

Roots of Khan Family of Musicians

WRITTEN BY MOBARAK HOSSAIN KHAN

Keyed in by: Tanim Hayat Khan (Rajit)

Roots of the Khan Family of Musicians:

Sirajuddin Khan: The rebellion turned into pure family man

Sannas and Fakir Bidroho (Saint revolution):

The ancestry of the Khan family traced down to Sirajuddin Khan, a valiant freedom fighter of the then Bengal against the British rule during the period of Warren Hastings (Year Late 1770s). The British were ruling the subcontinent. Their treatment towards the saints and fakirs was inhuman. Incensed by the continuous tyranny the saints and fakirs rose in rebellion. This rebellion, in history, known as Sannas and Fakir Bidroho (Saint Revolution). Their leaders were Moznu Shah, Musa Shah, Cherag Ali, Bhawani Pathok, Devi Chowdhurany, Anup Narayan, Shrinibas and others. They frightened the English. Sirajuddin Khan joined the fray. But the rebellion did not last long as the British were stronger than the saints and fakirs. As a result, to escape the persecution, the mutineers escaped to the forests in Assam. But the English did not give up and tracked them down. At one point, bitter fight erupted between the two sides. Sirajuddin Khan, a young leader of the fakirs, during an encounter was injured. The mutineers escaped with the unconscious body of their leader Sirajuddin. But after going a distance they realized that their leader Sirajuddin Khan was no more alive. They laid the body down on the ground with due honour and disappeared into the deep forest.

An old fakir was returning home through the forest. Seeing the body, he moved towards it and keeping his ears on the chest of the fallen body, detected a mild heartbeat. Without any delay, the old fakir carried the body to his hut, where he and his young daughter nursed him. The leader soon recovered. This revolutionary leader Sirajuddin Khan, was one of the ancestors of the Khan family.

This was the turning point in Sirajuddin Khan's life. The angry young man was now bound to home discipline. Following the request made by the fakir, he married his young daughter Nayton, and started leading a family life.

Soon they were blessed with a baby boy. He was named Miraj – Mirajuddin.

At times, the revolutionary spirit stirred in Sirajuddin, but Nayton calmed him down. Complying with the wishes of his wife one day Sirajuddin Khan moved out of the forest and resettled in the village of Shibpur, Brahmanbaria (Then Tripura).

Settling in Shibpur:

Shibpur is a forlorn village. There is no din and bustle. It is far away from the district town of Brahmanbaria. Facing no problems in their day-to-day living, the people of the

village were gentle and large-hearted. They welcomed the new couple. Siraj and Nayton. Siraj bought some land from his savings. In no time, he developed a friendship with other people in the village. With his charming behavior and affable qualities, soon he won the hearts of many. The village council started to invite him to its meetings. And in this way began the cycle of a new generation of a farming family. Sirajuddin Khan became the founder of Khan generation of Shibpur.

The Khan generation was founded in Shubpur. Miraj became involved in farming too. Son, he was married to a young girl, named Nasiman.

Miraj was settled in his farm with his family. They were blessed with a son. Sirajuddin Khan named the new born Ali Ahmed Khan. Miraj was blessed with two more boys. They were named Saleh Ahmed Khan and Zafar Muhammad Khan.

Life in Shibpur moved at its own pace. People happy and there was no problem of survival.

Sirajuddin progressed into old age. By now, Ali Ahmed, Saleh Ahmed and Zafar Muhammad had grown up. They were married and the family of Sirajuddin Khan soon multiplied. One day, Sirajuddin passed away, leaving behind a host of his progeny.

There was momentary shake-up in the air of Shibpur. The entire villager broke down in condolence at his demise.

With the death of Sirajuddin Khan, the life of revolutionary came to a standstill. But he left behind the legacy of an illustrious family.

Zafar Muhammad Khan had a son. His name was Madar Hossain Khan. When he grew up, his father brought a beautiful bride for him. They also had a son, who was named Sabdar Hossain Khan. The grandfather used to call him Sodu. The villagers called him Sadhu Khan.

Sabdar Hossain Khan: The Music era

Titas is an old river. The river is flowing by the side of the village Shibpur. The river had a tremendous effect on the life of Sabdar Hossain Khan.

One day, when he was a child, Sabdar went to the market at Rasulpur with his father Madar Hossain Khan. Sabdar was only 10 years old then. Rasulpur was about 7 or 8 miles away from Shibpur. It was the weekly market as Rasulpur. Madar Hossain used to go to that market with his father once a fortnight to buy the necessary items for household. A wide range of articles were available there.

The market used to take place on the bank of the river Titas. Rasulpur was situated on its edge. There was a hectic commerce of goods by riverine route, and that's why the market became so famous.

Madar Hossain used to go alone to the market. By then, Sabdar had grown into a youngman, and Madar Hossain took Sabdar along with him to the market. At sunset, the market had ended and it was time for them to return home. There was a Zilla Board muddy road, which zigzagged along the river. It did not enter Shibpur, but bypassed it. One had to take the sidewalks of the croplands to reach the village.

One day Madar Hossain was returning home from Rasulpur through this road his son followed him.

