Know the Maestro

Ustad ‘Baba’ Allauddin Khan was a musician par extraordinaire. Born in Shibpur village to a family of musicians, Baba Allauddin Khan is one of the most notable music teachers of the 20th century.

DID YOU KNOW?
The 1993 film Maihar Raag, directed by Sunil Shanbag, explored Baba Allauddin Khan’s crumbling heritage in Maihar. It won the National Film Award for Best Non-Feature Film in 1994!
An eminent sarod player, composer and multi-instrumentalist, **Baba Allauddin Khan** was born on 8th October 1862. The young musician was often found at the local Shankar temple, where he was deeply influenced by the devotional music. At the age of 10, Ustad Khan ran away from home and joined a jatra party, where he was exposed to several folk genres of music. Upon reaching Kolkata in 1877, he came under the tutelage of Gopal Krishna Bhattacharya. After the death of his Guru, Khan picked up instrumental music - mastering several indigenous and foreign musical instruments under the guidance of Amritalal Dutt, Hazari Ustad, Nandababu and Wazir Khan.

As the court musician for the Maharaja of Maihar, Baba Khan laid the foundation of the Maihar gharana, and developed several ragas such as Hemant, Hem-Bihag and Madhasri. He also created the first Indian orchestra, known as a Maihar Band or Maihar Vadya Vrinda. In 1935, he toured Europe, along with Uday Shankar's ballet troupe, and later also taught at his institute, Uday Shankar India Culture Centre at Almora. In 1955, he established a college of music in Maihar.
AWARDS AND LEGACY

Baba Khan was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1958 and the Padma Vibhushan in 1971. Prior to that, in 1954, the Sangeet Natak Akademi awarded him with its highest honour, the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship for lifetime contribution to Indian music.

Khan's illustrious legacy is characterized by the list of his extraordinary disciples. These include his son Ali Akbar Khan, daughter Annapurna Devi, nephew Raja Hossain Khan, grandson Aashish Khan, Ravi Shankar, Nikhil Banerjee, Vasant Rai, Pannalal Ghosh, Bahadur Khan, Rabin Ghosh, Sharan Rani, Nalin Mazumdar, Jotin Bhattacharya, Rajesh Chandra Moitra and W. D. Amaradeva.
DID YOU KNOW?
On his visit to Shantiniken, Rabindranath Tagore asked the sculptor Ram Kinkar to create a statue of the maestro.

ACTIVITY CORNER

1. Ustad Allauddin Khan was a multi-instrumentalist. Are there any other Indian musicians who played multiple instruments? Research about their lives and present your findings in the form of a poster, film, etc.
2. Listen to an original composition of Ustad Allauddin Khan. What elements sound unique to you?
3. Baba Allauddin Khan’s music and legacy has been the subject of several movies/documentaries. Watch any one such film/documentary and write a review.

REFERENCES

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wikipedia.org
itcsra.org