

# Sepia tones

● Gauhar Jaan is making news.

Eighty years after her death, the country is celebrating the life of the Armenian singer who was among the first to record a song in India. Jaan, who spent many years in Calcutta, is the focus of a book by engineer Vikram Sampath. After his first book on the Mysore royalty, *My Name is Gauhar Jaan: The Life and Times of a Musician*, is another riveting narrative.

The book pieces together anecdotes, myths and facts revolving round the legendary classical singer born in 1873. And it was high time somebody recorded history, for the ravages of time had wiped out a major part of her legacy. "Of her 600 recordings, less than 200 have survived. I could collect 100 and some songs from my collections are available on CDs being sold with my book," says Sampath. And that's music to some ears.