

L V N G

On the Road for Twenty Years

by Fayza Haq

MOST foreign musical troupes perform at the National Museum, Osman Memorial Hall or the American International School. 'Solisti de Cremona', performed at the Dinaipur Novara centre for the inauguration of a new wing for a technical school that already exists there. It must have been a unique experience for the people in Dinaipur to hear sixteenth and seventeenth century Italian music.

Silvana Minella, the leader, has been playing the violin for 40 years, and is a professor of violin at the Milan Conservatory. He has played thousands of concerts all over the world including places like USA, Canada, Europe, the Far East and India.

"We all teach at major musical schools but playing at concerts remains our main activity and classical concerts are doing well in Europe despite the wave of modern music," Silvano says.

In Europe, the best performances are to be found in Milan, Vienna, Berlin, London and Paris. Good concerts are also to be found in USA and Japan. At a high level, the standard is very similar in major cities," he gives his opinion of the level of the concerts the world over.

Asked how long he practised, Silvano admits, "It is normally three hours a day but this varies when I am doing something new or am travelling."

Commenting on what was essential for success in concert music, he says, "It involves dedication, inspiration and practice — all these factors are important. You have to be gifted and you must practice."

Commenting on his experience in travelling Silvano says, "Travelling is an important experience to mature your personality. You learn everywhere you go. The love for arts and music is a good contact point. We give 60 concerts a year, travelling all the time to places like Russia, Japan, Brazil, Argentina, Australia, Singapore and India. My wife Jocelyn Beaumont is from Australia. We met 27 years ago and we have one daughter who spe-

cialises in computers." Commenting on videos he says, "The programmes are not good in Italy. They have two influences. They kill the conversation in families, and people stay at home. The video programmes are too commercial to be good. They aim at only selling, so the programmes are of a low level."

Touching pop and rock, Silvano says, "They are good. But young people should not limit themselves to only pop and rock. They should be exposed to classical music too."

How does he feel about playing before an audience that is not acquainted with western classical music? "We've found that even if the audience has not been exposed to western music yet

the music touches the soul." Comparing eastern and western music he says, "I feel classical music in the western world has developed into a complicated construction. In the east it appears to be simple but expressive and poetic. Both eastern and western music are enjoyable and they can influence each other. They can also, possibly be combined."

While Silvano spoke English fluently, the others in the group at PIME house near Assad Gate had the help of Jocelyn Beaumont. The group had just come in from a shopping spree and were progressing to a practice session before they performed at the Italian ambassador's residence, Marco Fracassi, who played the organ

had been playing for 35 years. He began at the age of four and also played the harpsichord. He came from a musical family.

Marco says that "natural talent and persistence are important for success" in a musical career. Dwelling on video culture he comments, "Video does not undermine classical music. The two are worlds apart."

He has heard eastern music and is specially fascinated by the sitar, sarodh, sarangi and bansuri.

Antonio de Lorenzo, who has been playing for 20 years, teaches at Cremona and Marco Fracassi get together with the other four of the groups at Milan, which is 50 kilometres away, twice a week. Antonio plays the vio-



The Italian group seen at Washington DC

Migrant Army Mobilises for Rat Race

Fons Tuinstra writes from Shanghai

Masses of Chinese peasants have left their farms to seek work in boom cities such as Shanghai. At Lunar New Year - a traditional family festival that falls on 19 February, size of China's vast migrant labour force becomes clear as millions struggle to get home for the celebrations.

Jiang Ze Han lives next to a dump on the outskirts of Shanghai, a garbage picker who scavenges for bins, bottles, paper and plastic - anything he can sell.

A peasant farmer from Jiangsu province, 40-year-old Jiang has no residency permit to stay in the city, and is often harassed by the police. They regularly fine him, or charge him local taxes, but the sums are cheaper if he does not demand a receipt, so some might regard the payments as bribes.

