



A small corrugated-metal-roof multi-purpose structure that functions as grain storage (bhoral) on top floor; a manual grain mill (dheki) in the back and a pen for the cattle (gohali) in the front on the lower floor. Photo taken by Bharat Baruah of Fort Collins in the village of Jogduar near Teok, Jorhat, Assam, May 2007.

Table of contents:

Good Bye, Krishna! We adore your courage!!...	3
Prom night - CASH style!	4
Bishal Dutta	5
A Vision in Progress:	
Sattriya Dance Series UK 2007	6
Remembering the Genius of Bhabendranath Saikia .	8
A brief appraisal of Srimanta Sankardeva the great Vaishnavite Saint of Asom.	10
Amulya Baruah.....	12
NEDFi's Micro Finance Initiatives	13
Letters to the Editor	14



Nitin Sarangapani

September 25, 1981 - September 25, 2006



*Remembering Courage, Strength,
Patriotism and Eternal Youth*

Nitin Bezbaruah Sarangapani Memorial (NBSM) Fund
www.nitinfund.org

Good Bye, Krishna! We adore your courage!!

Krishna Saharia Das, wife of Dr, Pradip Das, of St. Louis, passed away on August 17, 2007 after a three year battle with leukemia.

Krishna was born to the late Hiranya Kumar Saharia and Mrs. Aparajita Saharia of Guwahati, Assam, India, on October 16, 1963. She grew up in Shillong, the then capital of greater Assam and attended Pine Mount School, Lady Keane College and Northeastern Hills University (NEHU), from where she received her MA degree in English Literature.

Krishna and Pradip Das were married on January 28, 1988. She came to join Pradip at Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1990. Their daughters Joy Shri and son Porag Jeet were born in 1991 and 1994, respectively, at Holyoake, Mass.



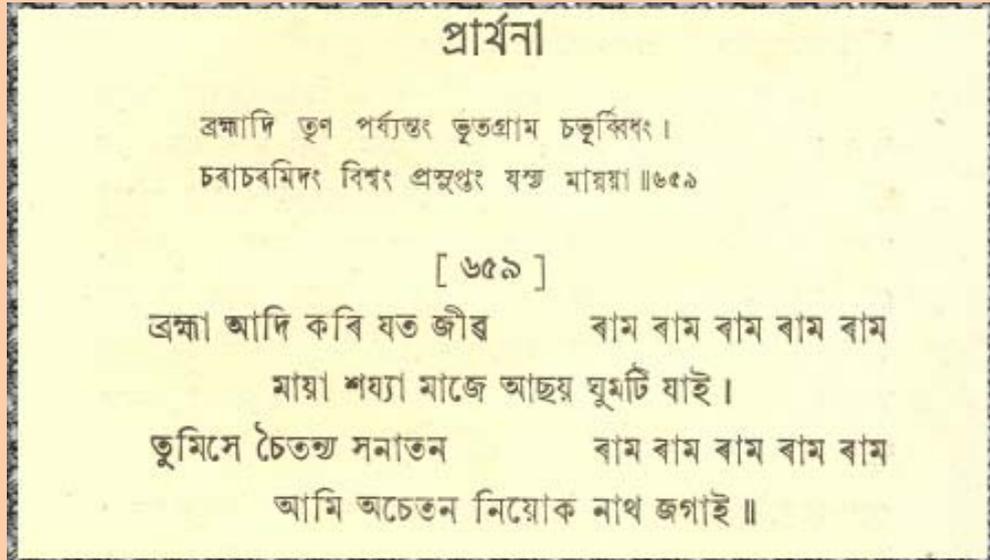
She took her oath of U.S. Citizenship at the historic Franeuil Hall in Boston in 1994, of which she was always very proud.

The Das family moved to St. Louis in 1996, where Pradip is pursuing his career as the Director of Crop Analytics at the Monsanto Company. Krishna was deeply

involved with their children's education and extra-curricular activities. She also volunteered as a teacher's assistant and library aide at the Old Bonhomme Elementary School in the Ladue School District. In spite of the demands on her time, Krishna loved to do quilting and stay in touch with literature.

