

## BADHON ACHE PRAANE PRAANE: OF HARMONY WITHIN

# SRIKANTA ACHARYA AND ADITI MOHSIN

### serenade Dhaka in stellar concert

FAIZA RAMIM

The High Commission of India in Dhaka, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), and HSBC Bangladesh welcomed the Bengali New Year with a musical evening featuring esteemed artists Srikanta Acharya and Aditi Mohsin on April 17 and 18, respectively. The title, *Badhon Ache Praane Praane: Of Harmony Within*, was drawn from Rabindranath Tagore's song *Amra Milechi Aaj*, reflecting the enduring idea that human connection transcends geography and political borders.

Pranay Verma, High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh, opened the event by emphasising that cultural bonds "run older and deeper than national boundaries." Md Mahubur Rahman, CEO of HSBC Bangladesh, followed by noting the significance of placing music at the center of cultural celebration—a rarity in an era where tradition often faces public pressure or narrow framing. The programme affirmed the region's secular, inclusive character, highlighting values of openness and shared heritage.

Among the dignitaries in attendance were Nitai Roy Chowdhury, Bangladesh's Cultural Affairs Minister, and Ranjan Bhattacharya, Managing Director and Head of Strategy for India and the Middle East at HSBC. Guests arrived at the High Commission in festive red and white attire, enjoying cuisine by Amari Dhaka before the performances began. On April 18, Zahir Uddin Swapon, Minister of Information and Broadcasting, attended the event.

The evening's musical journey

began with Aditi Mohsin, whose voice served as the event's spiritual anchor. Widely regarded as one of the most authoritative exponents of Rabindra Sangeet in the subcontinent, Mohsin brought an atmospheric depth to the stage that commanded immediate silence. Her performance was more than a recital; it was an invitation into the philosophical core of Bengali culture. She opened with Rajanikanta Sen's *Tumi Nirmol Koro* and Tagore's *Borisho Dhora Majhe Shantir Bari*.



Set to the same raag, the pairing moved thoughtfully from a plea for personal purification to a global appeal for peace. A graduate of Visva Bharati University in Shantiniketan, Mohsin's performance reflected her deep academic training, as she situated each song within the evolution of Bengali music.

If the evening was about "Harmony Within", Srikanta Acharya was its living embodiment. For nearly three decades, Acharya has served as a cultural bridge between Kolkata and Dhaka, his voice carrying the weight of shared nostalgia

and contemporary hope.

The evening transitioned into a collaborative segment as Mohsin was joined by the eminent Srikanta Acharya for duets of *Esho He Boishakh* and *Shei Bhalo Shei Bhalo*. Acharya, a renowned singer-songwriter and filmmaker from Kolkata, reflected on his 26-year relationship with Bangladeshi audiences, noting that every visit makes him feel "at home".

In his solo set, Acharya performed hits such as *Brishti Tomake Dilam*



and *Cholo Let's Go*, alongside requested classics like *Tomar Ankhir Moto Akasher Duti Tara*. He also bridged linguistic styles with Jagjit Singh's *Jhuki Si Nazar* and a blended rendering of *Amay Proshno Kore Nil Dhrubotara*.

The programme concluded on a personal note with *Ami Shei Deshe Khujechi Koto*, a song written by Acharya's wife. Ultimately, the event served as a powerful reminder that shared cultural memory and music remain the strongest bonds between these two neighboring nations.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF HSBC BANGLADESH

## A magical night revives

# JASIMUDDIN'S 'NAKSHI KANTHAR MATH'



PHOTOS: ABRAR FAIYAZ NILOY

**The choice of date was deliberate. April 17 marks both International Dance Day and the 123rd birth anniversary of the poet. The performance retold the story of Rupai and Saju, a love story of separation and longing set in rural Bengal.**

ANIKA TAHISIN HAFSA

The auditorium did not feel like an auditorium anymore. Women descended to a river to collect water. Men cut paddy in the fields. A *palki* swayed through a wedding procession. For a few hours, a convention hall in Dhaka had become a Bengali village.

