

Finally, a public jamming session in Guwahati



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Aiyushman Dutta 8 October 2009 8005 views

Over the last few years, the live music scene in Northeast India has been picking up momentum, making the region one of the most vibrant music destinations of the country. Performance of international artistes and rock bands in cities like Shillong and Dimapur have further helped bring international focus to the region. Though the region is being promoted as a music capital, a section of musicians of the city are unhappy with the sorry state of affairs of the local music scene. They feel that just a few international artists cannot make a region a music capital and the local music scene needs to develop for that. Moa Subong, frontman of Grammy-nominated experimental rock group Abiogenesis, says, "How can one or two musicians or bands make a region a music capital? To become a music capital, music needs to be inherent in the life of the people; there should be solid support for the musicians and local bands should get as many avenues to perform and play. I don't see any of that happening here."

Journalist and founder secretary of the Rockarolla Music Society Aiyushman Dutta says, "International artistes and star performers, when they come here for their performances, manage to stir up a lot of hype about the region being transported as an ultimate music destination. But the entire concept disappears with the departure of these musicians. It is imperative that the local scene is developed first; not to make the region any rock capital but just in order to give due respect to our musicians and artistes."

But despite the gloomy scenario, a lead has finally been taken in Guwahati – the hub of entire Northeast India. Continuing with its basic mission to develop the independent music industry of the region and also to use music as a unifying force for people in Northeast India, the Rockarolla Music Society has come up with yet another novel initiative – public jamming sessions for the local musicians! The first public jamming session – October Jam - would get underway on the afternoon of October 13 at Shilpagram in Guwahati.

October Jam, one of the first initiatives of its kind here, would see all senior and contemporary musicians from the independent music industry descending at Shilpagram to do what they do best – make music together! Besides them, the evening will also feature performances of some of Guwahati's most noted rock bands, including Dark Horizon, Hammerhead, Silver Tears, Sunday Mourning and DOTH. Co-founder of the Rockarolla Music Society David Koch said, "October Jam is open to all musicians and music enthusiasts. Anyone can come and perform; it is a meeting for artistes to express themselves." Besides musicians, the event will also be a merging point for Northeastern artistes from diverse fields.

Chaired by Chief Information Commissioner and musician DN Dutt, the Rockarolla Music Society was formed with the basic objective of developing the music scene of the region and to promote and encourage the local bands and musicians. Since its inception, the society has been acquainting the regional populace with new musicians of hitherto unknown genres and introducing them to the limitless possibilities of music. As Aiyushman Dutta says, "Our motive is not to organize commercial music concerts. We were formed to develop the local music scene. We are organizing the Karbi Anglong Beats contest on October 29 for the first time in the history of the region. The show, which is part of the 4-day traditional Rongtheang festival, will go a long way in encouraging the local musicians of Karbi Anglong. The winner will be sponsored and promoted by King of Tripura and editor of TNT magazine Maharaja Pradyut Debburman."

It is these kind of initiatives that make a region a music capital and not one or two international performances. What do you say?

Aiyushman Dutta

Journalist and Founder Secretary, Eastern Beats Music Society.

BY AIYUSHMAN DUTTA

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