

Chapter-3

Khaval and Thumri in Mass Media of Bangladesh

I. Dhaka Betar (radio station) and classical music (1939-1947)

Before the establishment of radio center Ustads of different Gharanas used to perform in the *Jalsha Ghar* (Music House) under the shelter of the landlords of the East Bengal. Functions of classical music were held in the palace of the Landlord of Murapara, Landlord of Bhawals, Baldha State, and Ruplal House. But certain social changes and scientific inventions brought about revolutionary changes in human lives. Especially the invention of the Gramophone Company is worth mentioning. The invention of the phonograph device had a major impact in British Indies. Gaharjan Bai was the first to have recording device. The record plate was manufactured in Germany and was brought to India. All the offices and workshops of record company were set in Calcutta as it was the capital (1757-1947) of British India. This wonderful device of Gramophone Company the came popular in the Indian subcontinent very rapidly. This was followed by another great invention of science in the British India and that scientific device was the radio. The renowned scientist Sir Jagadish Chandra Bashu invented this device; but he was not willing to market this device though he had it patent. Scientific research was his austere practice of life. While Sir Jagadish Chandra Bashu went to England for a different scientific purpose scientist Markoni reinvented this device and marketed it. The elite class of the society thus got the opportunity to enjoy music performed by famous Ustads staying home by operating the gramophone. With the radio device being available in the Indian Subcontinent the insolent classical music lovers got an opportunity to listen to music through radio. In this regard Bangladeshi musicologist Babu Rahman remarked,

“First radio center was established in the British India at the Apollo Port in Mumbai on 23rd July in 1926. The second radio station of Indian Broadcasting Limited was established at Garstne Place,

Calcutta-1 on 26th August in 1926. The Tala Park at Kashimpur set a medium wave transmitter of 1.5-kilowatt power near. Lord Arwin the Viceroy of India of that time inaugurated the radio station of Mumbai. And the Governor of Bengal of that time Sir Stanley Sacsor inaugurated the radio station in Calcutta. The Station Director of the Calcutta Radio Center was Mr. C.C. Walick from British Broadcasting Center and Program Director was Nripendra Nath Majumdar, an Indian Citizen. The name of Calcutta Radio Center was 'Akashbani Calcutta' (1926).¹

A radio station was established in Calcutta but the artists of Dhaka, Mymensingh, Barisal, Comilla (Tripura) were nowhere in the question of performing. Among the elite society the landlord of Murapara, Keshobchandra Benarji who was a famous Tabla Nawaz (specialist in Tabla playing) came forward to contribute in this regard. Apart from the radio center and music, he played a pioneering role in many social services. To describe about the contribution of Keshobchandra Benarji, the famous sitar player Ajay Sinha Roy writes.

"The landlord of Murapara Roybahadur Keshobchandra Benarji contributed the highest to today's music among all. After remaining established as a supreme Tabla player for a long time he died not very long ago. The performer of great deeds Keshobchandra was not only the member and director of the Executive Council, District Board, Municipality, schools, Universities, sports associations and musical conferences in one side but also in other side he was engaged in austere practice of rhythm instruments. He got his primary lesson in tabla from the famous Tabla Nawaz Shri Prasanna Banik. After that he received training

¹Rahman Babu, Betare kibi Nazruler Azrushiyan, Betar Bangla, Sept-Oct 2000

in Tabla from a number of Ustads of several Gharanas. Among them famous Tabla Nawaz Pundit Moulobhram Mishra of Benaras, Khalifa Naththu Khan of Delhi and Khalifa Masit Khan of Rampur are worth mentioning. He employed Ustad Masit Khan to train his eldest son Nirmal Chandra in Tabla. Nirmal Chandra reached great heights in the performance of Tabla; but due to his physical handicap he had to have a pause in his practice. His premature death was a traumatic shock for his father Keshobchandra. After the establishment of Dhaka Radio Center he introduced the program of performance of Tabla Lahara by performing duet Tabla Lahara in the radio center along with his son. Keshobchandra accompanied many famous artists of undivided India with Tabla. Esraj player Chandrikaprasad Dubay was employed in his court only to accompany him in the practice of Tabla. Employed in his court were Dhrupad specialist Ustad Imdad Hussein Khan, Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan's uncle celebrated Ustad Kalay Khan, of Lucknow famous sitar player Ustad Safed Khan's son Ustad Ishtiaq Hussein Khan and Sakawat Hussein Khan for a prolonged time. The musical functions in Dhaka were centered in the palace of Keshobchandra and all the musicians used to gather there after the establishment of radio center."²

