

WEAR MASK TO PROTECT  
YOURSELF



**RAISINA BENGALI SCHOOL ,MANDIR MARG ,NEW DELHI-110001**

**SUBJECT: ENGLISH**

**CLASS: IX A & B**

**TEACHER :S MALA**

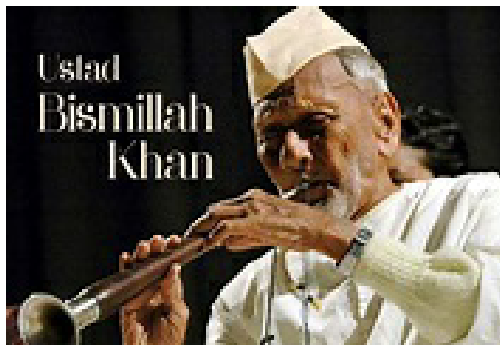
**ASSIGNMENT**

Book: BEEHIVE

CHAPTER :THE SONG OF MUSIC

SHEHNAI OF BISMILLAN KHAN PART 2

**AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEOS BASED ON THE CHAPTER IN POSTED EARLIER IN  
THE WHATSAPP GROUP STUDENTS PLEASE GO THROUGH THE CONTENT  
PROVIDED BELOW.**



## Lesson and Explanation

EMPEROR Aurangzeb banned the playing of a musical instrument called punggi in the royal residence for it had a shrill unpleasant sound.

banned: prohibited

shrill: very sharp

unpleasant: something that you dislike

*Pungi was a musical instrument, the predecessor of the shehnai. When the Mughals ruled India, before the Britishers came, there was a very famous Mughal ruler named Aurangzeb. He did not allow the punggi be played in his royal residence because he felt that it had a shrill, unpleasant sound.*



*Pungi*

Pungi became the generic name for reeded noisemakers.

generic name: a name given to a class or group as a whole

Generic name means the scientific name or a broad classification of something

reeded: wind instruments which have reeds like the flute, the clarinet, etc.

*So, any musical instrument which is made with reeds like we have flutes,*

*clarinets, they all are classified as 'pungi'. So pungi is a broad term for any type of instrument which uses wind to produce sound.*

Few had thought that it would one day be revived.

revived: brought back to live.

*As Aurangzeb has banned all these reeded noisemakers, he had banned pungi in his royal residence, no one thought that one day such noisemakers, such instrument which made unpleasant sound would be played and their sound would be liked by the audience.*



A barber of a family of professional musicians, who had access to the royal palace, decided to improve the tonal quality of the pungi.

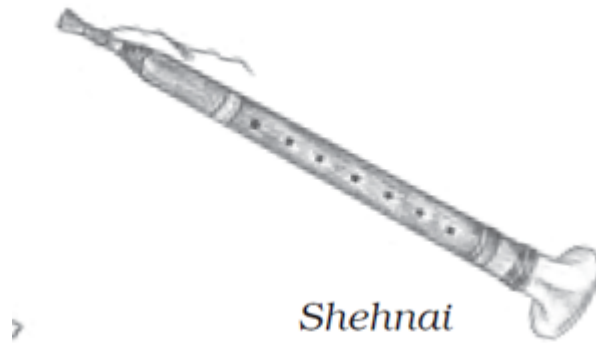
tonal quality: sound

*As the pungi had an unpleasant sound, there was a barber who belonged to a family of professional musicians and he wanted to play the pungi but he knew that the sound produced by pungi was unpleasant and so, he decided to improve the sound.*

He chose a pipe with a natural hollow stem that was longer and broader than the pungi, and made seven holes on the body of the pipe.

hollow: empty from inside.

*This barber took a pipe, a pipe which was a hollow stem. It was longer and broader than the pungi. He made seven holes on the body of the pipe. (If you have seen a flute it is something like this. It is a pipe which is hollow from inside and has holes on it.)*



When he played on it, closing and opening some of these holes, soft and melodious sounds were produced.

