

# Jaggan: Musical Heritage of Jessore District, Bangladesh

Debproshad Dawn

## Abstract:

Bangladesh is a riverine country. Like the rivers of this country, the music flows in different ways and Jaggan is one of the musical heritage of Bangladesh. The main reason for researching the Jaggan of Jessore district is to revive the almost extinct song, to make it known to the public about the musical heritage, and to make future generations aware of this heritage. This study describes that Jaggan is a bearer of our tradition. In my study, I presented the geographical location, naming, establishment, and brief history of Jaggan. The current study is qualitative in nature. For conducting this study, I utilized both primary and secondary data, For obtaining primary data, a personal depth interview has been conducted in the Jessore district of Bangladesh and secondary data of my study has been collected from published research journals, book chapters, and related academic papers. Through this research, a trend of extinction of traditional music has emerged that will attract future generations. Still, there is no research on this topic thus current study is one of the early studies on Jaggan. The country and the nation will be benefited if the medium of education and knowledge on Jaggan can spread to the new generation.



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## Introduction

Music is a medium through which the various aspirations of the people are expressed. Folk music is a genre that is not guided by modern psychic ideology. Which is caused by self-educated farmers and working people. There are more than a hundred types of folk songs in Bangladesh. Jaggan is one of the many songs that are almost extinct today. All images of social life are expressed through language and melody. And through all this, folk music has been created. Before learning about the folk music of the Jessore district, if you know about the public life and geography of the district, the light of music will be a little simpler. Bangladesh is a riverine country. The rivers of this country are as wide; similarly, the repertoire of folk music of this country is also wide. Baul poet Lalon Shah is found in a message—

**What is considered a sin in one country is a sin in another**

**I don't care about the virtues of sin.**

That is, the language of one country is not as comprehensible to the people of another country; similarly, the culture of one district seems different to the people of another district. And the reason for this distance- folk language, folk culture, everything changes every four to five miles. The nature of Bangladeshi folk music is depicted as the background of a vast environment. The people of each district have their own culture, which are the bearer and carrier of its cultural heritage. Jaggan of Jessore district is just such a song. This article gives a brief overview of the geographical infrastructure of the district and discusses the issues of psychological direction and awakening for the welfare of the people of the society.

## Findings & Discussion

### Geographic location

A part of the south-western region of Bangladesh is known as Jessore district. From the point of view of boundary, Kushtia to the north of greater Jessore district, Khulna to the south, Faridpur district to the east and West Bengal of India to the west.(Huda, 2007). Of this, 156 sq. Km. River area. The population is 27,64,547(Chakraborty, 2016), the district has 4 municipalities, 8 upazilas, 36 wards, 92 unions, 1,471 mouzas, 1,434 villages and 120 mahallas. The 8 upazilas comprising Jessore district are Abhaynagar, Bagharpara, Chougachha, Jhikargachha, Keshabpur, Jessore Sadar, Sharsha and Monirampur (Khan, 2014).

### Identification and Establishment

Jessore is a very ancient town. Jessore is said to be the capital of the state in the account given by the traveler Hien-sang of his travels to India.(Khan, 2014) In the course of time it has come to be known as *Jessore*.

*Aryan settlements were formed in the subcontinent about two centuries before the birth of Christ. Tantra Churamani is mentioned as Jessore is situated on the banks of Chandabhairab. According to a recent study by author Chalanlal Cradle of Civilization, the name Zasor comes from Egypt. They settled on the banks of the river Bhairab about three and a half thousand years ago (Sarkar, 2016), probably those who settled at that time named it Zasor.*

Until the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, Dwiganga was a town in Jessore. Jessore is one of the few ancient settlements in Bangladesh that survives to this day. (Khan, 2014)

### Environment and Public Life

Most of the people of Jessore depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Main crops Paddy, jute, sugarcane, vegetables and various flowers. Fruits include mango, blackberry, jackfruit, papaya, litchi, coconut and banana. Date molasses and patali, jackfruit, banana, jute, cotton and leather are special exports. Blacksmiths, potters, fishermen, weavers, farmers, etc live in harmony and dependence. Due to the large population of agriculture and working people, in most cases mud houses with thatched and thatched roofs can be seen. However, as a result of

the development of the education sector, the wind of change has blown in the workplace. Homes have changed, new buildings have sprung up. There are hat-bazaars in different places. In some villages there are music and Jatra (like Drama in stage) groups for entertainment. The plains of Jessore district are formed by river sediments. Among the rivers Kopotaksh, Harihar, Mukteshwari, Srinadi, Ichhamati and Bhairab are notable. There are numerous beels, baors, ponds and dighis. Notable among the bills are Harina Beel, Sholakur, Mashihati, Kaibila, Gola Bhanga etc.