Establishing the radio center in Dhaka was one of the celebrated deeds of Keshobchandra. Observing the prevalence, publicity and development of classical music in Dhaka he took initiative and contacted the Controller of Broadcasting in India of those times, Mr. Lionel Filden at Shimla who was an English man. He urged for establishing a radio center in Dhaka. Filden did not agree with the proposition but later on after having a prolonged and extensive

² Roy, Ajay Singha. Pub Banglar Uchchangya Sangeet, Pratikkhan Pub. Ltd. January- 1996, page (28-29)

discussion. With the help of Keshob Chandra the establishment of radio center opened a new horizon of classical music in Dhaka as well as in the entire East Bengal. Observing the massive practice of classical music many famous performers, Ustads and worshipers of art and music started coming to Dhaka. Before the partition of Bengal Keshobchandra played a pioneering role promoting classical music. And after the partition of Bengal he migrated to Calcutta and recognized as one of the senior most virtuous rhythm instrument specialists. As part of the recognition of his talent and knowledge, he received several awards, during his lifetime. Recently he has died. With this contribution of Keshobchandra the practice of classical music in Dhaka i.e. East Bengal became more public oriented. The inaugural ceremony of this center was held on 16th December in 1939 at Nazimuddin Road in Dhaka. On this auspicious occasion of inaugural ceremony the great poet Ravindra Nath Tagore sent his blessings and message of his greetings. And in the following year the great poet Kazi Nazrul Islam participated in a function of Dhaka Betar (radio) along with his troupe. The center was named as "Dhaka Dhoni Bistar Kendro". The transmitter of this center was set at a place that is presently called Kalyanpur. It had the power of only 5-kilowatt and was manufactured by Radio Corporation of America (R.C.A). At night it had a range of 14 to 15 miles and at daytime 24 to 25 miles. A radio publication called "Pakshik Betar Jagat" (Quarterly Radio World) was arranged to send the monthly planned schedule of the programmes to the subscribers. The Director of Dhaka Center was Dr. Amulya Kumar Sen. He requested the Station Director of Calcutta Radio Center of that time Mr. Stepleton to publish the program schedule of the Dhaka Center in "Betar Jagat" (Radio World). The Delhi Radio Station was established in January 1934. It's worth mentioning that in 1935 a radio station was established in Mysore named "Akashbani" and was headed by Mr. Filden. He changed the name of "Indian State Broadcasting" into "All India Radio" on 8th June in 1933

If Dhaka Dhoni Bistar Kendro would start at 4.30 PM it would finish by 10.00 PM. If it would start at 5.00 PM it would continue up to 10.30 PM. In the left page of "Betar Jagat" bulletin the program schedule of Calcutta center and in the right page the program schedule of Dhaka Center was published. Dhaka Center used to transmit at 257.1 meter 11.67 kilocycles. In the beginning they used to broadcast time signal, Bhajan programmes (songs in praise of god), Ravindra Sangeet (songs of Ravindra Nath Tagore), seasonal songs, talk show, recitation of scripture, etc. Besides as a special attraction there used to be programs of classical music both of instrumental and vocal. In the programs of vocal music there used to be the events of Dhrupad, Dhamar, Khayal, Tappa, Tarana, Thumri, Dadra, Ghazal Qawali, Bhajan, Natia, Geet and Raga based songs, which were the properties of North Indian Classical Music.

Mentioned below is the time schedule, name of the artists and subject of performance of programs of those times.

