

## REPORT

ON

### **A FILM SCREENING AND DISCUSSION ON *THE NAMESAKE***

Department of English, Golaghat Commerce College in association with GCC Film Society organized a Film Screening and Discussion on October 08, 2021. The event was organized for the students of B.A. English (Honours) programme with an objective of familiarizing them with literature of the Indian diaspora. The event started with a brief introduction by Ms. Swadhinata Gogoi, Assistant Professor, Department of English. This was followed by the screening of Mira Nair's "The Namesake" based on the bestselling 2003 novel of the same name by Jhumpa Lahiri.

The film tells the story of a young couple Ashoke (Irrfan Khan) and Ashima (Tabu) who have an arranged marriage in Calcutta and move to New York where they discover each other and their new country, and have two children. The story then shifts to the second generation — their son Gogol and daughter Sonia — who go through their own long journey of self-discovery, negotiating the complex dynamics of home and homeland, immigration and integration. The film ends with most of the characters coming to terms with the dualities, between past and present, tradition and modernity, history and contemporaneity.

In the discussion that followed, Dr. Jiban Jyoti Kakati, Head of the Department of English said that what is especially remarkable about Nair's film is the way it locates the struggle for assimilation by highlighting the conflicted, hybrid cultural identities of its characters, heightened by the decisive clash between first and second generations of the Indian diaspora and their ambivalent relationships with home. He also said that films can be learning tools for students and such screenings especially benefit the visual learners. Ms. Himadri Gogoi, Assistant Professor, Department of English said that the film beautifully shows the characters being caught in the conflict of keeping family tradition and their fascination for individual freedom and consciousness. She also asked the students to notice the difference in the experience of reading the novel watching the film. She said that the readers of the novel *The Namesake*, will very likely sympathize with the character of Ashima to a great extent whereas, the viewers of the film will empathize with Gogol as he is the hero and films are usually hero-centric.

20 (twenty) students attended the film screening and shared their opinions in the discussion session. Ms. Sneha Bakshi of B.A. 5<sup>th</sup> semester said that the different attitudes

of the first generation and the second-generation diasporic people are beautifully shown in the film. After Gogol gets Maxine as his girlfriend, he starts avoiding his parental home. He does not even pick up his mother's call. When his father is about to leave his Pemberton home for Cleveland, Ashima calls Gogol who says he can't come as he wants to visit his girlfriend's parents' lake-view house in New Hampshire.

