

Aga Khan Music Initiative artists thrill guests in Mombasa

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Afghanistan musicians of Rubab Duet Homayoun Sakhi and Salar Nader performs at the Aga Khan music initiative at Mombasa's Aga Khan Academy on March 6, 2018. PHOTO | LABAN WALLOGA | NATION MEDIA GROUP



By **WINNIE ATIENO**

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By **EUNICE MURATHE**

[More by this Author](#)

Friends and dignitaries of the Aga Khan Development Network on Tuesday night enjoyed a sterling musical performance from visiting international artists.

The artists were drawn from the Aga Khan Music Initiative.

The Mombasa Academy hall dazzled with mystical music of Central Asian Pamiri people during the concert.

MUSIC

The musical evening was a blend of devotional songs, mystical music of the mountain dwelling Pamiri people and the traditional Kabuli style of Indian raga performance.

The performances captivated distinguished guests among them prominent businessmen in Mombasa.

The special performances featured the Badakhshan Ensemble and the Afghan Rubab Duet whose aim is to preserve Central Asia's musical heritage.

Led by their Director Soheba Davlatshaeva, the renowned artists of the Badakhshan Ensemble included Mukhtor Muborakqadomov, Aqnazar Alovatov and Khushbakt Niyozov.

With a soulful voice, harmonised by the sound of rubab, Soheba Davlatshaeva passionately cut into the audience's soul conveying an inner meaning of music.

The charismatic performer displayed his mastery of the rubab gained from being born in Kabul into one of the Afghanistan's leading musical families.

He is the heir to the musical lineage that began in the 1860s, when the ruler of Kabul brought classically trained musicians from India to perform at his court.

During the performances the message on presentation of musical practices to nourish the preservation of traditional culture was passed.

Speaking at the concert, Aga Khan Diplomatic Representative in Kenya, Azim Lakhani said internet connectivity provides opportunities to learn about enormous diversity of people, their cultures and expressions.

DIVERSITY

Kenyans were urged to embrace art and culture to foster diversity.

However, Dr Lakhani said the diversity is also creating tension where individual groups and communities feel that theirs is the best way.

"They wish to dominate. Over the last few decades His Highness the Aga Khan has been promoting the notion of pluralism. This means that groups and communities connect with one another in order to learn about each other, accept and respect differences and live in harmony," he added.

In 2006, the Canadian government and the Aga Khan Development Network launched the Global Centre for Pluralism in Ottawa.

Dr Lakhani said the centre is used for dialogue, exchange of ideas and learning from each other about the challenges of diversity and acting as a true champion of pluralism.

He said pluralism does not seek to eliminate differences or erase distinctions rather it seeks to embrace them.

“Pluralism does not mean everyone will always be in agreement however this should be the basis for dialogue. Leading to peace and progress. Diversity does not weaken society it strengthens it,” Dr Lakhani said

He said the advent of global connectivity through the internet, media and travel has shrunk the world.

“This is having two contrasting effects. On one hand there is a tendency to converge towards one common culture on the other hand, the connectivity provides opportunities to learn about people’s culture through food, dress, art, dance and music,” Dr Lakhani said.

The Aga Khan Music Initiative is on a tour to Kenya to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of His Highness the Aga Khan.

The music initiative supports musician it has identified as tradition-bearers who are revitalising important musical repertoires.

They ensure transmission of the Asia’s endangered musical heritage to a new generation of artists and audiences.

The music concert in Mombasa was held in conjunction with the National Museums of Kenya.