Date	Time	Artist	Raga	Subject
02/02/1940	6.45 P.M	Ustad Gul Muhammad Khan	Jayatshri	Khayal/Tarana
04/02/1940	5.00 P.M	Lalit Mohan Dash	Kamod	Khayal
05/02/1940	8.15 P.M	Bashanta Mitra	Shankara Behaag	Dhamar Dhrupad
06/02/1940	5.20 P.M	Kartik Bal	Tilok Kamod	Khayal
07/02/1940	?	Narendrachandra Ghosh	Tilong	Light classical
08/02/1940	6.05 PM	Gopalchandra Gupta	Chhayanat	Bhajan
09/02/1940	6.30 PM	Shukumar Roy	Shankara Khambaj	Light classical Tappa
10/02/1940	8.00 PM	Meghnath Bashak	Yaman	?
11/02/1940	10.00 PM	Gourochandra Dash	Yaman	Bhajan
02/06/1941	6.30 PM	Nutu Mukherji	Jayet Puria	Dadra
03/06/1941	7.40 PM	Fakir Muhammad	?	Khayal Ghazal
03/06/1941	10.00 PM	Devbala	Kedar Darbari	Ghazal Bhajan
07/06/1941	7.15 PM	Pulinchandra Devbarman	Puria Dhaneshri	Khayal
08/06/1941	5.25 PM	Radharaman Bashak	?	?
08/06/1941	7.30 PM	Purnachandra Nandi	Durga	Thumri

Table-3.1: Betar Jagat(Radio Journal of British India), Akash Bani Kolkata And Dhaka Dhawni Bistar Kendro, All India Radio, 1940- 1942.

Besides, Radhagovinda Dash, Shambhu Pal, Tarokeshwar Roy, Shamarendro Pal, Gopalchandra Gupta, Kironchandra Devbarman, Brojogopal Dash etc. were the performers of the different forms of North Indian Classical Music.

Radio Pakistan Dhaka (Pakistan Period: 1947-1971):

The Indian subcontinent was partitioned on 15th August in 1947, as Pakistan and India. There prevailed a wave of changes in the political, social and economic phenomenon at that time which had a major impact on the music as well as on the total culture. The entire population was outraged by the communal riot, which was a result of the diplomatic conspiracy of the British Empire. Hindus and Muslims indulged themselves in mutual fighting which damaged the peace and harmony all over the country. As a result all the artists and lovers and patrons of music of East Bengal migrated over to West Bengal. East Bengal lost many virtuous and knowledgeable artists in this communal riot. "Dhaka Dhoni Bistar Kendro" which was established during the British India was converted into "Radio Pakistan Dhaka". The radio publication "Betar Jagat" of Akashbani center of Calcutta emerged with a new title called fortnightly "Alan". This was published from 43, Nawab Katra Road, Dhaka-2, Dhaka. The annual subscription of this fortnightly journal was five Taka and was priced at four Ana (cents). It used to publish two "Alan" in the two fortnights of each month. Dhaka Center used to broadcast three sessions. First session used to continue from 7.00 AM to 9.00 AM. Second session would begin at 12.00 PM and would finish by 2.00 PM. And the third session would start at 5.00 PM and would continue up to 10.00 PM. Radio programs were broadcast at medium wave 256.5 meter, 1170 kilocycles and short wave 50.1 meter, 5980 kilocycles or 19.60 meter, 15305 kilocycles. However, there were occasional alterations in the sessions and program schedules. The following table gives the data of programs of classical music held at that time, collected from the journals of radio program published by Radio Pakistan. For

convenience and better comprehension, Pakistan regime is divided into two decades. One is 1950-1960 and the other is 1960-1970.

Radio Pakistan, Dhaka-January, 1960

January 1, 1960		
Event	Time	Name of the artist
Sitar	7.25 AM—7 30 AM	Rina Sultana
	5.10 PM—5.15 PM	
	7.30 PM—7.35 PM	
Ghazal	5.20 PM—5 30 PM	Syed Ahmed

Table-3.2, Alan (Radio Journal Of Pakistan), January- 1960.

