

Beatles and the Rolling Stones; they are still very much in with the audience even after 40 years," Bogy contends. There are at least a dozen examples of how a band started with a lot of promise, but eventually that promise died down even before it could take shape either because of break up or sudden inactivity. But why does this happen?

"Forming a band is something akin to getting into wedlock," Bogy explains. "A marriage falls apart when the two persons involved can no longer get along with each other well or fail to live up to the marital vows. In a band, things are even more complex with five or six people committing themselves to one another. So in my opinion, the question should be how a band of five or six people manages to stay together for so long, rather than why do bands break up."

"Band members are just like other people; they have their personal commitments which often force them to part ways with the band even if it is for some days. Fareed Rashid had to move permanently to USA for personal reasons and Shafin had to leave in early eighties in pursuit of higher studies before coming back in '90s. There are so many reasons for which a person may not be able to continue," says Manam, Miles's keyboardist.

However, a junior band musician was more precise in pointing at the underlying reasons behind band break ups. "Personality clashes, distribution of money and leadership are more frequent reasons for band disintegration. Almost all the big bands have one problem; the band leader entitles himself to the lion's share of incomes and then distributes a negligible among the rest."

A handful of companies like Pepsi, Benson & Hedges often came forward to sponsor concerts and organise talent hunt programmes. Star Search was one very laudable initiative British American Tobacco had taken in 1999 with a view to give budding artists and groups a break. Vikings, Steeler, Saptak and Subconscious all came up using the platform of Star Search. However, the recent interest of organisers in flying in Indian artists had left many of local artists fuming with deep resentment. Maqsood, Feedback's founder, was quite livid with the press for creating a fuss over the presence of Indian Idols in the country: "The press always seems to go gaga over foreign artists, while hardly giving coverage of local artists. This outrageous

tendency irks me to no end."

"During an open air concert, the organisers arranged a chopper flight for Junoon while doing nothing of that sort for the participating Bangladeshi bands. This kind of preferential treatment surely belittles local bands and hurts local music," says Saju of Artcell.

Allegations of drug abuse for long have been the bane in band music industry. Often band personalities are accused of encouraging the young generation who hero-worship them, to use drugs.

"This is complete rubbish," Shafin says. "Drugs have nothing to do with any type of music. Music calls for the utmost dedication on the part of musicians. Look at the musician who moves restlessly on the stage regaling fans with his unerring notes on the guitar and tireless voice for two hours on the trot. A tipsy person simply cannot do that. On top of that, band music like any other form of recreation provides a respite from the throes of life. The youngsters who throng the concert venues would be more prone to drug abuse if there were no recreational arrangement such as live con-

certs etc for them."

"Whether a person chooses to live on drugs or not is entirely a personal choice; he/she can't be accused of encouraging drug abuse as long as he/she keeps it to him/herself. I don't think any artist has ever made any overt gesture on the stage that indicated he's on drugs," Bogy says.

Band music has a long history of extending a hand for charitable causes and motivational purposes. Be it for raising funds for those in distress or creating mass awareness about a burning social issue, bands have always been overwhelming in their response to such causes and as well as quite successful in their campaign.

"I can still hear the voice of George Harrison singing 'Bangladesh, Bangladesh' at Madison Square Garden. That was one concert that echoed Bangladesh's cry for independence all across the world," says a middle-aged music fan. "Whenever I see any local bands rising up for a humanitarian cause, I can feel the spirit in them that led to the birth of a nation."