### **Brief history**

The history of Jessore district is especially important because a number of folk songs have been created in the minds of the agrarian masses centering on the history of the region. The political and administrative continuity of the independent state of Jessore was established in the hands of King Pratapaditya. Later, in 1757, English rule began. In 1786, Jessore became a district (Khan, 2014). The first incident of indigo cultivation in the region. The next time the blue rebellion and many blows began. India was liberated from British rule in 1947. Two separate states, India and Pakistan, were formed. The war of liberation started in 1952 with the continuation of the language movement and the mass uprising of 1971. After the declaration of independence on 26 March 1971 and the bloody struggle on 16 December, the independent sovereign Bangladesh was established. It is to be noted that Jessore was liberated on 16 December, 11 days before the final victory. Jessore is the first district of undivided India and the first independent district of Bangladesh (Khan, 2014). Music and acting have been added as the main tools of the movement at different times. Especially Jatrapala and Kabigan which have awakened and inspired the conscience of the common man. And a special part of the music is the songs issued in the Jessore region; Awakening songs in Baul tunes etc. Music has been closely associated with history since time immemorial.

### **Jaggan**

Jaggan festival centered song. This song is referred to as feminine. Through this prayer music, the sadhva women of the village (whose husbands are present) sing this song for the sake of the family and the gods and goddesses. Basically, Jaggan is an integral part of the vows of Hindu women. Here it is important to discuss what the vows are. From the beginning of Boishakh to the end of Chaitra (Bengali Month name), every month there is a festival or vows. And that is why in Bengali proverbs it is also called *Thirteenth festival in twelve months*. The vows must be discussed before the Jaggan discussion and the festival must be discussed beforehand. Because the word festival is at the forefront of all these puja-parvan and vows.

### **Festival**

Festival is a natural mentality of self-expression in the practical life of a social person, where the reflection of social life is reflected through his real intellect and imaginary experience. Through the celebration of the festival, a certain group of people combine their traditional culture with the daily life in the eight cities and it is also influenced by religion and art culture. Therefore, the festival is not only a system of entertainment or entertainment in the life of the conscious people, but also the ethnic history of the people in different countries, times, religions and cultures is inextricably linked (Ghosh, 2014). In the past, when people used to go out of their caves to collect food or to gather food, they would think of the dangers in the forest and seek help from the gods. All of them used to come together and create a joyous atmosphere by performing dances and songs which is the name of the festival. This group of human beings used to organize such festivals to get rid of the monotony of the minds of themselves and their children. Studying and analyzing anthropology, sociology, it is clear that the concept of festival is not very modern; It is the earliest period of human creation. What has changed over time has given the festival a different look. Festivals are a major part of

Bengali culture and tradition. The festival can be divided into six parts. Such as: 1. Festival of livelihood; 2. Religious festivals; 3. Cultural festival; 4. Historical or commemorative festivals; 5. Political festival; 6. Socio-familial festival. (Rahman, 1985) Bratakatha is one of the traditional resources of Bengali folklore. Vows are the rituals that are performed to pray to the deity with devotion to the law by wishing for something. There are also regional differences in the religion, beliefs and vows of the Bengali people. The origin of the word vow is from the root bri. (Br (to accept) + Attachrm) which means rules; Virtuous sin is destructive action. It is an aesthetic ritual of virtuous deeds for the attainment of the intended result by eliminating sin by observing the rules and regulations by wishing something to the deity. The worldly desires of the people are involved in the vows. According to Abanindranath Tagore, I wish that something that is going on in the society is a vow. (Das, 2009) Many vows of Bengalis were once prevalent in primitive society. Examples are given below-

1. Ashwattha Narayan, 2. Akshay tritya, 3. Worship of Alakshmi, 4. Aryanna Shasti, 5. Itu, 6. Karam, 6. Cuckoti, 6. Cool Kulti 9. Kulaya Thakur, 10. Go-kal, 11. Cow-razor, 12. Garsi, 13. Khentu, 14. Joy Mangal, 15. Tejo Darpon, 16. Tara, 17. Tal Nabami, 16. Khoyathuri, 19. Ten Putul, 20. Nakhchut, 21. Nag Panchami, 22. Punyipukur, 23. Panchra Puja, 24. Bandurga, 25. Bhatri Ditiya, 26. Madhu Sankranti, 27. Magh Mandal, 28. Yam Pukur, 29. Jachapan, 30. Saspatha, 31. Shiva, 32. Savitri, 33. Senjuti and 34. Haricharan vows (Das, 2009). Through this ritual, a ritual called Jaggan has been created.

### **Origin and development**

Jaggan literally means night songs, especially country music. This came from the Jagar song. The word jagar can be analyzed in Sanskrit as jagri + a (va). That is, the word jagar has been generated by adding non-suffix to the end of jagar metal. The word jagar means waking up, waking up, waking up. (Biswas, 1993) While searching for information, Mrs. Chapa Rani Dey said, since ancient times, this song has been celebrated with great pomp and ceremony in Jessore district. In different villages. Jaggan is a vow; self-educated women of rural society sing this song with their husbands and children for the good of the world.

### **Purpose**

The main purpose of worshipping Kali and Shitala mother. The word shitala literally means the presiding deity of smallpox. In ancient times, smallpox would kill the people of the village and it would take the form of an epidemic, which was the purpose of this puja. In various festivals such as drawing alpana or fasting to show loyalty to God and to live in peace with nature, this ritual seeks to please God. It is a kind of ritual and belief.