After observing the schedules of programs of classical music as shown above it can be concluded that in primary end stage artists were given five minutes each and in three sessions during one day, programs were broadcast three times. In three sessions programs were broadcast for the total time of nine hours. In Pakistan regime, the programs of classical music broadcast by Radio Pakistan were curtailed compared to the programs of classical music broadcast by Dhaka Betar during the British regime. The allotted time for classical music along with light classical (Ghazal) was only 25 minutes. For better clarification and transparency program schedule of 7 consecutive days are denoted. Another point that can be highlighted by observing Alan was that West Pakistan had more privileges compared to East Pakistan. For example there were no radio centers in the erstwhile East Pakistan except the Dhaka Center. The ruler class of the west did not set radio centers in East Bengal after the partition of the Indian subcontinent. The only radio center in the East Pakistan was the Dhaka Center established during the British Regime. But there was radio center in Karachi, Hyderabad, Lahore, Peshawar, and Rawalpindi in the West Pakistan. What gets reflected here is that West Pakistan abused East Pakistan as a field of political extortion.

Mentioned below is the data of the programs of classical music in accordance with the date and time. At that time the editor of Alan was A. F. Kalimullah

Dhaka Center

January 2, 1960		
Event	Time	Name of the artist
Sitar	8.15 AM—8.30 AM	Jamila Khatun
	5.00 PM—5.15 PM	

Table: 3.3, Alan (Radio Journal Of Pakistan), January- 1960.

January 3, 1960		
Event	Time	Name of the artist
Sangeet Shikshar Ashar (Program of musical learning)	8.10 AM—8.30 AM	Program of musical education
Khayal	12.05 PM—12.10 PM	Mastan Gama
	8.15 PM—8.30 PM	
	9.45 PM—10.00 PM	

Table: 3.4, Alan (Radio Journal Of Pakistan), January- 1960.

January 4, 1960		
Event	Time	Name of the artist
Violin	7.05 AM—7.35 AM	Afzalur Rahman
	5.15 PM—5.30 PM	
Khayal	8.15 AM—8.30 PM	Jahanara Begum
	8.30 PM—8.45 PM	
Ghazal	6.15 PM—6.30 PM	Program of the Army
Semi classical	9.15 PM—9.30 PM	Roshan Ara Begum

Table: 3.5, Alan (Radio Journal Of Pakistan), January- 1960.

August 1, 1960		
Event	Time	Name of the artist
Sitar	7.15 AM—7.30 AM	Ustad Khadem Hussein Khan
Ghazal	7.45 PM—8.00 PM	Bilkis Nasiruddin
Sitar	8.25 PM—8.30 PM	Jamila Khatun
	9.40 PM—9.45 PM	

Table-3.6, Alan (Radio Journal Of Pakistan), August- 1960.

Bangladesh Betar (1972-2002):

'Dhaka Dhawni Bistar Kendra' of the British India was renamed as 'Radio Pakistan-Dhaka' in the Pakistan period. On 16th August 1947, under this name, it started broadcasting different programs. In 1971, Bengalis achieved their independence by military action. During the beginning of the Independence War (27th March, 1971), programs were broadcast for a short time under the name 'Swadhin Bangla Biplobi Betar Kendra'. After few days this name was changed into 'Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra'. After independence on 16 December 1971 this center was named 'Bangladesh Betar'. Unlike the previous phase, the whole nation was brought under the network of Dhaka center. After Dhaka center other centers were established at Rajshahi, Thakurgaon, Sylhet, Fhulna, Rangpur, Chittagong, Comilla and Barishal-Radio. So the duration of the program on classical music was increased with general songs. But the highest 30 minutes program duration got reduced to 15 minutes.

'Dhaka Betar' centrally publishes two fortnights by radio magazines every month. One of them is published with program schedule only and the other one publishes broadcaster talks, literature and music related writing.

At the beginning, radio programs were broadcast in a single session (From-4:30 in the afternoon to 10:30 at night). During Pakistan rule, it had three sessions:

- a) 6:00 at morning to 11:00 at morning
- b) 12:00 at noon to 3:00 at afternoon
- c) 4:00 at afternoon to 11:30 at night.

