, on the afternoon of May 19, 1993, Bosko and Admira met at an arranged place, both of them nervous, yet confident.

Although both sides agreed to give them a safe passage, Admira and Bosko could feel the tension in the atmosphere, the uncertainty of what was going to happen, if anything should happen hanging in front of them.

Both of them walked on, Bosko a little faster, Admira a little behind. Can they reach the safety zone in time? Will everything be alright? Seems not. One moment, they were walking with nervous steps, the next moment they are lying on the ground. First Bosko got shot, he fell down immediately and died on the spot. Admira fell slowly, as if she didn't realize what was happening to her. She felt something warm inside her and then she saw blood oozing out of her stomach.

"Oh Lord did it have to end this way." As life began flowing out of her, she crawled over to where Bosko lay. She wouldn't be so close to him and yet so far away! Before passing away, she raised her left hand and put it around him. "Goodbye Bosko, we are together at last!" There lay Bosko and Admira for six days, just the way they died with the two sides fighting over their decaying bodies. Such is the reward of love — neglected, humiliated, petrified.

Both of them were later buried side by side in the same

LOVE can overcome everything — all obstacles in fact. It is the most pure and innocent thing — the only true emotion that still exists in this world, without which life in this world would almost be empty and meaningless. But even then love is so unjustly rewarded, so easily disregarded when it naturally comes as a means of compromise, friendship, tolerance, and justice in a world in which ethnic hatred and religious intolerance, violence and corruption come back as nightmares to haunt people.

These disturbances not only destroy the lives of the common people who are just satisfied with what they have, meagre though it is, but also the peaceful innocent lives of the human beings who experience the essence of love. War and peace — where the former always seems to mock the latter, turns the lives of so many people upside down, relinquish hopes, shatter dreams and... bury love.

Yes! Like all other wars that weigh upon this world, the war between the Muslims and the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina is intolerable, ghastly, merciless and deadly beyond words. The story I am going to relate now is about two young people who had loved each other profoundly enough to risk their lives. But fate ensnares them in a trap — a deadly trap in which they have to surrender to death. This story will make one realize what a betraying inhuman untrustworthy world we live in.

Bosko and Admira, for so are the names of the hero and the heroine of my story. They may sound like the characters of a romantic movie — indeed they almost remind me of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. But unfortunately, their's is a true story where love which brings them together also results in their death. Bosko was a Serb



Niloy Das. Courtesy — Tahmeem Aziz Khan

that I virtually taught myself and changed and improved my style," he recounts. In retrospect when he realized that guitar was much more than just an interest to him, he decided to take it as a profession and started a school.

Besides, at that time young people were showing enthusiasm in guitar playing. But Niloy confides that it was his friend and well-wisher 'Kabirbhai' of Rainbow audio recording store who gave him the inspiration, not to mention the final push to set up the school.

plans of looking out for new premises for it. He also intends to distribute certificates among the successful students.

The way the new promising and not-so-promising musical bands are mushrooming in the city, it almost seems as if every kid with a guitar is contemplating on forming a band.

A guitar school can satiate an amateur guitarist's desire and provide him with the necessary coaching. Who knows? Maybe, one or two 'Eric Claptons' or 'Slashs' might emerge from it someday.

## Bad Fortune

by Sarah Shehabuddin

15th February 2000, Paris.

THE world seems so very empty now I am trying to be as optimistic as possible. I mean, thank God for the heating. It's really cold outside. The shop doors are open. Yesterday, Hajra and I went around, picking up loads of food, clothes and anything else we fancied. Hajra's really depressed. She's kind of paranoid. I'm worried about her.

Anyway, we've decided to watch BBC news everyday to keep up with worldly events. We play video games to get rid of feelings of loneliness. We're gonna go check out our school today to use the computer to find what our education programme was supposed to be this year. Working'll keep our minds off things.

13th March 2000, Paris.

One month has past since

the evacuation. Things have happened since the last time I wrote in here. The worst thing happened on February 26th. Hajra said she couldn't bear to stay alone here with me doing nothing any longer. She wanted to go back to her own house on the outskirts of Paris. We quarrelled a lot but she won in the end and set out with tons of food, a sleeping bag and other necessities in her back pack. She said she'd come back as soon as possible.

I've become a video game addict now. I miss humans so much. I leave the television on to hear voices. I want my parents. Kami, Shakil, Naureen, Shaju Kancha and Hajra back. Tension sure produces appetite. I eat so much now a days!

To be continued