He says angrily: "What country is this, where legal citizens are considered illegal, but have to pay taxes anyway?"

Life in the city is tough for Jiang, who shares a room in a building without running water. But he lives in constant fear of being barred from this life, where he can earn \$2.50 a day - good money in his poor farming village.

He will return home soon

with cash and presents of food for his wife and three children - China's one-child policy has never been very successful in the countryside for the traditional Spring Festival celebrated at Lunar New Year, which falls on 19 February this year.

Millions like him will push and jostle and fight to get home for family reunions and celebrations. Many are state workers posted to far-flung parts of the country, but a huge and growing proportion are peasants who have flocked to find work in the boom cities, such as Shanghai and Beijing.

China has tried to control the flood of migrant labour, but with limited success. It has been estimated that more than 100 million people, or 10 per cent of China's population, work outside their home regions. The fact is highlighted each year as everyone 'who is able to go home, does so - throwing the transport system into chaos.

Two months before the holiday, the government issued its first announcements encouraging people to refrain from travelling. But as in the past, its pleading will be vain. Train passengers, their arms full of children and bundles of belongings and presents, have to fight their way on to trains. Children are shoved through open windows, as adults battle their way through crowds to get a board.

The return journey is not usually quite so chaotic as people spend differing amounts of time at home - from a few days to a month.

Chinese lunar years are named after 12 animals, which, according to legend, turned up to bid farewell to the Lord Buddha as he departed from Earth. The rat is said to have reached him first by running along the backs of the larger animals, and the Year of Rat - this coming year - begins a new 12-year cycle.

Traditionally, it is regarded as a year of plenty, bringing opportunity and good prospects, a fact that is guaranteed to bring the masses back to the cities to seek their fortunes.

For years, over-population and economic policy aimed at encouraging more efficient farming have pushed millions of people off the land. Many have moved to rural township industries, but in recent years, vast numbers have been lured to cities like Shanghai, where rapid economic growth has led to a boom in areas such as construction. It is estimated that the city currently has 21,000 building sites.

At the gates of one site, 29-year-old Li Sun Jing plays with her two young children. "I'm here on holiday," she says. "My husband is working here, and I joined him two months ago because there was no work on the land any more. We will only go back for Spring Festival."

For the past four years, her husband, 31-year-old Mao Guo Ping, has been employed in the city as a building worker. The work is organised by the boss of a construction company in their home village in nearby Zhejiang province. Mao says: "He gets people from our village and one other village. We get the better jobs. The [hard] work is mostly done by workers from poor provinces such as Anhui or Hubei."

His boss supervises 10 projects simultaneously and

has good relations with the local police. For him, getting the right work and residency permits for his employees is no problem.

Mao is lucky. When this job is finished his employer can guarantee him a new one. And, because his boss is a fellow villager, he is unlikely to cheat him.

One of the best organised groups of migrants in China are the students, Shanghai has 50 universities with about 150,000 students, mostly from outside the city.

After their admission they get a red pass, proving they belong to a certain university. After graduation, they are supposed to go home, whether they like it or not.

Zhang Min, 24, from Zhejiang province, is studying political science and philosophy. He knows that when he graduates this year, he must leave his girlfriend, other

friends and the city of opportunity behind - unless he finds a way around the government regulations.

Zhang wants to stay, but to do so legally, he must acquire a Shanghai hu kou (residency permit). One day, he takes a telephone call.

"I might have a solution," he says excitedly. A friend of a friend has organised a meeting with officials from a state-owned advertising company.

In exchange for his hu kou, Zhang will work there for three months without pay. The friend's favour will not easily be forgotten. It has enabled Zhang, like millions of others, to stake a claim to a piece of the boom town.

Gemini News

Fons Tuinstra is a Dutch journalist based in Shanghai and specialising in development issues.

lin with different chamber orchestras in Italy.