In independent Bangladesh, there are three sessions with an extra session named 'Nishuti' (12:00 at night to 3:00 in the morning). The next session goes from 5:59 in the morning to 12:00 at noon and after five minutes break the new session starts from 12:05 at noon to 11:30 at night. But the programmes on classical music did not increase.

'Raag Lahari' a program on classical music is broadcasted at 10:30 in the night from Dhaka center. But, there is no title for the program that is broadcast at 9:45 in the morning. From Chittagong center, 'Ragranjan' is broadcast everyday (except Friday) at 8:45 in the night (Sunday, Monday, Wednesday). At 8:30 in the morning, every Friday a music-learning program is broadcasted from Rajshahi center. And, at 10:45 in the night, classical music artists present their performance in Rag Lahori with the same title as Dhaka center.

At 10:45 in the night every Wednesday 'Raga-Bichitra' and everyday (except Friday) at 2:30 in the afternoon 'Raga Lahori' are broadcast from Khulna center.

At 11:05 in the morning every Sunday and at 10:00 in the night every Wednesday 'Raga-Murchhana' is broadcast from Sylhet center.

Programmes on classical music are very few in number at the new Radio stations such as Rangamati, Barishal, Thakurgaon etc. Names, time and broadcasting schedule of few programs of all the centers are mentioned below:

Dhaka Center- 1997

Dhaka	Date	Time	Programme	Item	Artist
'Kha'	15/3/1997	10:30 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Ali Imam Chowdhury
'Kha'	16/3/1997	10:30 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Ful Mohammad
'Ka'	18/3/1997	10:30 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Mohammad Iyasin Khan
Kha	28/3/1997	10:30 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Ila Majumdar

Table: 3.7.

Chittagong Center 1997

Date	Time	Programme	Item	Artist
15/3/1997	8:45 AM	Ragranjan	Khayal	Malobika Das
17/3/1997	10:30 PM	Rag Laholri	Khayal	Sujit Kumar Das
19/3/1997	10:30 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Md. Masud Hossain
20/3/1997	10:30 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Myabi Das
23/3/1997	10:30 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Shornomoy Chetarjee

Table: 3.8.

Khulna Center-1997

Date	Time	Programme	Item	Artist
16/3/1997	2:30 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Abdul Mutalib
19/3/1997	10:30 PM	Rag Bichitra	Khayal	Nargis Nasir

Table: 3.9.

Rajshahi Center

Date	Time	Programme	Item	Artiste
15/3/1997	9:45 AM	Ragrong	Khayal	Sanowar Hossain
18/3/1997	2:00 PM	Rag Bichitra	Khayal	Manjusree Roy
19/3/1997	10 45 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Babor Ali
23/3/1997	10:45 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Aumresh Roy

Table: 3.10.

Rongpur Center

Date	Time	Programme	Item	Artist
16/3/1997	10:30 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Abdul Malek Khan
17/3/1997	10:45 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Shopna Goldar
27/3/1997	10 45 PM	Rag Lahori	Khayal	Akhtari Begam Bulbul

Table: 3.11.

Sylhet Center

Date	Time	Programme	Item	Artist
16/3/1997	11:01 AM	Rag Murchhona	Khayal	Rash Bihari Chetarjee
19/3/1997	10:00 AM	Rag Murchhona	Khayal	Rudreshwar Shutrodhor
23/3/1997	11:05 AM	Rag Murchhona	Khayal	Ram Kanai Das

Table: 3.12.

Table- 3.7- 3.12. Source: Betar Bangla (Radio Program Journal), 15th to 31st March-1997, Dhaka

