

# Hakka Dhaka: Small on space, BIG on food

DYUTY AURONEE

Hakka Chinese restaurants are perhaps your new fried chicken outlets. No, they don't sell fried chicken and I don't want to give you false hope but it's something that we hadn't heard of even a year back and now it's somewhat of a craze. Hakka Chinese may sound like regular Chinese cuisine but it's the distinct cooking style of the Hakka people, who originated mainly from the south-eastern Chinese provinces.

Hakka Dhaka, at Banani, happens to be one of the most popular places serving this cuisine and it's also one of the few in the city. I did hear from a few friends about the limited space but had no idea it was going to be so small. It won't be totally wrong to say that they stacked 6 tables with maybe 24 chairs or less in a space that's almost half the size of anybody's bedroom. One of us had second thoughts and had wanted to leave but then the manager/owner came forward to help us out with the seating arrangement and it was his warm hospitality that held us back. The menu was simple. Only two platters were available.

Platter A had a choice of chicken wings or spring rolls, Hunan chicken, Mongolian beef and chilli garlic prawn. Platter B had wrapped prawns, chicken



with mushrooms, dry chilli beef and Szechuan prawns. Hakka noodles, egg fried rice and soft drink/water were common to both the platters. We picked Platter B. It wasn't totally random; it had two prawn dishes so you get the point. A full platter priced at BDT 2500 serves four people and a half platter priced at BDT 1300 serves two. The portions were very generous and one can easily conclude that the platters are sufficient for a party of two or four people.

For me the star of the meal was the appetizer, the wrapped prawns. Perfectly

cooked, tender jumbo prawns wrapped around crispy golden fried noodles with what they call their "secret dipping sauce" – an absolute winner. If this item doesn't take me back to the restaurant for a second time, I don't know what will.

All the items were really flavourful and filling. The balance of sweet and sour was nice and the two staples, egg fried rice and Hakka noodles, were brilliant on their own. Owing to its popularity, Hakka Dhaka has opened up a second branch at Uttara. This branch is pretty spacious and offers a wider variety of dishes. Also, they have introduced desserts.

Hakka Dhaka happens to be one of your safest bets when you're hungry and don't want to experiment much yet feel like trying out a new cuisine. It's also a go-to place if you have no time to go through long menus. Oh, their service was pretty quick as well. It's also quite easy on your wallet as you can split the bill with your friends. The restaurant is open from 12:30pm to 4pm and 6:30pm to 11pm.

**Address:** House-66, Road-10, Block-D, Banani, Dhaka

**And**

**Auckland Center (3rd Floor), House 11, Road 6, Sector 4, Uttara, Dhaka**

For more information, visit:

<https://www.facebook.com/hakkadhaka>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/HAKK-A-DHAKA-Uttara/706862829434185>



# What's All That Jazz About?

EVENT



ZARIF MASUD

International Jazz Day happened to be on the 30th of last month and to celebrate its influence on many forms of modern music as well as to celebrate traditional jazz itself, a group of enthusiastic young musicians from the high-flying band, 42, along with the Imran Ahmed Quartet and Groove Gen, organised a jazz show at Shilpakala Academy in Dhaka on May 1, 2015.

Activation Partners included GrooveGen, GrooveDesign Interactive, Bengal Music Company, black N Orange, Sonali's and iCreation. Media partner was yours truly, SHOUT.

The atmosphere was rather pleasant and homely owing to the fact that most of the musicians and even the audience knew each other. The venue was an excellent choice for a concert such as this, as the environment made for quite an enjoyable night to listen to some good music.

The sound quality was great and the lighting made for some apt ambiance. Proceeds from ticket sales were to be donated to the Nepal earthquake relief fund.

The show started at around 6:30 PM. Imran Ahmed and Yameen Khan (42) gave a brief introduction in which they talked about jazz, the purpose of the event as well as expressed their condolences to the earthquake victims and families in Nepal.

The show kicked off with Kaarthik, Kirtana Krishna and Towfiq Arifin Turjo. They had a complicated and musically challenging set list consisting of covers of Robert Glasper Experiment and Hiatus Kaiyote.

Next up was a traditional Indian classical group with Nishit Dey (sitar) and Dipankar Aich (tabla). Although this was not a jazz group, their inclusion in the line-up was warmly appreciated as they performed a full-fledged Indian classical set featuring Raga Charukeshi – on taal rupak (7 beats), and later on tin taal (16 beats). The group paid their respect to the victims in Nepal as well.

The Imran Ahmed Quartet – consisting of, obviously, Imran Ahmed (guitars), Rahin Haider (saxophone), Mohaimin

Karim (bass) and Towfiq Arifin Turjo (drums) – came up next. And if the environment had gone a little mellow after Nishit Dey and Dipankar Aich's soulful performance, Imran Ahmed Quartet got everyone's blood pumping again. The group performed some of their originals and crowd favourites like "City", "Splash", "P.T.O to 35" and a rendition of the famous jazz standard "My Favourite Things".

Next, it was 42's turn to turn up the groove with Yameen Khan (guitar), Rahin Haider (saxophone), Xahid Ahmed (bass), Towfiq Arifin Turjo (drums) and Shaveena Anam (vocals). The band played a complete set consisting of their renditions of jazz hits like "So What", "Take Five" and a few cover songs by modern day jazz and funk artists.

Lastly, The Tango Trio came on stage with Saad Chowdhury (bass), Robert Russel (keyboard) and Nafeez Al Amin (drums). The group covered jazz classics like "Spain" and also a cover of Esbjorn Svensson's "Elevation of Love".

It was the sort of concert that has been generally lacking in recent years. The young musicians are some of the most talented in the country. All in all, it was an evening well spent.