Leukemia struck Krishna in 2004, but it could never dampen her spirit or rob her of her ever present smile and upbeat demeanor. She fought her battle valiantly, and left us at 2:15 AM on August 17, 2007 with a legacy of courage and determination for the rest of us who were close to her and her family to look up to. In addition to Pradip, Joy Shri and Parag Jeet, she leaves behind her mother Aparajita Saharia of St. Louis and a brother and sister-in-law Drs. Chandan and Kavita Saharia of Guwahati.

By Chandan Mahanta, St. Louis



Every living being starting from Brahma, including me, is deep asleep engrossed in worldly illusion and ignorance. Oh Supreme Spirit! You are eternally awake! I pray to Thee to raise me from unconsciousness and summon me to your Godly presence.

--Naamghoxa, Madhavdeva, 16th Century

Bishal Dutta

Bishal lives in Pennsylvania and is in grade five. He was recently selected as student delegate to Washington DC by people to People World Leadership organization based on his academic excellence and future world leadership potential. Bishal performed a Bollywood dance in the recently concluded Assam 2007 in Maryland.



Celebrating Five Decades of International Exchange

To: The News Media
Re: Allentown Student Accepted into People to People Academic Program

Bishal Dutta, a student at Lehigh Parkway Elem. School, has been accepted into the People to People World Leadership Forum. Dutta will join a select group of students in Washington, D.C., September 10-16, 2007 to earn high school credit while studying leadership and exploring some of the United States' most prominent monuments and institutions.

From Capitol Hill to the Smithsonian Institution, and from Colonial Williamsburg to the National Museum of American History, Dutta will examine the characteristics of American leadership during times of national challenge and prosperity. Forum delegates will also participate in small-group discussions and exercises to experience first-hand how successful leaders develop strategies, make decisions, build consensus, and foster change.

Dutta was nominated and accepted for the honor based on outstanding scholastic merit, civic involvement and leadership potential.

The program is coordinated by People to People Student Ambassador Programs to fulfill the vision Dwight D. Eisenhower had for fostering world citizenship when he founded People to People during his presidency in 1956. For additional information please visit www.wflleaders.org.

A Vision in Progress: Sattriya Dance Series UK 2007

In September 2007, there will be a rare opportunity for mainstream British performing arts scene to experience Sattriya dances of Assam, the 8th classical dance form of India, in both historical and contemporary contexts through an innovative tour of live performances, lectures and workshops in mainstream dance venues, universities and museums in the UK by two generations of Indian dancers and choreographers – Indira P.P. Bora and Menaka P.P. Bora.

This series will highlight the contemporary relevance of Sattriya dance evolved by Sri Sankardev in the 15th century A.D. in Assam. The vision of bridging the age-old spiritual philosophy and aesthetics of Srimanta Sankardev's living legacy and the contemporary cultural identity of Indian arts and culture is celebrated and embraced in this exclusive 'Sattriya Dance Series'. Sri Sankardev's message of universal peace, equality and tolerance is a powerful message in today's world of emerging global violence and religious segregation.

In order to develop a vision of creating new directions and possibilities of Sattriya dance culture within and outside Assam, the series will introduce the history of Sattriya dance culture and engage with a real question. How can we connect our ancient traditions to new modernities without losing the essence of the original forms?

For the first time in the history of Sattriya dance music, the traditional *Nagara* drums were introduced by Menaka in consultation with dance gurus as a major musical accompaniment into classical Sattriya dance repertoire in 2003. So far only Khol was used as the prime rhythmic instrument in Sattriya dance music. The traditional *Chalinritta* (a pure dance item) was performed to the beats of *Nagara* drums. This was an original project developed and performed in close collaboration with established *Nagara* player and guru Aswini Kumar Bayan of Guwahati. The purpose was to develop a new direction in Sattriya dance music repertoire within the classical framework of Sattriya dance and also, to implement

less er known but suitable Assamese musical instruments into Sattriya dance music. This work will be included in the series.

