



Dr. Bhattacharya and Michael Faillace with the student-beneficiaries, mentors and parents at the induction ceremony. Photos by Prakash M Swamy

TV reality music shows not genuine : Anup Jalota



Bhuvan Joshi, the incoming Country Head of Bank of India, Prabhu Dayal, Anup Jalota and Narendra Prasad, Country Head of Bank of India. Photo by: Prakash M Swamy

PRAKASH M SWAMY

New York

Winners of some of the most famous reality shows in Indian television are not selected by eminent singers who act as judges but by common man on the basis of number of text messages received. This only goes to prove how genuine such shows are, said 'Bhajan Samrat' Anup Jalota

Addressing a group of Indian-American media at the Consulate General of India accompanied by Consul General Prabhu Dayal, he said most often the common man has no knowledge and was being influenced by other factors not related to music. The television channels choose the so-called winners based on random choice and the experts who go as judges have no say. The judges often had to disagree with the choice, albeit discreetly with the organizers. "Such short-cuts result in short-lived career and the emerging singers lose their sheen quickly. Instead of leaving the choice to the audience, they should respect the verdict of judges who are invariably eminent musicians with thorough knowledge and understanding of the nuances," he said.

He said the Government of India must take steps to restore the declining interest in Urdu and Hindi poetry and classical music. He said the government should do more to preserving the two genres. The government is taking serious steps to preserve wildlife in India, but not showing as much

interest in preserving language and culture. "The decline will be our great loss," he said.

"Unfortunately there is a misconception that Urdu belongs to Pakistan. It's being allowed to decline from its prime place. Urdu is as much an Indian language as Hindi or Punjabi and steps should be made to revive it in India," he said.

The ghazal king regretted that in many films not-so-good lyrics overtake rhythm and melody. While agreeing that the current music has to be in tune with trend of movies, melody should be given its pride of place. He said Bollywood movies should support bhajans and ghazals with a view to reviving the ancient music forms. He said he had recently signed to play the role of Sri Sathya Sai Baba in a Hindi movie.

Prabhu Dayal said Jalota is no stranger to Indians in overseas as he had performed all over the world. He said the singer has performed in each of his overseas postings as a diplomat and described his unique way of rendering ghazals and bhajans. Dayal also complimented Bank of India's New York office for sponsoring the event true to its commitment to serve Non Resident Indians.

Narendra Prasad, chief executive, US operations of Bank of India, who is demitting office soon after completing his term in New York, said the bank was proud to associate itself with the evening concert of noted musician Anup Jalota. His successor Bhuvan Joshi said the bank would continue to work with Indian-Americans and be a part of their cultural and social milieu.

Anup Jalota enthralls New Yorkers



Anup Jalota enthralls audience at the Indian Consulate musical evening

PRAKASH M SWAMY

New York

There is a saying that good things always come in quick succession. Last week, the ornate grand ballroom of the Consulate General of India in New York resonated to the golden voice of Bhajan Samrat and Ghazal King Padma Shri Anup Jalota twice within a week thanks to the co-sponsors of the events – Bank of India and Flamingo Films. The concerts were part of Jewels of India series organized by the Indian Consulate.

The singer entertained the invited guests with his signature numbers in ghazal and bhajans for over two hours. When he commenced his concert with his most popular "Aisi Lagi Lagan," there was a thunderous cheers and Jalota radiated joy and merriment with his usual banter in-between the songs and verses. He engaged the audience with his jokes and anecdotes and made them sing along to make it a memorable evening.

Accompanied by Imran Sagar on tabla, Bashir Ahmed on Banjo and Dhiren Raichura on guitar, Jalota was at his best during the concerts and took the audience down the memory lane with his " Jag Mein Hain Do Naam," "Maiyya Mori Main Nahin Makhan Khayo," " Chaand Angdaiyaan Le Raha Hai," " Main Nazar Se Pee Raha Hoon, " "

Laga Chunnari Main Daag" and " Rang De Chunariya."

Jalota announced that the concerts were to pay homage to two renowned ghazal singers who passed away recently – Jagjit Singh of India and Mehdi Hassan of Pakistan who ruled the subcontinent with their voice and said the two icons carried the flag of Indian music tradition all over the world.

Jalota also dedicated the first concert to Agewell Foundation, a New Delhi-based NGO engaged in providing a helping hand to senior citizens.

Consul General in New York Prabhu Dayal said the concert was also to celebrate the noted singer's recent honor of being awarded Padma Shri by the President of India for his service to Indian music. Jalota was awarded the Padma Shri in January this year and he has sung over 2,000 bhajans and ghazals in his 30-year career.

A household name in India, Jalota has performed over 5,000 live concerts in over 300 cities across the world in all the five continents and has released over 250 albums – both solo and with other artists.

