



Hamin Ahmed



Maqsoodul Haque



Sheikh Monirul Alam Tipu



Mohammad Ali Shumon



Fuad Naser Babu



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## 30 YEARS OF

# BAMB A

## MORE THAN JUST BANDS

COVER STORY

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After a break of almost four years, Bangladesh Musical Bands Association, better known as BAMB A, recently arranged a mega concert, 'BAMB A Live Chapter 1', in Dhaka. The turnout was huge, with the spacious hall room of the International Convention Centre, Bashundhara, filled to the brim with fans eager to get a glimpse of their favorite bands and listen to their all-time hits. 11 of the 27 bands under the umbrella of BAMB A, including Warfaze, Miles, Shunno, Aurthohin, Nemesis, Vikings, Feedback, Dalchhut, Maq O' Dhaka, Pentagon and Arbovirus performed at the concert. Star Showbiz recently invited BAMB A to participate at a roundtable discussion at The Daily Star Centre. Hamin Ahmed, President of BAMB A; Sheikh Monirul Alam Tipu, General Secretary; Fuad Naser Babu, Vice President; Maqsoodul Haque (Mac), Executive Committee Member; Mohammad Ali Shumon, Treasurer; and Doza Alan, CEO, SkyTracker Limited, took part in the roundtable discussion. It was facilitated by Star Showbiz Editor Rafi Hossain. The discussion focused on BAMB A's current activities and the way forward in the face of the challenges confronting our music industry.



Snapshot from the roundtable

**Tell us how BAMB A came into being.**  
**Maqsoodul Haque (Mac):** It was the drive to help the flood victims of 1987 which led to the formation of BAMB A. My friend Rebecca Hossain, who was also Hamin's friend, was visiting Dhaka from abroad in 1987, when she suggested an initiative to assist the flood victims. It was decided that a three-day charity concert will be arranged at the Sheraton Hotel by the leading bands. Renaissance, Miles, Images and other bands joined the concert. A total of BDT 2.5 lac was raised at the concert and donated for the rehabilitation of the flood victims. A similar initiative was also undertaken in 1988, when BAMB A organized a two-day charity concert and donated the amount collected to reconstruct the houses of some flood victims in Manikganj area. BAMB A has played a pivotal role in popularizing band music among the audience in Bangladesh. BAMB A has organized multiple charity concerts, open-air concerts and indoor concerts over the years and have hosted a couple of music reality shows, creating platforms for promising bands.

**What's keeping BAMB A busy these days?**  
**Hamin Ahmed:** BAMB A is currently working on generating awareness regarding intellectual property rights in the music industry. BAMB A's focus is more than just arranging concerts. For nearly nine years, BAMB A has been battling the growing menace of piracy affecting the artists of the

music industry. Piracy has taken a huge toll on the efforts, morale and livelihood of the artists in the music industry by depriving them of their right to their own creations. It is essential now to create awareness about the issue among the stakeholders, especially the deprived artists and empower them to overcome this problem.  
**Maqsoodul:** Artists are being deprived of their rights every day in our country. Neither the radio stations airing songs, nor companies playing them every minute of the day for their commercial gains, pay royalty to the artists. And the stores selling pirated music in hard drives or websites hosting free downloadable music are only adding to the problem.  
**Hamin:** Artists, singers, lyricists and composers these days are facing a huge problem in ensuring copyright of their own creations. In order to address this issue, BAMB A has held discussions with all relevant stakeholders. BAMB A had extensive talks with World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC) regarding intellectual property rights and related issues in Bangladesh. Over the years, BAMB A has worked with the LCS (Lyricists, Composers, Singers) Guild of Bangladesh to secure the CMO license, and formed Bangladesh Lyricists, Composers and Performers Society (BLCPS). The CMO license enables us to legally act in the interest and on behalf of the original owners' creations. Bangladesh is a

culturally aware nation, and it is unfortunate that this problem of piracy is worsening by the day, affecting the work being produced in our music industry. Although BLCPS has managed to secure the CMO license, we are still a long way from fully implementing its rights. The guidelines set by WIPO is adhered to in most countries, but we are still far behind.  
**Mohammad Ali Shumon:** These days even the distributors are taking advantage of the artists. Artists do not give up their right over their creations when they allow the distributors the right to sell their music.  
**Fuad Naser Babu:** It is essential to fully implement the WIPO guidelines to ensure the rights of the creators. Otherwise, the music industry will suffer greatly. At this point, the morale of some of the artists are very low, given the scenario and the number of CDs being released every year has declined significantly.  
**Monirul Alam Tipu:** In the earlier days, fans used to wait for bands/singers to release their albums; these days, they only wait for singles to be made available for free streaming on the internet.  
**Hamin:** People living in the far corners of the country who do not have easy access to internet still want to buy CDs. However, due to the pressures of piracy, many bands/artists have stopped releasing CDs altogether. Who is really getting paid for all the free airing and streaming of music – who is benefitting from these?