*Then he blew air into the pipe and closed and opened different holes. He found that soft and melodious sounds were produced when he did like this.*

He played the instrument before royalty and everyone was impressed.

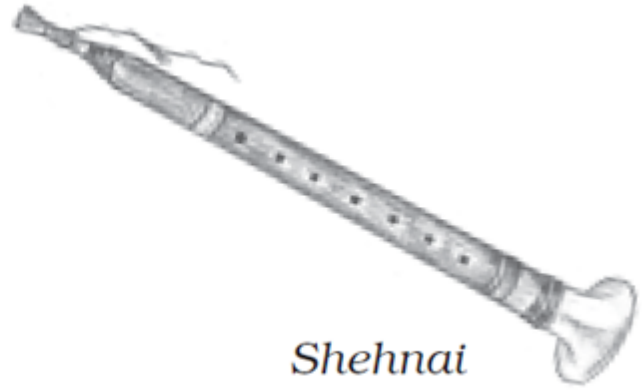
*When the barber played this instrument in the royal court, everyone liked the sound produced by it.*

The instrument so different from the pungi had to be given a new name.

*The royal court thought that this instrument was different from the pungi and so, it should have a different name also.*



Pungi



Shehnai

As the story goes, since it was first played in the Shah's chambers and was played by a nai (barber), the instrument was named the 'shehnai

*Now there is a story behind the name given to this instrument - this instrument was played for the first time in the royal residence of the Shah, Shah was a name given to king. (Mughals called the kings as Shah.) As the 'nai', that is the Indian term used for a barber had played it for the first time, they called it 'shehnai'. So, the first part is 'sheh' which stands for 'shah' and the second part 'nai' that is a barber. So, this instrument was named as shehnai.*

The sound of the shehnai began to be considered auspicious.

auspicious: promising to bring good fortune

*The sound which was produced by shehnai was considered to be a good omen. And so, it was played on good occasions.*

And for this reason it is still played in temples and is an indispensable component of any North Indian wedding.

indispensable: without which a piece of work cannot be done, something which is necessary

*You can hear shehnai being played at many temples and at weddings also.*



In the past, the shehnai was part of the naubat or traditional ensemble of nine instruments found at royal courts.

Ensembles (pronounced 'onsomble'): things (here, instruments) considered as a group

*The shehnai was a part of the naubat. (Naubat is an urdu word and it means traditional ensemble that means a traditional group of nine musical instruments.) These nine musical instruments were played at the royal court and shehnai was also a part of naubat.*

Till recently it was used only in temples and weddings. The credit for bringing this instrument onto the classical stage goes to Ustaaad Bismillah Khan.

*The shehnai was played at the king's court, in temples and at weddings. It was used on stage in performances and the credit for that goes to Utsad Bismillah Khan who was a legendary shehnai player and people wanted to hear him play the shehnai.*



As a five-year old, Bismillah Khan played gilli danda near a pond in the ancient estate of Dumraon in Bihar.

*When Bismillah Khan was five years old, he lived in an old estate named Dumraon in present day Bihar estate. He used to play gilli danda, an old sport quite similar to cricket.*

He would regularly go to the nearby Bihariji temple to sing the Bhojpuri 'Chaita', at the end of which he would earn a big laddu weighing 1.25 kg, a prize given by the local Maharaja.

Laddu or laddoo are sphere-shaped sweets originated in the Indian subcontinent.

*Also, he would go to the nearby Bihariji temple. Although Bismillah Khan was a muslim, he would go to the temple and he would sing this song – 'Chaita' in Bhojpuri language. (Bhojpuri language is spoken in an area of Bihar.) When he would finish reciting the song, he would get a big laddu as reward and the weight of that laddu was 1.25 kg. This was a prize given to Bismillah Khan by Local maharaja for singing the chaita.*

This happened 80 years ago, and the little boy has travelled far to earn the highest civilian award in India — the Bharat Ratna.