### **Materials**

As a material for performing this song, a small cane-shaped pot (local name Ari) is painted with vermilion on the hands and feet, covered with paddy inside and covered with red woven cloth at the top of the altar. The song is performed by lighting a lamp in front of him. The use of dhak, kanshi, conch, dhunuchi, Pradeep (Lamp) etc. can be noticed in Jaggan.

### **Time**

This song is mainly sung at the end of winter and the beginning of spring. However, the nature of different parts of Jessore district is different, but there are differences in the performance of this song. For example, in some parts, this song is sung for a week from a full moon date one month before Charak Puja, and somewhere for fifteen days. The field special charak puja centered octave song can be heard singing till the day before the abode.

### **Location**

Altars are built around neem or bell trees. The altar is defined as the place of Jaggan and is called Kalitala, Shitlatala or Haritala.

### **Stage**

It can be organized in a small range in a home environment, so there is no need for a separate stage. However, during the performance of songs in different places, Bedipatis (spatial

names) made of palm leaves are arranged to sit on the floor with a tent. In the areas where Jaggan is sung in two parts, prayer music is performed on the altar and joy music is performed on a separate stage next to it.

### **Musical instruments**

No musical instruments are required to serve Jaggan. Anyone can do it if they want to arrange harmonium and Mandira in musical instrument. In the areas where a separate stage is set up for the performance of joyous music, the use of musical instruments like kanshi, flute, kartal or mandira, harmonium etc. including Bengali drums is noticeable.

### **Artist**

No specific artist number is mentioned anywhere in this song. Therefore, it can be said that when a particular artist performs a part of a song, all the women present in the sanctum sanctorum start singing in unison. There is no specific artist number for this. However, when joy music is performed, a turn or comedy part is presented by a certain number of artists.

### **Dohar artist**

The number of dohars is high due to the lack of instructions from a certain number of artists, which makes this song lively. Everyone present can sing this song.

### **Acting**

This song is sung in prayer to God. No such performance can be noticed in the song. However, somewhere in the region, the characters of different gods and goddesses are specially made through decorations to make the event attractive. The whole ceremony of Jaggan can be divided into two parts. Namely: 1. Worship music, 2. Joy music. At the end of the city tour, at the designated place where the song is performed, the evening lamp is lit and the aarti is sung. After taking prasad (Blessing food) in the aradhana music, the joy music starts again. During the performance of this song, the characters of the alternate songs are meant and are performed only to give pleasure.

### **Uniform**

No special costume plays a role in this song. That is why regular clothes are served. However, in the case of performing joyous music, different costumes are used to portray the character of the artist.

### **Event Cost**

Jaggan is a traditional festival of simple women of the village organized for the welfare of the society and the world. In a rural lower middle class environment, the cost is met by raising money and rice from all the families in a public event.

### **Tune Features**

No form of Classical Music is observed in the melody of Jaggan. However, if the thinking is based on Classical Music, then it can be said that most of the time bilabal and some songs Bhairab and Bageshri use of anger is noticeable. The main goal of this song is to spread the vows or the words of the gods. Sometimes it is heard to be sung in the form of recitation without melody. However, if the song is presented in tune, everyone can sing in unison. Due to the influence of Bhatiali melody in the folk songs of Jessore region, the movement of the melody of this song can be seen to fluctuate a little more. However, sometimes it can be heard to sing like a Dhuwa song. Such a term—

A farmer's son came from heaven  
He carries a golden spade on his shoulder  
My Hari Thakur's seat is ticking  
Door sweep in the morning, lamp in the evening.

(Dey, 2016)

There is less humor and monotonous melody as there is less difference in the melody of the song. For this reason, it does not attract the general audience. The melody of this song sung by women is not seen in such a high tune. However, in the lower and middle tune, its movement is more and the melody rolls like a meer. Kheur, Sanyatra, the application of

sentimental words can be seen in Jaggan. Sometimes plays are presented around meaningless subjects. While working in the field about Jaggan, I talked to Mrs. Chapa Rani Dey, a resident of Parkhajura village in Monirampur upazila of Jessore district and Tripti Rani Sikder of present Jhenaidah district. This endangered song is lost in the whirlpool of time, but the women of these villages still collect the songs in their minds to perform their rituals. No written form of which was found in the collection. Apart from the songs of the Bratanusthan, Mrs. Sikder said, in our time, the elders of the village used to teach the songs and we used to accept them with pleasure. But at the present time it has become difficult to keep these songs alive. Because, the girls of this generation do not show any interest in all these songs. Mrs. Dey mentioned in her speech- There are songs of devotion and gathering in the episode.

### Conclusion

Different songs are popular in different parts of Bangladesh for example Dhamaileet is a very common and famous song especially in Sylhet region and Jaggan is the most popular and traditional music in the Jessore region of Bangladesh. The philosophical feature of this genre of folk music is that it presents social values and every aspect of life through melody keeping religious thoughts in mind. Jaggan has been created in the continuation of this which is one of the different genres of folk music in Jessore district. The current study reveals the common aspects of Jaggan.

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