For the first time in classical Sattriya dance presentation, solo Sattriya dance was introduced simultaneously with dancing drummers (Khol player and Bhortal player) set to traditional Sattriya talas and hand gestures from the famous 17th century text, *Srihastamuktâvali* by poet Shubhankar. Originally conceived, choreographed, arranged and performed by Menaka with Sattriya musicians Sada Hazarika, Dhruva Baruah and Pankaj Baruah, this work was premiered at Khajuraho Festival of Dances in 2004 with critical success. The idea of this innovative union and choreography between dance and Khol playing on stage is now deployed and extended by other Sattriya dance artistes in their performances. Sattriya dance is presented in a collaborative platform, which will remain true to its traditions and at the same time will respond to contemporary concerns and universal appeal.

These projects will be performed and analyzed among diverse groups of knowledgeable and mass audiences throughout the tour in the UK.

About the dancers and choreographers:

Indira P.P. Bora, an award winning Indian classical dance exponent, is currently celebrating the golden jubilee of her dance career. She began learning Sattriya dance at a tender age from gurus



in Assam and has further trained in Bharata Natyam under direct supervision of legendary dancer and educationalist Rukmini Devi Arundale of Kalakshetra in Chennai. She has played major roles in the classical dance dramas choreographed by Rukmini Devi and has extensively toured with Kalakshetra's company in Europe in the 1960s and 1970s. Along with gurus, she has introduced Sattriya dance in major dance festivals and cultural centres of India and abroad. Her solo dance works are archived in Lincoln Center for Performing Arts in New York. During last fifty years of her active dance career she has become a role model for younger generation of women in north-east India by raising the profile of performing arts as a respectable and sustainable profession, pioneering the development of female dancing tradition in Sattriya dance, creating employment avenues for young women artistes in the region and developing arts education for young children. She was awarded Sangeet Natak Academy Award by Govt. of India for Sattriya dance. As a founder of Kalabhumi arts centre in 1982 in Guwahati, Indira continues to develop both spiritual and socio-cultural role of 'dance' in present day society. Kalabhumi Dance Company regularly performs with a band of young dancers in India and overseas. Kalabhumi is currently celebrating its silver jubilee year through performances in dance festivals and concerts across many parts of India.

Throughout her golden jubilee celebrations, Indira has successfully toured South Korea in April 07 and has received the prestigious Bisnu Rava Award from Chief Minister of Assam in June 07 for her contribution to Sattriya dance development in the region.

Menaka P.P. Bora, a young and versatile Indian classical dance soloist and choreographer, is deeply committed to the research and performance of Sattriya dance as a contemporary classical form. Besides working at the grass roots with traditional monks and musicians in Assam, Menaka is currently contributing to the emerging field of South Asian media and performance in the UK as a scholar and artiste. She has widely performed in the international dance circuits in France, Australia and the USA. She is just finishing her PhD in Media and Communications at Goldsmiths College, University of London.

by Jugal Kalita, Colorado Springs



SATTRIYA DANCE UK TOUR 2007

- 26 July 07 7.30 PM : **THE LOWRY, SALFORD QUAYS**
(Festival of Indian Dance)
Box Office 0151 707 1111 (Milapfest)
- 16 Sept. 07 4.30 PM : **ALEXANDRA THEATRE, BIRMINGHAM**
(Artsfest)
Box Office 0121 464 5676
- 22 Sept. 07 8 PM : **mac THEATRE, BIRMINGHAM**
(in association with Sampad)
Box Office 0121 440 3838
- 23 Sept. 07 6 PM : **ARTS IN EDUCATION THEATRE, LEICESTER**
(in association with Centre for
Indian Classical Dance)
Box Office : 0116 255 2862 (CICD)
- 5 Oct. 07 7.30 PM : **BHAVAN THEATRE, LONDON**
(in association with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan)
Box Office 0207 381 3086/4608
- 17 Oct. 07 7.30 PM : **MICHAELIS DANCE THEATRE, LONDON**
Roehampton University
(Lea-Dem at Dance Dairy)
Box Office 0208 392 3380
- 20 Oct. 07 1 PM : **WORLD MUSEUM LIVERPOOL**
Liverpool
Box Office 0151 478 4349