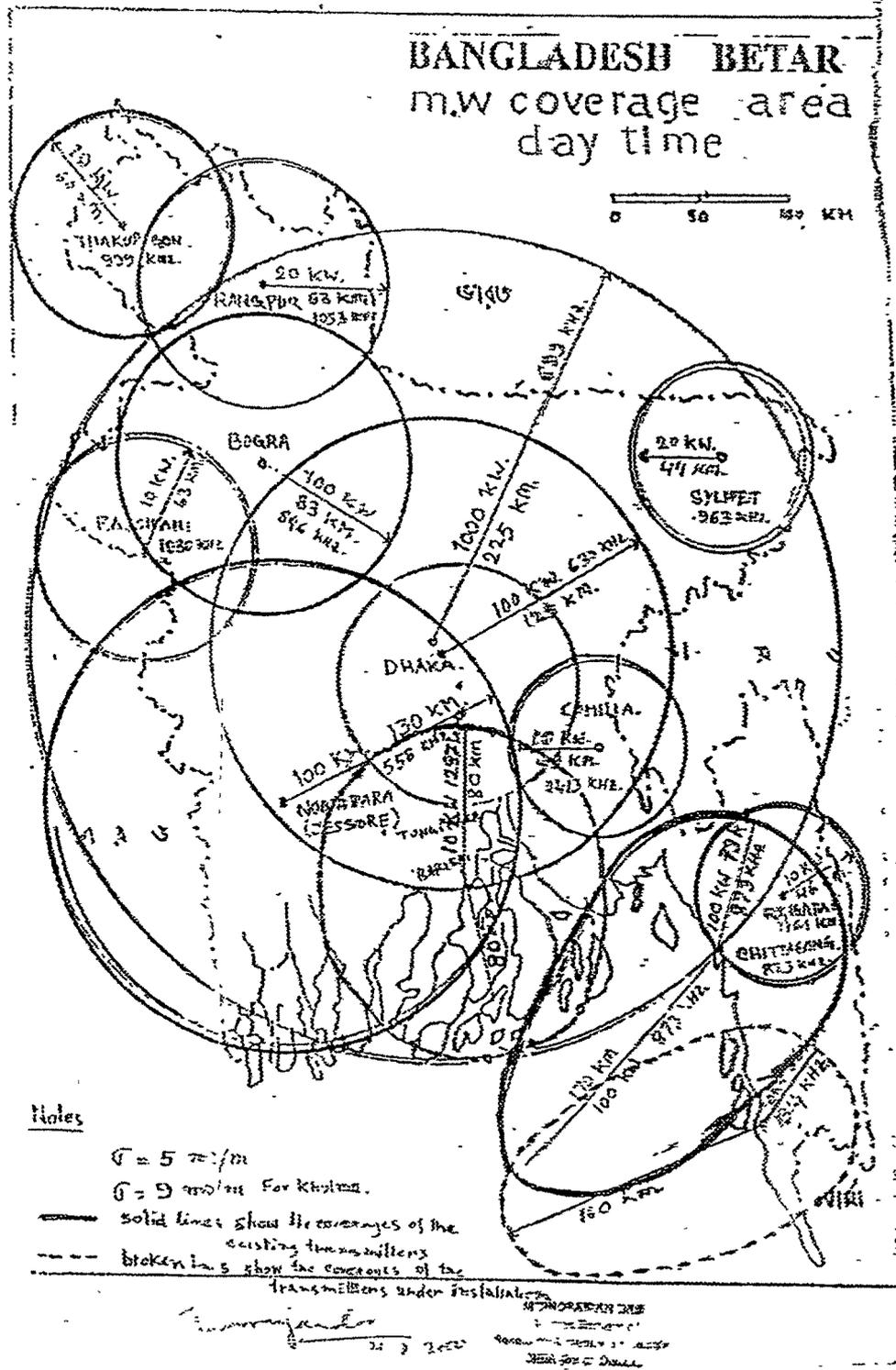


Figure: 10, Dhaka Radio Transcription, Shahabagh, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