*The writer says that this incident occurred when Bismillah was five years old, that he would get this Laddu as a reward. And after Eight years, Bismillah Khan earned the highest civilian award in India - the Bharat Ratna. So, this is the distance that he has travelled in his life. At five years of age,*

*he would get a 1.25 kg laddu as a reward and at eighty, he achieved the highest civilian award in India that is the Bharat Ratna.*

Born on 21 March 1916, Bismillah belongs to a well-known family of musicians from Bihar.

*Bismillah Khan was born on 21 March 1916 in a family of Musicians in Bihar.*

His grandfather, Rasool Bux Khan, was the *shehnai-nawaz* of the Bhojpur king's court. His father, Paigambar Bux, and other paternal ancestors were also great shehnai players.

paternal ancestors: ancestors of the father

*The lineage on his father's side was full of great shehnai players. We can say that Bismillah Khan ji acquired the skill of playing the shehnai from his ancestors. His grandfather was a great shehnai player. He played the shehnai in the court of the Bhojpur king. His father and all paternal ancestors were also great shehnai players.*

The young boy took to music early in life.

*Bismillah Khan ji also started learning music at an early age.*

At the age of three when his mother took him to his maternal uncle's house in Benaras (now Varanasi), Bismillah was fascinated watching his uncles practice the shehnai.

*When Bismillah Khan ji was just 3 years' old, his mother took him to her parents' house – to his maternal uncles. (Maternal uncles mean the lineage on one's mother's side.) They lived in Benaras (Benaras is today called Varanasi.) And when Bismillah Khan saw his maternal uncles play the shehnai, he was attracted towards it and he also wanted to learn playing it.*

Soon Bismillah started accompanying his uncle, Ali Bux, to the Vishnu temple of Benaras where Bux was employed to play the shehnai.

*Bismillah Khan started going with his uncle, Ali Bux to the Vishnu temple in Benaras. Ali Bux was on a duty to play the shehnai at the Vishnu temple of Benaras.*



Ali Bux would play the shehnai and Bismillah would sit captivated for hours on end.

Captivated: attracted

on end: for a very long time without stopping, continuously

*When Bismillah Khan saw his uncle, Ali Bux play the shehnai, he would get attracted towards it that he would sit there for hours, listening to him play the shehnai.*

Slowly, he started getting lessons in playing the instrument and would sit practicing throughout the day.

*Gradually Bismillah Khan also started learning playing the shehnai and he would practice throughout the day. He never got tired, he was so captivated by the shehnai.*

For years to come the temple of Balaji and Mangala Maiya and the banks of the Ganga became the young apprentice's favourite haunts where he could practice in solitude.

apprentice: trainee

haunt: place you like come, where you like to visit many times a day

solitude: being alone, single

*For many years, Utsad Bismillah Khan remained in Benaras. He would visit the temple of Balaji, temple of Managala Maiya and would remain on the bank of river Ganga, where he would practice playing the shehnai all by himself.*



The flowing waters of the Ganga inspired him to improvise and invent ragas that were earlier considered to be beyond the range of the shehnai.

*Here we come to know about the talent of Ustaaad Bismillah Khan. He was so inspired and motivated by the river Ganga, it provoked him to improve his performance and he also invented many ragas that were considered impossible to be produced by a shehnai. Ustaaad Bismillah Khan worked hard, and invented different sounds with the shehnai.*

At the age of 14, Bismillah accompanied his uncle to the Allahabad Music Conference.

*When Bismillah Khan was 14 years of age, he accompanied his maternal uncle, Ali Bux to the Allahabad Music Conference.*

At the end of his recital, Ustaaad Faiyaz Khan patted the young boy's back and said, "Work hard and you shall make it."

[recital: performance](#)

*Ustaaad Faiyaz Khan (he was a renowned classical vocalist) was impressed by his performance and said that if he would work hard like that, he would make a name in the field of music.*

With the opening of the All India Radio in Lucknow in 1938 came Bismillah's big break. He soon became an often-heard shehnai player on radio.

