



the first band to bring out a heavy metal album of English songs. Recent trends show that the young bands are more into heavy metal music these days. Heavy metal bands like Black and Artcell are predicted to stay longer than a brief tryst with the audience. But other genres such as pop are also going quite well with the audience.

"The taste of the audience is always a determining factor in promoting any type of music, says Hasan 'A certain section of the audience is very knowledgeable and true connoisseurs of good music. There is also a section that goes after catchy tunes and beats. If there's a boom in tasteless songs, then the taste of audience to some extent should be held responsible too. If people hadn't been listening to tasteless songs, then these songs would never have been commercially successful."

Recording companies more often than not show disinterest in upcoming bands or artists; they hardly give their nod to anyone new or something alternative; this is one unanimous lament that reverberates in the junior camps. Some of them even came up with serious allegations of malpractice and depravity against the stalwarts in the band arena. "In most cases when a debutante approaches a recording company they are made to go through a sham assessment phase conducted by an appointed panel of judges comprised of some stalwarts in the music arena. More often than not, the initial verdict happens to be negative; but this initial 'No' ultimately turns into 'Yes' upon acquiescing to amoral demands such as hefty amounts in kickbacks."

Even though contacted several times, the 'stalwart' in question was unavailable for comments. "With so many substandard artists getting breaks all round the year, I should term the complaint baseless," says Bogy, a prominent band personality of the country, and founder of Ektaar. "I'm not trying to say that such practices are totally non-existent in the industry. But my opinion is that there's still ample scope for a new comer to break through."

'Recording companies are here to do business, and

they always look for someone who can give them a hit. I personally believe anyone with real promise won't have to hanker after recording companies, rather they'll be sought out by the recording companies. The point is that a newcomer should really try and grab any opportunity by both hands in order to be successful,' says Shafin, lead vocalist of Miles.

Even though the number of bands is increasing day by day in this country, the dearth of female band musicians is still quite conspicuous. What could be the reason for the absence of female band groups?

"Being a regular band member entails a lot of commitments to keep up with, which I think is one major reason why many female artists haven't been on the circuit. It's also applicable for western countries as well where female representation in bands is pretty minimal compared to male. I don't think there's any other factor that discourages girls from forming or joining bands. But one thing you should take notice of, there are lots of solo female artists who are performing and doing well everywhere. So overall female representation is quite satisfactory I should say," Bogy contends.

"Often we have to rehearse up as late as 3 o'clock at night, especially prior to live shows. The physical rigours of travelling and performing for two consecutive hours on the stage are never quite easy to take either. All these factors plus a conservative social mindset unfortunately haven't helped to create a propitious atmosphere for girls," Shafin explains.

Cameo appearances and evanescent popularity mark careers of many band musicians. "The real success of any artist lies in how long his songs echo among the audience. In the case of modern music, style and presentation are constantly changing as tastes change, and that makes staying popular over an extended period of time even more difficult. But genuinely good bands will always be able to eke out a special place in the heart of audience over time. Look at the