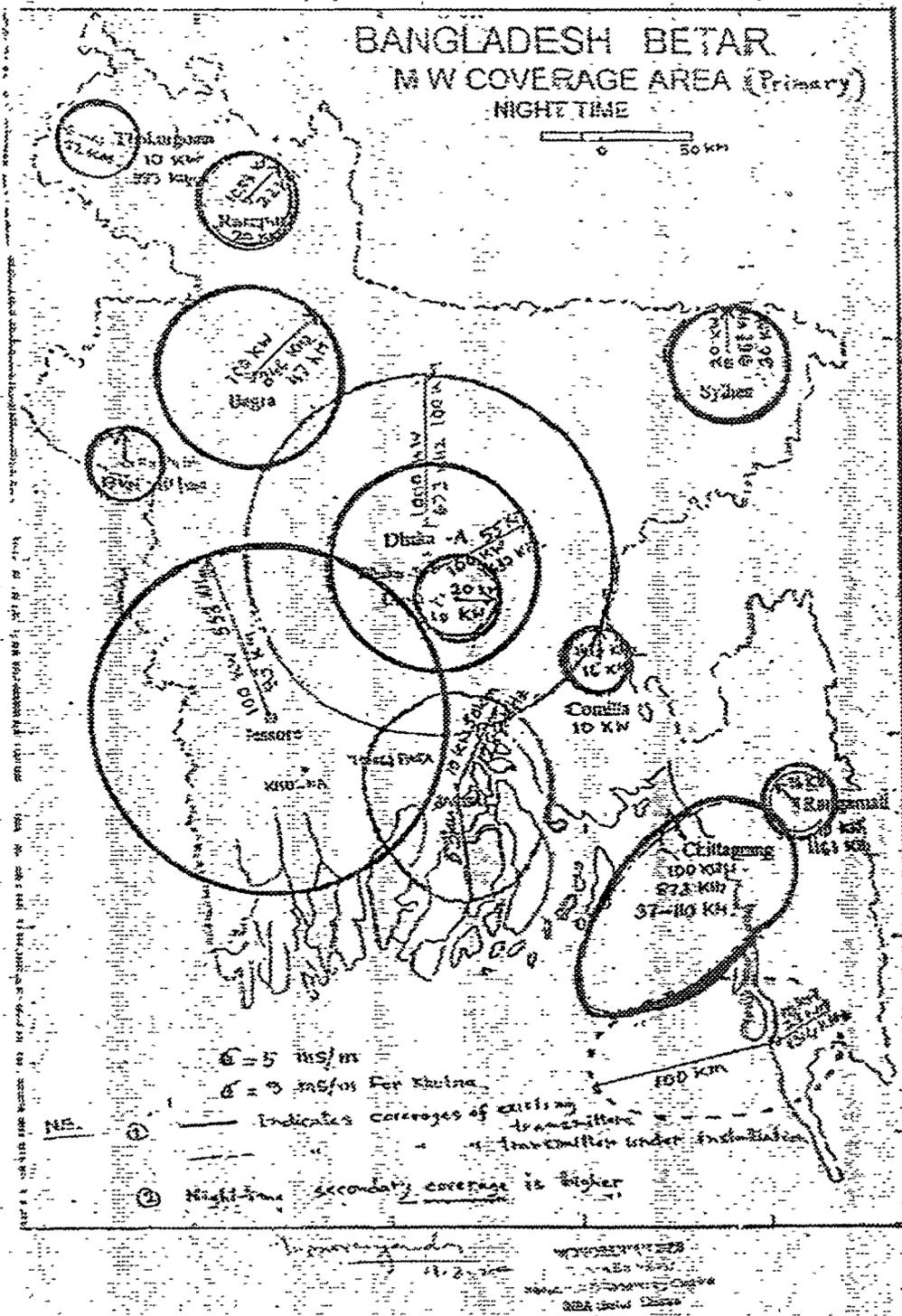


Figure: 11, Ibid.

II. Bangladesh Television (1965-2002)

On 25th December 1964, during Pakistan period, Bangladesh Television was started at a rented flat of DIT building in Dhaka. From the beginning classical music was telecast. Except national artists, artists from the subcontinent performed on the TV. Among them artists of classical music have performed there. After the Liberation war of 1971, artists of this country have started performing on the TV. Some authentic information from the beginning of 80's is provided here with: -

Bangladesh Television, October To December, 1984:

Date	Time	Programme	Artist
1/10/1984	10:30 PM	Sur Lahori	Md. Fazlul Haq, Narayan Chandra Boshak
8/3/1984	10:30 PM	Sur Lahori	Md Yasin Khan, Nilufar Yasmin
22/10/1984	10:30 pm	Sur Lahori	Barin Majumdar
29/10/1984	10:30 PM	Sur Lahori	Md. Rafiqul Islam, Kazi Rubina Ahmed, Abdul Malek Khan
17/12/1984	10:30 PM	Sur Lahori	Akhtar Sadmani, Auloka Das
31/12/1984	10:30 PM	Sur Lahori	Ferdaosi Rahman, Yasin Khan

Table 3.13

Date	Time	Programme	Artist
23/9/1985	10:30 PM	Sur Lahori	Yakub Ali Khan, Ferdausi Begum
30/9/1985	10:30 PM	Sur Lahori	Nitai Roy, Ishrat Jahan, Topon Boïddo

Table 3.14

1986- October To December

Date	Time	Programme	Artist
3/11/1986	10.30 PM	Sur Lahori	Bela Islam, Nrayan Chandro Boshak

Table 3.15

1987-January To March

Date	Time	Programme	Artist
23/2/1987	10:30 PM	Sur Lahori	Shumita Naha, Md.Yakub Ali Khan

Table-3.16.

Table 3.13 – 3.16. Source: TV Guide (Program Schedule), Bangladesh Television, 1984/ 1985/ 1986/ 1987/ 1991/ 1992/ 1993.Rampura, Dhaka.

Programs have been rescheduled in the TV guide for the year 1988. 'Raga-Rang-a program on classical music was telecast at 10:30 in the night in the first and third week of every month. The names of the artists were not mentioned. Up to 1990 this method was followed in the TV guide.

1991-April To June

Date	Time	Programme	Artist
7/7/1991	10:30 PM	Ragrang	Afzalur Rahman (Sarod), Shomir Das (sitar), Iskandar Ofat Mir

Table-3.17

1992-July To September

Date	Time	Programme	Artist
16/8/1982	10:30 PM	Sur Lahori	Vocal-Kazi Rubina Ahmed Mili, Nirmol Kumar Boiddo, Chhaya Roy, Leo Je Baroi, Md.Azizul Islam Bachchu

Table-3.18

1993-October To December

Date	Time	Programme	Artist
19/9/1993	10:30 PM	Sur Lahori	Sitar-Khurshid Khan, Vocal- Md.Hannan, Afroza, Yasmin, Leo Je Baroi.

Table-3.19

Table- 3.17-3.19. Source: TV Guide (Program Schedule), Bangladesh Television, 1991/1992/1993.Rampura, Dhaka.

Old artists performed for TV program on classical music in the entire decade of nineties. Shikha Rani Das of Chittagong, Amaresh Roy Chowdhuri of Rajshahi (1994), Sayed Zakir Hossain (Thumri), Manzuri Chowdhri of Rajshahi, Shamsunnahar Ahmed, Harum-or Rashid of Rajshahi, Satindranath Chandra Mandal, Dr. Krishnapada Mandal, Kaberi Das (1995), Anil Chandra Saha, Satya Chakrabarti, Shamima Parveen, Md Maniruzzaman (1996) Niaz Mohammad Chowdhuri, Rafiqul Islam (1997); Dolon Kanungo, Hasan Ikramullah, Md. Maidul Islam, Anil Kumar Saha, Gopal Chandra Das, Anis Akhter, Idul Bashir Al Razi, Sameer Kumar Das, Sameeran Barua, Gopal Dutta, Md Aminul Haque, Sumil Kumar Mandal, Dilip Kumar Chakrabarti (1998) are names some to be mentioned .

In 1999, Nashid Kamal Md. Hasan Ali and in 2000 karim Shahabuddin and Salauddin two Indian national from west Bengal performed in TV program by showing communal cause and take address.

From the above discussion and brief history of Bangladesh Betar and Television, their successive consequences, names of the artists of raga music could be found. As mass media is the gift of the modern civilization – its successive contribution and services to music cannot be neglected. Even though a few programs and names of the artists are mentioned, broadcasting schedule of raga music and particulars of the artists can be known clearly.