*When the All India Radio started it's a Radio station at Lucknow, Ustaaad Bismillah Khan started performing from there. Often, his shehnai performance would be on air.*

When India gained independence on 15 August 1947, Bismillah Khan became the first Indian to greet the nation with his shehnai.

*Ustaaad Bismillah Khan was the first Indian to greet the entire nation through his shehnai. He played the shehnai from the Red Fort on this memorable occasion.*



He poured his heart out into Raag Kafi from the Red Fort to an audience which included Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who later gave his famous 'Tryst with Destiny' speech.

*The Raag that was played by Ustaad Bismillah Khan on the occasion of the Independence of India was Raag Kafi. He played it from the Red Fort. After his performance, the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gave his famous speech - 'Tryst with Destiny'.*

Bismillah Khan has given many memorable performances both in India and abroad. His first trip abroad was to Afghanistan where King Zahir Shah was so taken in by the maestro that he gifted him priceless Persian carpets and other souvenirs.

taken in by: attracted or charmed by

souvenirs: things given in memory of a place, person or event

*Bismillah Khan gave many performances in India and abroad. Some of them are memorable like the one at Afghanistan. The King of Afghanistan, King Zahir Shah really liked Bismillah Khan's performance and he gifted him many things which were made in Afghanistan like Persian carpets, etc. so that Ustaad Bismillah Khan would remember his first visit abroad that*

*was to Afghanistan.*

The King of Afghanistan was not the only one to be fascinated with Bismillah's music. Film director Vijay Bhatt was so impressed after hearing Bismillah play at a festival that he named a film after the instrument called Gunj Uthi Shehnai.

*There were many other people also who were attracted to his shehnai's music. 'Gunj Uthi Shehnai' was a name of a Hindi movie. It was made by Vijay Bhatt. He was a film director and he really liked the sound of the shehnai played by Bismillah Khan and that is why he named his movie as Gunj Uthi Shehnai.*

The film was a hit, and one of Bismillah Khan's compositions, "Dil ka khilona hai toot gaya ...," turned out to be a nationwide chartbuster!

chartbuster: record breaker

*There was a song in movie Gunj Uthi Shehnai named "Dil ka khilona hai toot gaya....". It was composed by Ustaad Bismillah Khan and became a chartbuster, it brook all record.*

Despite this huge success in the celluloid world, Bismillah Khan's ventures in film music were limited to two: Vijay Bhatt's Gunj Uthi Shehnai and Vikram Srinivas's Kannada venture, Sanadhi Apanna.

celluloid: old fashioned way of referring to films

venture: project that often involves risk, something which has a lot of risk

*Although this song was a chartbuster, Bismillah Khan got a lot of success in this film, but he composed music for only two films. The names of the movies were - Gunj Uthi Shehnai made by Vijay Bhatt and a Kannada Movie made by Vikram Srinivas called 'Sanadhi Apanna'.*

"I just can't come to terms with the artificiality and glamour of the film world," he says with emphasis

Emphasis: to lay stress on something

*Ustaad Bismillah Khan would say that he did not like the artificial world of films and the glamour that was there in the film world. That was why he did not compose music for many movies.*

Awards and recognition came thick and fast.

thick and fast: he got a lot of awards and was recognized at many places

*Bismillah Khan got a lot of recognition and was honoured with awards.*

Bismillah Khan became the first Indian to be invited to perform at the prestigious Lincoln Centre Hall in the United States of America. He also took part in the World Exposition in Montreal, in the Cannes Art Festival and in the Osaka Trade Fair.

*Bismillah Khan ji performed all over the world. He performed in United States of America at the Lincoln Centre Hall, he performed in Montreal, Australia in the World Exposition, he performed at the Cannes Art Festival and he also performed in Japan at the Osaka Trade Fair.*

So well known did he become internationally that an auditorium in Teheran was named after him — Tahar Mosiquee Ustaad Bismillah Khan.

