

Nostalgia tinged with concern as Lata meets Bhupen Hazarika

Bhupen Hazarika, the 82-year-old veteran Assamese composer whose health has been rapidly declining, had an unexpected surprise on his birthday. He received a message from Lata Mangeshkar saying she wanted to meet him.

'Dada (Bhupen Hazarika) and Lata didi go back a long way. She has sung for him in Assamese, Bengali and Hindi. And Dada simply adores her. When he got the message from Didi it was like a signal from heaven. They met after decades,' Kalpana Lazmi, Hazarika's protegee, told IANS.

Hazarika turned 82 on Sep 8. The two stalwarts met at Lata's home at Prabhu Kunj.

'The meeting was so emotional, so genuine, I broke down. Didi was so concerned about Dada's failing health. She offered all help to him at her hospital in Pune. She also said, 'Dada, the film industry is falling apart. People like you and I are becoming legacies of the past!'

'Dada has always had a very soft corner for Didi and he'll carry this meeting with him forever,' Lazmi said. 'On the way back from the meeting he told me, 'I'm so blessed to have shared a unique friendship with Lata!'

Recently, plans to celebrate Lata's 80th birthday were called off when singer Mahendra Kapoor died a day before.

'Every year Lataji is reminded of the passing forth of the golden era. It's not an easy thing for her to see all those colleagues and co-singers whom she worked with pass her by. This is why she decided to meet Bhupen Hazarika,' said a friend close to her.

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