Dark haired, dark eyed 28-year-old Giovanni Gigli has been singing with the group for two years. She teaches the piano but says, "I'm happier singing than with playing the piano." She loves Mozart and Puccini. For a singer Giovanni says it is important not to get cold feet or cold head. She says coming to Bangladesh is an opportunity she looked forward to as there are not many opportunities to come to places that you read about.

Marco Perini, who plays the cello, began playing at the age of eight and is now playing for 40 years. This is although his family was against his going in for professional music.

Marco explains that his group includes members who know each other for 20 years. The group developed through personal friendship rather than purely professional reasons.

Marco enjoys modern music too specially the Beatles, Elton John and country music.

Leonardo Colonna plays the double bass. His problem doing his travels is the safe transportation of his large instrument.

Asked to comment on the people of Bangladesh Leonardo says, "Despite their poverty they are not bad tempered or aggressive. Even though they have little, they appear contented. I've loved my stay in the east as in Bangkok, Singapore and in Japan."

Jocelyn Beaumont, who has been playing the violin and viola for 45 years, plays at the Scala orchestra and teaches at the Conservatory. "It wasn't easy when I had to bring up my daughter Nadia. When I was younger I worked as a physiotherapist at a leper colony in New Guinea. I went to study music at a summer school at Siena and there met Silvano."

The group was remarkable for its cheerful and jolly bearing. There was nothing overbearing about them, although they specialised in Monteverdi, Vivaldi, Rossini and Mozart.

When the Telephone Drives You Bonkers

by Muneera

IT is not easy to use a telephone set. The telephone is a modern machine that must be handled with care, sorry, utmost care, or else this simple device is enough to drive a whole house of people quite mad.

Take the instance of making a phone call. To onlookers the process looks extremely simple. All that has to be done seems to be to have to pick up the receiver and dial the number. But no sir, it's not so simple - once your ear comes into contact with the earpiece, you find that the dial tone is missing. After softly hammering the set for some time, you may get this precious tone back but it's easily overtaken by the "engaged" tone which is highly reluctant to leave your set.

You silently pray and keep on trying and slowly it gives way to the dial tone again. Now all that has to be done is to dial the number. Before you are finished, the engaged tone reappears and you have to start all over again. You try again - yes - No - yes - No - and finally after a long battle, it clicks as you hear the phone ringing on the other side. Phew! At last, you think...

"Hello," someone says.

"Hello, is this dash-dash-dash-dash.....?" you ask.

"No, wrong number," and someone rudely slams down the phone.

