

'Jonakar Pohar' staged at Surya



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Socio-cultural organization **Aikyatan** brought its 40th [anniversary](#) celebration to Surya's intimate stage with the staging of a new play titled 'Jonakar Pohar' recently. The play evoked genuine curiosity amongst the [city](#)'s film and theater [community](#) before its enactment on stage. And the play really exceeds expectations [as](#) it turned out to be a true celebration of an incredible 40-year-old journey. The occasion actually turned out to be a reunion of sorts for some of the surviving members who once acted and worked behind the scenes for the pioneering organization.

Well-known musician Kishore Giri trudges along with his trademark guitar, and sets the initial tone by paying tribute to Aikyatan's founder-member Pabitra Kumar Deka, intimate members Krisnamurty Hazarika, Indra Bania, Surajit Gogoi, Loknath Subba among others. Giri, who is fortunate enough to have spent several years in the shadows of these former stalwarts, spoke about their contributions [over](#) the years, with a tinge of nostalgia. The torch has now been passed on to new generation, who despite their busy schedules and commitments, has to carry forward the legacy. After nearly two decades, Aikyatan has started staging plays with last year's 'Apekhyat' on Surya's intimate stage.

Apart from its interesting theme, there was something about this new play, just so full of life, that look quite akin to our culture. 'Jonakar Pohar' based on Irish playwright Lady Gregory's 'The Rising of the Moon', seamlessly pulls the audience around a wave of Irish patriotic fervour and nationalistic songs.

The play opens with three Irish policemen, working for the British authorities, pasting a poster for an escaped political convict. The policemen discuss the large reward of 100 pound they will receive for the [criminal](#)'s capture. He asks his younger assistants to post more leaflets around town while he stays around to guard the harbor where

he thinks a ship is bound to take the rebel to freedom. The Sergeant played by Mrinal [Das](#) remains on the stage throughout the play and grips the attention of the audience.

Soon, a poor artiste by the name of Walsh who makes a living singing songs of Ireland, engages the Sergeant in a conversation which drifts towards the past. He croons a few ballads to the protesting Sergeant, who only wanted to keep the area clear so he could catch the fleeing prisoner if he appeared.

The Sergeant begins to think of the fate of the fugitive in comparison to his own. He thinks about the friends of his youth, and the circumstances, which could have placed him in the position of hiding from the police in the [dark](#).

The Sergeant, overwhelmed with patriotic feelings, undergoes a change of [heart](#) with the disguised rebel. He even joins Walsh in singing a popular patriotic song, obviously moved by the prevailing mood.

After eventually discovering that Walsh is indeed the [criminal](#) everyone was looking for, he performs his complicity with the nationalist movement by letting him hide behind a row of drums located in the harbor.

He may have purely noble and idealistic reasons for doing so, but the Sergeant allows Walsh to escape from the place, putting paid to any hopes of acquiring the hefty sum. He is deeply moved by memories of his own patriotic youth.

A proud race, the Irish lived beneath real oppression once, and yearned for freedom. [One](#) can perceive a deep conflict between the hearts of the characters. The play's dramatist herself had been a witness to the

violent uprisings in Dublin. The play draws perceptive insights from her own personal experiences and observations. 'Jonakar Pohar' is suffused with traditional and sentimental songs.

Like last year's 'Apekhyat', Aikyatan's new production delighted the audience who settled into comfortable intimacy right from the very beginning. 'Junakor Puhor' gets a fresh lease of life under the direction of Prodyut Kumar Deka, who has also done the difficult [job](#) of translating it into [Assamese](#), seasoned artistes Juwan Dutta and Mrinal [Das](#), and the music direction of Kishore Giri. Aikyatan is fortunate to have artistes like Mrinal [Das](#) and Juwan Dutta on board to bring the characters of the Sergeant and Walsh to life. Dutta is capable of playing just about any character to perfection. He also displayed his rare musical sense by pulling off all the songs in his eloquent voice. On the other hand, Mrinal [Das](#) threw himself into his part with comfortable ease. Kamal Paran and Niharika Sarma were quite adequate in the characters of police constables. Kishore Giri provides effective backing with his voice and guitar throughout the play.

There was also on view an exhibition of some of Aikyatan's old photographs that took everyone down memory lane, at the premises of Surya.

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