River Titas was flowing by the roadside. Suddenly, Sabdar stopped. A melodious tune hit his ears. He was entranced. It was an extraordinary tune. Someone was singing and the melody sprang from the river. Sabdar looked towards the river. He noticed a small boat sailing. The boatman was rowing and singing. It was a Bhatiali song. Of course, Sabdar realised this only later. There was an exalting attraction in the tune that made Sabdar stop on his tracks. The boat soon sailed away in the opposite direction and Sabdar continued his journey back home, memorizing the tune in his heart. He started to sing to himself the same tune. The tune was deeply embedded in his mind. Sabdar himself was surprised at his ability to memorise it. He became desperate to listen to the boatman's song again. He decided to accompany his father again to Rasulpur and listen to the song. The Bhatiali song.

Sabdar waited eagerly for the market day. As Madar Hossain readied himself to go, Sabdar was ready too. He followed his father again on the route to the Rasulpur market.

That day, Sabdar did not go inside the crowded market, but instead sat on the bank of the river. Madar Hossain allowed him to.

Sabdar waited impatiently to hear the song. Very soon his desire was satisfied. The tune of the Bhatiali song started coming in from a boat on the river. Sabdar listened with rapt attention, as if he was assimilating it.

The boatman sailed away, singing. But the tune kept resounding in Sabdar's ears. He kept on repeating it to himself. Suddenly, he opened his voice. He remembered the tune, not the words. So he sang aloud with his own lyrics, but in the same tune.

Sabdar continued to sing unmindful of the time. Suddenly he stopped as his father came back. Madar Hossain found Sabdar in a mood to sing. He listened and was charmed by his melodious voice. He was flattered at this quality of his son.

Sabdar was a little stunned and shy, wondering what his father might be thinking and regretted singing aloud. He just didn't realise when his humming turned into a high-pitch song.

Madar Hossain understood his son's hesitation and did not say anything. He saw that Sabdar was absorbed in his own worlds and did not want anyone to disturb him.

It was through this rhythm of the Bhatiali songs, sung over the waves of the Titas, that the Khan family crept into the domain of music.

Finally, the father's dream came true. Sabdar grew up and was married to a girl, Harasundari Begum. But Sabdar was not at all wordily and earned little for the family. As a result, Harsundari Begum had to take up the responsibility of providing for the family.

There used to be a good deal of cultural activity in the Royal Court of Agartala. Ustad Kashem Ali Khan was the state musician at the court. He was the descendent of the great music maestro, Mian Tansen and maternal uncle of the famed music laureate, Ustad Wazir Khan. Sabdar became disciple of Ustad Kashem Ali Khan. He took to learning the sitar and not singing.

Sabdar Hossain Khan was quite devotee. He practiced on the sitar for days on end, but never talked about it. He loved music and was very religious, too. His aim was to seek blessings of God Almighty through the silent devotion to the strings of his sitar.

All through his life, Sabdar continued his quite worship of music. He believed that music was the narvest of 'Riyaz' (Practice), a continuum without a finality. Practice is life and life is practice.

Concluding words:

Sirajuddin Khan once established an ancestry of farming and Sabdar Hossain Khan established a new era – an era of Music. He was the founder of the Era of music in the Khan family. With the pace of time the Khan family became the most illustrious and celebrates family of musicians of the world.

Sabdar Hossain Khan was the father of five sons and two daughters. They are:

1. Madhumaloti (Daughter)
2. Samiruddin Khan (Son)
3. Aftabuddin Khan (Son, later known as Fakir Aftabuddin Khan)
4. Alauddin Khan (Son, later famously known as Ustad Baba Allauddin Khan)
5. Kadar Chand (Daughter)
6. Nayeb Ali Khan (Son), and
7. Ayet Ali Khan (Son, later famously known as Ustad Ayet Ali Khan)

Appendix – Picture of Sabdar Hossain Khan and Harsundori Begum:



Appendix - Fundamental family tree:

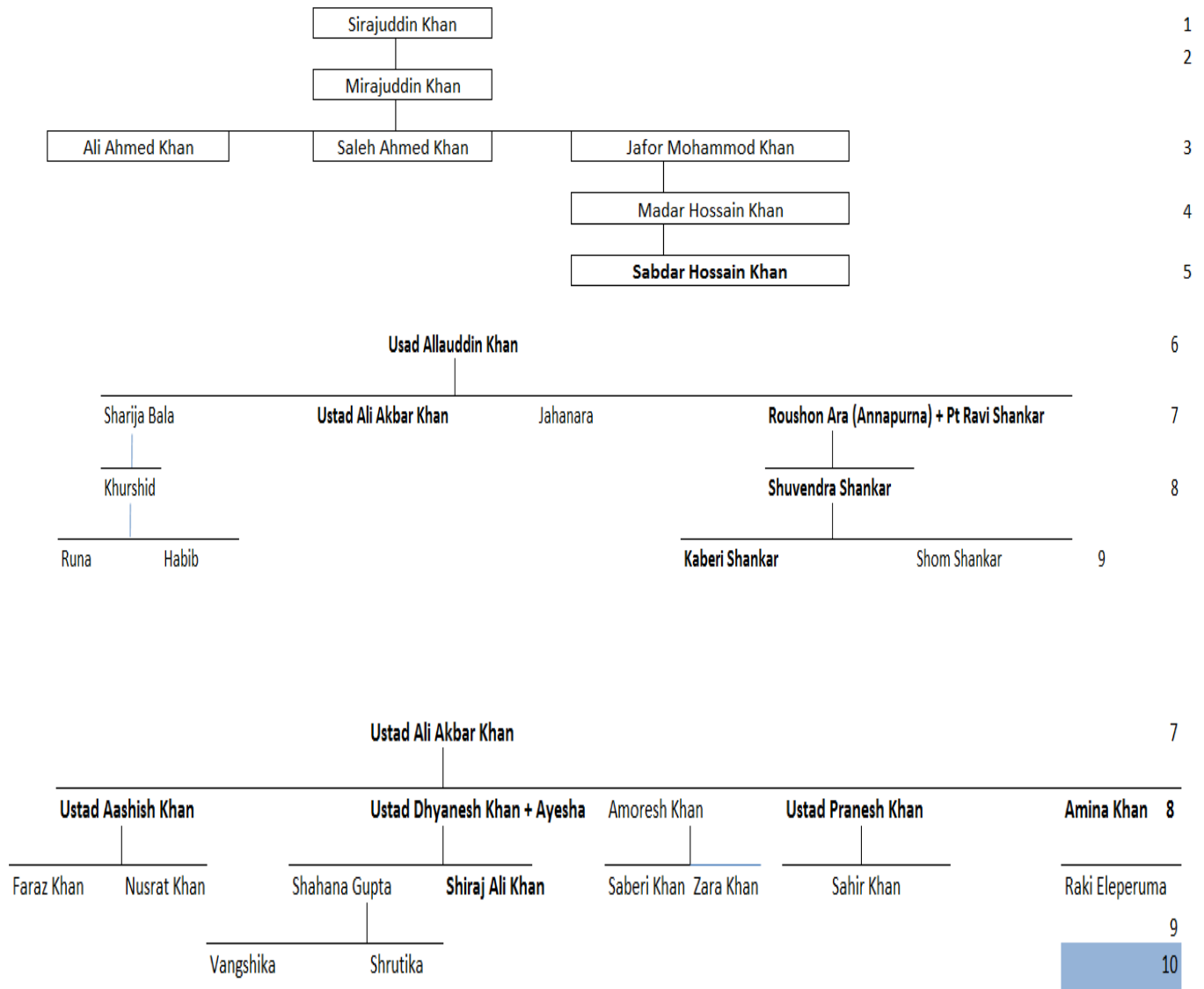
Khan family is currently having 10th generation from male side and 11th generation from the female side.

As a musician, Khan music family is currently having 5th generation of music running in the family. Sabdar Hossain Khan is the first generation of musicians.

Note 1: Here **only the musician generations** have been depicted.

Note 2: The **bold** names are musicians

Note 3: **The number on the far right** represents the generation number.



Ustad Ali Akbar Khan						7	
Alam Aftabuddin Khan	Manik Bahadur Khan					8	
Ustad Ayet Ali Khan						6	
Ambia Khanom	Kohinoor Khanam	Rizia Khanom	Ustad Abed Hossain Khan	Ustad Bahadur Khan	Mobarak Hossain Khan	7	
Ustad Ayet Ali Khan						6	
Momota Khanom	Momota Ahmed	Sheikh Sadi Khan	Tansen Khan	Yasmin Khanom (Shilpi)	Rubaiyat Khan (Bitophen)	7	
Ambia Khanom						7	
Anowara	Ustad Khurshid Khan	Hasina	Shahana	Torit Khan	Dharit Khan	Shulekha	8
Ustad Khurshid Khan						8	
Morshed Khan	Taslima Khan		Sumona Khan	Mosharrof Khan		9	
Hasina Khanom						8	
Firoj Khan	Akhter Hossain Khan		Selim Khan			9	
Ustad Abed Hossain Khan						7	
Firoza Zaman (Dipu)	Shahida Haque	Rosy Khan (Rubi)	Dalia Khanom	Ustad Shahadat Hossain Khan		8	

	Ustad Shahadat Hossain Khan	8
Afsana Khan	Rukhsana Khan	9

	Ustad Bahadur Khan	7
Ustad Bidyut Khan	Ustad Kirit Khan	8
Bilash Khan	Tarana Khan	9
Ahir Khan		

	Mobarak Hossain Khan	7
Reenat Fauzia (Rimi)	Tareef Hayat Khan (Roopak)	8
	Tanim Hayat Khan (Rajit)	

	Reenat Fauzia (Rimi)	8
	Tahsin Khan (Singer)	9

	Sheikh Sadi Khan	7
Rownak Ferdous Khan (Singer)	Shagufta Zabin Khan	8

	Tansen Khan	7
Shaptak Khan	Jinat Khan	8

	Nayeb Ali Khan	6
Asia Khanom	Aminur Hossain Khan	7
	Ustad Khadem Hossain Khan	
	Ustad Mir Kashem Khan	
	Raja Hossain Khan	

