

Kalpana Patowary enthralls London bihu



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Nina Goswami 15 April 2016 Updated 15 Apr 11181 views

Bollywood and [Assamese](#) folk singer Kalpana Patowary drew a record crowd to this year's London Bihu. More than 260 people gathered at the Champion School in Hornchurch last Saturday (April 9) to see her perform [as](#) part of the British capital's bihu celebrations.

Professor Jayanta Barua, the London Bihu Committee's president, said: "After welcoming our guests with traditional bihu snacks we had a wonderful and eclectic mix of talented performances -traditional husori, bihu nas and bihugeet from local artistes - we were drawn in to the showstopper guest artist Kalpana Patowary."

Kalpana is known for numerous Bhojpuri songs and Bollywood numbers in films like Billu and R. Rajkumar and [Assamese](#) films including Ahetuk.

Dr Neera Borkakoti, Committee treasurer, estimated that at one time [over](#) 60 percent of the people were dancing either with the artist on the stage or in the hall.

She said: "Kalpana is an impressive artist with a striking voice and larger than life personality who effortlessly involved the audience in her performance during the entire show."

The guest artist said she was honoured to be invited to join London's bihu. Kalpana Patowary said: "Coming to Bihu, I got a warm welcome from everybody, the stage was mind blowing, the audience were energetic - mostly the feminine energy."

Zaved Choudhury, the London Bihu's Cultural Secretary said he and the Publicity Secretary Manas Borah invited Kalpana [as](#) they wanted to showcase how 'vibrant and versatile' artists from Assam are.

Choudhury added: “We are building on 30 years of hard work by the senior members of the [UK’s Assamese community](#). They preserved and passed on the rich [Assamese](#) heritage to the next generations and it has given us the basis we needed to bring exciting talent such [as](#) Kalpana to the London Stage.”

The Committee believe another factor that has led to this year’s record attendance is an increased interest in [Assamese](#) culture from non-[Assamese](#) people.

Briton Nick Humphries and his family, who have previously visited Assam, travelled more than 230 miles from Liverpool to attend their first bihu.

“The London Bihu certainly didn't disappoint,” Humphries explained. “We were made to feel welcome the moment we crossed the threshold; the array of colours from beautifully dressed men and women and the smells of the Indian treats and sweets on offer.

“The music was loud and the singing and dancing was louder and great to be a part of.”

Many bihu revellers commented that one highlight was this year’s husori. Committee member Jayanta Borkakoti was among them: “The participation was great [as](#) it was a mix of generations and backgrounds all coming together in a spectacle which for me was a microcosm of the whole event.”

4-year-old Ruhi Goswami, the youngest husori participant, loved being involved: “When on the big stage I was very very happy and did not get scared while dancing in front of lots of people. I loved it and want to do Bihu Husori again next year.”

Committee president Professor Jayanta Barua summed up how many felt about this year’s event: “For the ex-pat [community](#) and their friends and families, I really believe we created a little piece of Assam in London. The bar has been set high, will be difficult to beat.”



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