About Indira P.P. Bora

..... A disciple of Rukmini Devi Arundale and an exponent of three Indian classical dance forms : Sattriya, Bharata Natyam and Kuchipudi..... one of the first women pioneers to develop Sattriya from a ritualistic dance form to a classical dance form in India..... promoted Sattriya dance as a classical dance across many parts of the globe since 1960s.

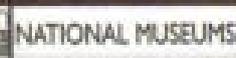
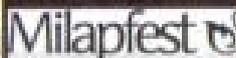
..... Recipient of many prestigious awards and citations including National Fellowship in dance and Sangeet Natak Academy Award, Govt. of India..... Founded "KALABHUMI" (a pioneer cultural centre in Guwahati, India in 1982) for developing arts education and traditional arts in the region.

About Menaka P.P. Bora

..... A dynamic and critically acclaimed Indian classical dance soloist-choreographer..... Trained in Bharatnatyam and Sattriya dance technique from the age two years by her mother - guru Indira P.P. Bora... Described as a "sculpture come alive" (The Statesman, New Delhi) Menaka brings a youthful vision into the heritage of Sattriya dance..... She is equally respectful and critical of her dual role of being "a young cultural ambassador of Sattriya" (The Assam Tribune) and a creative performer at the same time.....

..... Presently in the UK, her dance works have been featured in mainstream Indian, British and American venues.

Photo : Avinash Pasricha



Remembering the Genius of Bhabendranath Saikia

During the past four decades, the stories, writings and films of the legendary **Dr. Bhabendranath Saikia** of Assam left an indelible mark not only on the Assamese society but also on mankind in general. Authenticity was his signature; it was the hallmark of this genius who is credited with putting Assamese film truly on the Indian national scene.

Dr. Bhabendranath Saikia, the man with a stellar indigenous career that dominated creative spheres of Assam for a long time bid adieu to the mortal world **three years ago on 13.08.2003**. He was born on 20th February, 1932 in a non-descript locality in Nagaon town. He



Dr. Bhabendranath Saikia receiving National awards from Presidents of India, Sanjeeba Reedy

in his autobiography "**Jiwan Britta**" (The Circle of Life). His father was in the habit of fleeing home on various occasions, the reason for which he discovered later. It was nothing but sheer poverty. What a long, sometimes heart breaking always-arduous road he

trudged to reach the pinnacle that he ultimately scaled! All these personal feelings and intimate happenings have been expressed with robust optimism in his short stories. **Prahari, Brindaban, Shringkal, and Taranga** are a few to name.

He is also considered the main pillar behind the success of the great Assamese mobile theatre which

obtained his PhD in Nuclear Physics from London University. He picked up his interest in filmmaking over a long time, from the time he was a student studying Physics in Cotton College to becoming a reader at Gauhati University. He would have had a glorious life abroad but the artist and the writer in him brought the maestro back to Assam to render services for the upliftment of Assamese culture.

can only be compared to the famed **jatras of Bengal**. Today the mobile theatre of Assam is a huge industry with a turnover exceeding about Rs 20 crores.

Bhabendranath Saikia created seven Assamese films starting from 1977. All of his films won the **Rajat Kamal Award** as the **best regional film**. **Sandhya Rag, Anirban, Agnisnan, Kolahal, Sarothi, Abarton and Itihas**. Saikia also won the national award for **best screenplay for Agnisnan**. Besides he also made a film in Hindi Kaal Sandhya, dwelling on the complicated issue of militancy but refusing to take

He followed the normal cause of a commoner as a child. He was perhaps baffled by the mysteries and illusions unfolded by the nature and behavior of his penniless father, whom he described



with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru at the Gauhati University

Loni Mahanta is a Lawyer!