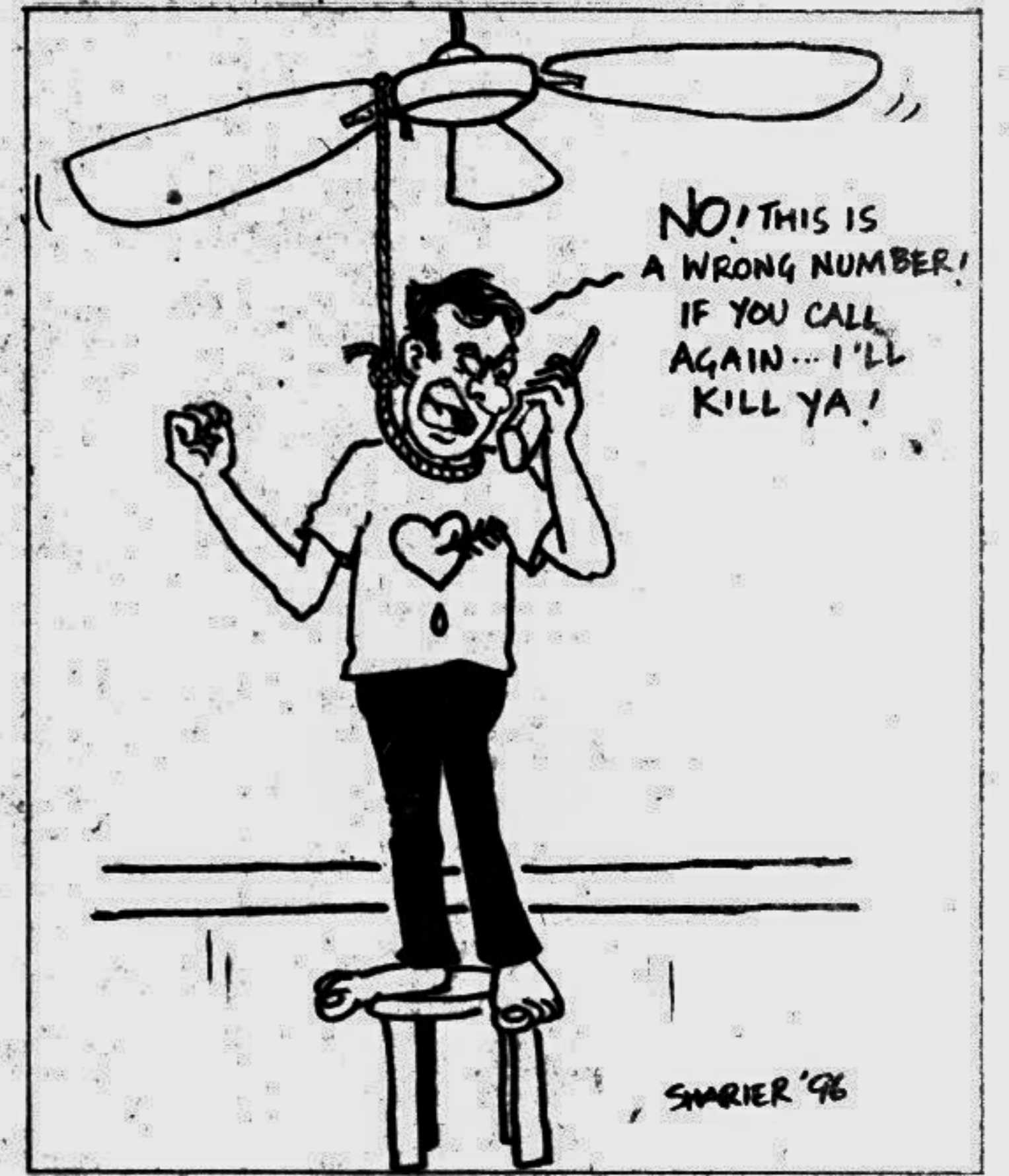
After all this trouble, you think and try again. If after overcoming all the previous knots and dots, you get through to the number, again which turns out to be wrong. Someone will answer to the number you want but it won't belong to "the owner" you think it belongs to. You dial again and end up at the same place. This repeats until they get really mad. Now, the wiser, you ask them to keep that receiver up for a few minutes. This should invariably work.

Just as you think that you are getting somewhere you get into a cross connection and unfortunately it's two love birds on the line, that too making up to one another for their last quarrel. The problem is, your line is so well tangled into this that you can't get out of it and no matter how long you wait (or plead) the other two on the line are most reluctant to hang up. Finally when your pressure has gone up really high, they decide to call it a day, and now you are again

left to the mercy of the line... Perhaps this much isn't enough to dampen your spirits. Just listen to the case of Abdul Sarkar. After a long tiring day at work, he is just trying to take a short nap. As soon as he dozes off, the telephone goes a loud CRING CRING! He answers it to only discover that it's a case of a wrong number.

Before he gets back to his armchair, the telephone rings again, this time it's for his daughter, then his wife, then his neighbour, his son and it goes on!