*Teheran is located in Iran. Bismillah Khan was so famous all over the world that in Teheran, an auditorium has been named after him.*

National awards like the Padmashri, the Padma Bhushan and the Padma Vibhushan were conferred on him.

conferred: given, usually an award or a degree

*Ustaad Bismillah Khan has been awarded with these national awards.*

In 2001, Ustaad Bismillah Khan was awarded India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna.

With the coveted award resting on his chest and his eyes glinting with rare happiness he said, "All I would like to say is: Teach your children music, this is Hindustan's richest tradition; even the West is now coming to learn our music."

coveted: much desired

*When Ustaaad Bismillah Khan received India's highest civilian award - Bharat Ratna in the year 2001, his eyes were shining. He was very happy because his hard work had been recognized and he gave an important message to the country. He told all the Indians to teach music to their children because music is the richest tradition of India. He said that even the western countries wanted to learn India's music.*

In spite of having travelled all over the world — Khansaab as he is fondly called — is exceedingly fond of Banaras and Dumraon and they remain for him the most wonderful towns of the world.

*Although Ustaaad Bismillah Khan ji had travelled all over the world, he was given so much respect and recognition, he remained rooted. Benaras, where he learned music and Dumraon, where he was born and brought up were the two most wonderful towns of the world for him. He was so down to earth that although he had travelled all over the world, still he was attached to his birth place.*

A student of his once wanted him to head a shehnai school in the U.S.A., and the student promised to recreate the atmosphere of Banaras by replicating the temples there. But Khansaab asked him if he would be able to transport River Ganga as well.

replicating: making a copy of something

*There was a student of Ustaaad Bismillah Khan and he wanted that Ustaaad Bismillah Khan should set up a shehnai school in USA. He promised that he would recreate the temple of Benaras in America for Ustaaad ji as he would miss it. Now Ustaaad Bismillah Khan was attached to River Ganga also. So, he asked his student that would he transport the River Ganga also to America. So, he wanted to say that he could not leave India – He was attached not only to the temples of Benaras but also to the holy river Ganga.*

Later he is remembered to have said, “That is why whenever I am in a foreign country, I keep yearning to see Hindustan. While in Mumbai, I think of only Banaras and the holy Ganga. And while in Banaras, I miss the unique mattha of Dumraon.”

yearning – longing, having a desire for something

*Ustaad Bismillah Khan said that whenever he visited any foreign country, he longed to see India. He wanted to return to India. And then he says that when he was in India, in Mumbai, he yearned to visit Benaras and the Ganga River. And when he was in Benaras, he missed his birth place Dumraon and the Mattha where he sang chaita and was rewarded with the laddu of 1.25 kg weight by the Maharaja.*

Ustaad Bismillah Khan's life is a perfect example of the rich, cultural heritage of India, one that effortlessly accepts that a devout Muslim like him can very naturally play the shehnai every morning at the Kashi Vishwanath temple.

devout: believing strongly in a religion and obeying its laws and following its practices

*Here the writer says that Ustaad Bismillah Khan was a perfect example of the rich cultural heritage of India. His work was beyond the religion barriers. Although he was a strict Muslim, he followed the Muslim laws but every morning he would play the shehnai at the Kashi Vishwanath Temple, which was a Hindu temple. This shows that he did not have the barriers of religion in his mind. He was a true Indian. He considered music to be India's richest cultural heritage.*

Ustaad Bismillah Khan passed away on 21 August 2006 at the age of ninety after a prolonged illness. He was given a state funeral and the Government of India declared one day of national mourning.

*Ustaad Bismillah Khan had been ill for a long time and he died on 21 August 2006 at the age of ninety. The entire country mourned the death of the legendary musician. There was a holiday for one day and he was given a state funeral.*

Thanks to Ruchika Gupta and successcds