Loni Mahanta, daughter of Dr. Banti and Chandan Mahanta of St. Louis, graduated magna-cum-laude from the Hastings College of the Law of the University of California at San Francisco in May 2007. She has just taken her California bar examination and is expected to start work in San Francisco from November. Loni was a competitive gymnast in high school and won a number of state and interstate awards. She graduated from high school from the Thomas Jefferson

School of St. Louis and was a Scholar Athlete of the year, sponsored by the St. Louis Post Dispatch. She went on to Stanford University to do her undergraduate studies, before entering law school. Loni also spent a summer in Guwahati after high school, volunteering for Snehalaya, a home for destitute children ran by Bosco Reachout of Guwahati, affiliated with the Don Bosco Society.

by Jugal Kalita, Colorado Springs





Busy in editing his magazine Prantik



with Ashish Bidyarthi for the film Kalsandhya

sides.

Many of his films have been screened at International Film Festivals, e.g., **New Delhi, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Karlovy Vary (Czechoslovakia), Nantes (France), Valladolid (Spain), Algeria, Pyongyang (North Korea), Sydney, Munich, Montreal and Toronto.** He has also directed one episode of **Rabindranath Tagore's stories** for Doordarshan in Hindi.

Recognized as one of the top-ranking writers of Assam, many of his stories have been translated into **English, Bengali, Hindi, Telegu, Malayalam, Marathi and Gujarat.** Such wide appeal testifies to the universality and simplicity expressed in his stories.

Agnisnan is the most touching and award-winning film of Dr. Saikia in 1985. In this film he depicted the true life of commoners—their hopes and despairs,

dreams and nightmares, and values and morals. He showed how they struggle for a survival both physically and intellectually, with their individual as well as social obligations. The boldness with which Dr. Saikia established the independence of a woman's self in "Agnisnan" was not only a trendsetter but also was an example of cinematic expertise. Most of his films revolved around a woman's character; thus his films can be categorized as women-oriented, at least thematically. The maestro acknowledged that women have been a source of inspiration both in their bold and weak versions. His writings have expressed his feelings towards this "so called" weaker sex, so have done his films.

Dr. Bhabendranath Saikia had established the **Bhabendranath Saikia Children Welfare Trust in February, 2001.** On 20th February, 2002 construction for Aarohan, the first project of the Trust started.

Preeti Saikia, wife of Dr. Bhabendranath Saikia, was a true companion to her husband when he was alive. Now-a-days, with her disarmingly simple smile, down-to-earth and charming manner, one sees the bespectacled Preeti Baideu everyday at "Aarohan", the dream institution of her husband. It is a unique endeavor, the first of its kind in the North East—a centre dedicated to the all round development of children using novel concepts and programs.

Unfortunately Bhabendranath Saikia passed away on **13th August, 2003.** With a dedication and determined mind, Preeti Baideu along with the family and well wishers had resolved to continue the construction process of Aarohan to

meet Dr. Saikia's goal of being functional by 20th February, 2004.

Aarohan started at Beltola in Guwahati at Dr. Saikia residence, the land he donated to the welfare of the children. With a message **"It is my wish by the time you are grown up, our land will become beautiful and prosperous. The problems that are present today will no longer be there. All of you have to do your duties well from this moment onwards in order to prepare yourself for the days to come"**.

