

# **'Ekshonge'**

in Bangla means 'together'

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**We are pleased to invite you to join together for a unique cultural evening with authentic Bangladeshi food to mark the launching of an ambitious project to provide support for some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children in Bangladesh.**

**22<sup>nd</sup> July 2006, 7pm**

**The Skyway Brasserie, 1 Violet Str, Katoomba, located at the Scenic Railway**

Tickets are priced at \$50 (concession \$30) which includes a 3-course buffet meal, cultural performance and various highlights. Guests will also have the chance to participate in a raffle draw with great prizes along with an auction of exclusive items.

**All proceeds will be used for the establishment of a dedicated service for children in 'Safe custody' in Bangladesh.**

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'**Safe custody**' is a system in Bangladesh, where children and women are detained in jail, without trial for their own 'protection'. There is an estimated 1200 children in jails across Bangladesh today. In an environment of hardened criminals, these children not only lack the basic needs and human rights of children but are subject to physical, verbal, emotional and sexual abuse.

**A dedicated service is being established in collaboration with Shishu Polli Plus to ensure that these children's rights to health, education, security and other norms will be addressed.**

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## **Who is involved in this project?**

**Adrian Sym:** Adrian Sym has extensive experience working in the NGO sector in Bangladesh. Prior to developing this project he spent 4 years working in management and fundraising in one of the largest disability NGOs in Bangladesh. His interest in safe custody started when he read about a disabled girl who was gang raped and sent to jail because she was unable to tell the police the location of her family. Adrian and the organisation he was working for managed to have three disabled children released from jail to the care of the organisation, two of whom have subsequently been successfully rehabilitated in suitable safe environments in the community.

**Natasha Yolland:** Natasha Yolland first went to Bangladesh with an Ausaid program called the Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development. After completing this 12 months assignment, Natasha moved to Nepal where she set up an occupational therapy department in a local disability NGO. Natasha has experience of numerous South Asian charitable organisations.

**Shishu Polli Plus:** Shishu Polli Plus is a well respected organisation in Sreepur, Bangladesh. It was originally started as an orphanage, but has now also a strong commitment to destitute mothers. There are currently around 580 children and 100 mothers living in this village. This is a safe village for women and children to receive basic health, education and vocational training that will enable them to be successfully reintegrated into the community.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND TO MAKE A RESERVATION:**

**Shirley and Terrance Plowright**

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