The month ends and bill arrives. The astronomical amount of 5-figures almost chokes out the breath of the Sarkar "korta". "Eh! Who can make so many calls in a month?" He rushes to the Telephone office but his worse fears are confirmed. There is nothing wrong with his bill, and if he doesn't pay in a week's time, they assure him, they will cut off his line. The poor man returns



"NO! THIS IS A WRONG NUMBER! IF YOU CALL AGAIN... I'LL KILL YA!"

home and hurls abuse at anyone unfortunate enough to cross his path. Whom to blame? And suddenly cring goes this loathsome piece of machinery, CRING! CRING! "HELLO," screams - Mr. Sarkar into his line, "what do you want?"

"Hello," answers a husky, coaxing voice. "I am a single girl and I just dialled a random number to look for a friend. If you have some time to spare, we could be penpals..."

"No, No," screams back this gentleman. "No, Good-bye," and he pulls out the set and hurls it against the wall.

This year's new years

Most calendars are based on the apparent motion of either the Moon or the Sun

1 Jan	Gregorian
19 Feb	Chinese
26 Feb	Akbar
20 March	Saka
21 March	Iranian solar
24 March	Jelali
15 April	Burmese
19 May	Islamic
8 June	Soor San
23 July	Yezdezed
30 July	Zoroastrian
11 Aug	Fasil Deccan
14 Sept	Coptic, Ethiopian
17 Sept	Jewish
	Parasuram

For China, this will be the Year of the Rat, the start of a cycle of 12 years, each named after an animal

COOKERY

Chocolate Crumble Pudding (for 6)

For the chocolate pudding

1 pint milk	2 oz. sugar
1/2 oz. cornflour	1 oz. cocoa

For the crumble top

4 oz. plain flour	1 oz. sugar
2 oz. margarine	Pinch of salt

Blend cocoa, cornflour and sugar together with a little of the cold milk. Boil remainder of the milk and pour over blended mixture. Return to pan and cook until thickened. Pour into pie dish and allow skin to form.

To make crumble. - Rub fat into flour and stir in sugar and pinch of salt. Spread on top of the chocolate pudding and bake in moderate oven until golden brown.

Chocolate Rainbow Pudding (for 4)

1/2 oz. flour	1/2 teaspoonfuls
1/2 oz. custard powder	baking powder
Pinch of salt	1/4 teaspoonful
	vanilla essence
3 oz. sugar	1 pint milk
3 oz. margarine	1/4 pint milk
1/2 teaspoonful cocoa	Carmine

Cream the fat and sugar, add the sifted flour, salt, baking powder and custard powder, and mix with milk to a soft, drooping consistency. Add vanilla essence. Divide into three. With carmine, colour one-third pink, add cocoa to another third. Put the three mixtures into a greased pudding basin in scattered spoonfuls. Cover with greased paper and steam for 2 hours. Serve with custard.

Chocolate Meringue Pudding (for 4)

2/3 oz. breadcrumbs	1 or 2 eggs
2 pint milk	1 oz. drinking chocolate
1 oz. sugar	
1 oz. margarine	

(2 oz. castor sugar to each egg-white for meringue)

Bring sugar, chocolate and margarine to the boil with the milk, pour on to the breadcrumbs in a basin. Cool slightly and add egg-yolks. Place in greased pie dish and bake in moderate oven until set.

For meringue. - Whisk egg-whites until stiff and fold in castor sugar lightly. Pile on top of pudding. Place on low shelf in slow oven and bake until golden brown.



Brigitte Bardot at 10 years during a dance. 2. At Louvacienne, between her father Pilou, and her mother Anne-Marie, her grandfather "Boun Papa", and her sister Mijanou. 3. A growing girl of 16. She will become the symbol of a new moral revolution. 4. Vadim and BB: two idols of the young. 5. BB by Willy Rizzo. 6. She leaves the seaside like a goddess of love. 7. She happily walks with her mother at Saint-Tropez. 8. Good times at Saint-Tropez under Pilou's eyes between Bob Zagari et Jeanne Moreau. 9. The most beautiful woman in the world at a Mediterranean sea side. 10. Animals who can be more loyal than human beings.