This was MAYA Bengal in Motion Presented by MW Bangladesh, held on April 17 at Alok Convention Centre. Now in its third edition, the evening was a tribute to *Palli Kabi* Jasimuddin and his most celebrated work, *Nakshi Kanthar Math*. The event was jointly organised by MW Magazine Bangladesh and MAYA, a natural wellness brand under Square Toiletries Limited.

The event was presided over by Anjan Chowdhury, Managing Director of Square Toiletries Ltd. Welcome speeches were delivered by Rumana Chowdhury, Editor and Publisher of MW Magazine Bangladesh, and Malik Mohammed Sayeed, CEO of Square Toiletries Limited. Sayeed reaffirmed MAYA's commitment to supporting initiatives that celebrate the nation's art, culture, and heritage.

The choice of date was deliberate. April 17 marks both International Dance Day and



the 123rd birth anniversary of the poet. The performance retold the story of Rupai and Saju, a love story of separation and longing set in rural Bengal. The work has been translated into numerous languages worldwide. It was first adapted as a dance drama by Bulbul Lalitakala Academy in 1959.

Even before the performance began, the venue itself set the mood. *Nakshi kanthas* from several regions of Bangladesh were

displayed across the walls. Photographs of Jasimuddin captured significant moments from his life and literary journey. Lines from his poems hung throughout the hall. The entire environment felt like a reflection of Bangladesh's cultural heritage, quietly pulling everyone back to their roots.

Outside the auditorium, three women sat stitching *kanthas*. A single *kantha* takes one and a half to two months to complete. Village women stitch them in their free time, while raising children, keeping house, and managing daily life. Watching those needles move through layered fabric, right at the entrance of the event, offered one of the most quietly powerful moments of the evening.

The performance was curated by Anisul Islam Hero and featured renowned artistes Shamim Ara Nipa, Shibli Mohammad, and Nriyanchal. Through folk dance, music, and expressive storytelling, they brought rural Bengal to life on stage.

The performance will be broadcast on Maasranga Television on April 29 on the occasion of International Dance Day.

Jasimuddin wrote about a Bangladesh that many city dwellers have quietly drifted away from. On one April evening in Dhaka, that Bangladesh came back.

## Tom Cruise-led 'Top Gun 3' officially enters production

Tom Cruise is set to return as Pete "Maverick" Mitchell as Paramount Pictures has officially confirmed that *Top Gun 3* is now in production.



The announcement was made during the studio's presentation at CinemaCon in Las Vegas, signalling the next chapter in one of Hollywood's most successful action franchises. Cruise will once again collaborate with long-time creative partner Christopher McQuarrie, who is attached to the project.

While details regarding the film's storyline, cast and release date remain under wraps, anticipation remains high following the massive success of *Top Gun: Maverick*. The 2022 sequel, directed by Joseph Kosinski, earned over \$718 million worldwide and revitalised the franchise for a new generation.

The original *Top Gun*, directed by Tony Scott, was released in 1986 and introduced audiences to Maverick, a naval aviator played by Cruise.

## Ashes concert at Rabindra Sarobar cancelled over safety concerns



A scheduled concert by Ashes at Rabindra Sarobar in Dhanmondi has been cancelled due to safety and crowd management concerns, the band confirmed.

The show, set yesterday (April 18), was called off after organisers expressed concerns over the probable turnout for the open-air event. In a Facebook post, band vocalist Zunayed Evan said the venue was too small to safely accommodate the expected crowd.

He added that local authorities also raised concerns regarding security and traffic management, leading to a joint decision to cancel the event.

The band has been on an extensive tour schedule, performing 12 concerts across the country between April 1 and 17, including shows in Dhaka, Gazipur and Cumilla.

Fans were expecting the Dhanmondi concert to be another highlight of the band's ongoing run, but organisers prioritised public safety in making the final decision.