This year on **Tuesday 14.08.07** the film: **Agnisnan** was shown at the **Nehru Centre (the Cultural Wing of Indian High Commission) in London to commemorate the 4th death anniversary of Dr. Bhabendranath Saikia.**

Today I feel very happy that my wishes were completed. When I met Bhabendranath Saikia (Sir) along with Preeti Baideu (**Nanu mami**) **Nanu Dutta in 1986 in London 21 years ago** on their return after attending **Nantes (France) film festival**, we talked about a lot of things, his days at **Imperial College, London** and his wish to have a seminar. **Deep down I promised myself "may be one day"**

One can call him a **professor, journalist, storyteller, editor, filmmaker or administrator.** For the rest of us he is just **"Sir"**. So, when he is gone, the icon-less Assamese society has taken a lengthy pause. One of its last remaining icons has left a void difficult to fulfill.

by Rini Kakati, London, UK



wife Preeti Saikia

A brief appraisal of Srimanta Sankardeva the great Vaishnavite Saint of Assam

Krishna”, has given the full blessings of wider Indian culture to the people of Assam. It is no exaggeration to say that Srimanta Sankardeva’s noble numbers (“Borgeet”), dramas, literature and poetic diction have created the Assamese national life.

The great Vaishnavite saint and reformer Srimanta Sankardeva was born in Alipukhuri of Bratadova, Nagaon, in 1449. He was destined to play a significant role in preaching to humanity, and protecting human religion, the downtrodden, the oppressed and the untouchables.

Lord Krishna said to Arjuna in the Gita “when irreligion prevails, I manifest myself in bodily form age after age for the purpose of protecting the saints and destroying the inauspicious forces to foster religion. Lord Krishna is also the symbol of art. Srimanta Sankardeva’s incarnation is a great one. He was also a symbol of art. There is no “Guru” in the world who is at once a poet, dramatist, painter and sculptor. The incarnation of Srimanta Sankardeva is a historical wonder. He contributed immensely to the integrity of human culture.

“Ek Sarania Nam Dharma” preached by Srimanta Sankardeva is based on scientific analysis. The worship of Lord Krishna through “Nam Prasanga” leads to the quest for truth and balance between the soul and the body. Hardly has there been a religious “Guru” who effectively enjoined a pure honest work-culture, social discipline, humanized love and thus cherished religious values accepted by all. The lessons of humanism can be drawn in his literature, drama, music, dance, “Totoy”, “Chopoy”, “Bhaona” and art and culture.

The philosophy of his religion is enriched with the essence of Vedanta, Bhaktism, monotheism, spiritualism and humanism. The main tenets of his religious faith are truthfulness, religious liberty and a benevolent attitude towards one and all. His religion is wholly characterized by secularism. The doctrines of all the chief religions are assimilated into the Vaishnavite faith. There is no casteism in his religion. His



Beloguri Xatra

disciples were from different ethnic tribes of North-East Assam.

Srimanta Sankardeva was a great scholar and literary genius. His eminent literary creation is the “Kirton-Ghosa”, an early Assamese poetical work. In “Gunamala” he had cryptically described the manifold qualities of Lord Krishna in a day to impress the Koch King Naranarayana. It is almost like putting an elephant into an earthen pot, which is indeed the essence of the “Bhagavat”. “Srimod Bhagavat”, the incomparable creation of Vyasdev, the great scholar of Indian classical religious literature was translated into the Assamese language by Srimanta Sankardeva.

Srimanta Sankardeva and his great disciple Madhabdeva explicated monotheism through simple narrative description of the scriptures. The open air theater “Namghar” of Srimanta Sankardeva is the pilgrimage of universal human religion as well as its ethos and manners.

Srimanta Sankardeva’s cult based on the glorification of “Rama”, one of the greatest manifestations of “Lord

The Xatras set up by Srimanta Sankardeva have an important role to play in the religious and spiritual life of the people. They have also got special social functions. The “Xatras” and “Namghars” gradually turned into religious and social institutions for congregation and prayer.

Here is a brief account of some of the “Xatras” established by Srimanta Sankardeva and his followers :

Sri Sri Modhupur Dham - Modhupur Xatra is located in Cooch Behar of West Bengal. The sacrosanct precinct of the famous “Xatra” where the saint Srimanta Sankardeva left for his heavenly abode brings serenity and calmness to the mind of one and all who visit this place.

Sri Sri Phatik Chandra Dev is the present “Xatradhikar” of “Modhupur Xatra”. He is well versed in all the scriptures of the Vaishnavite and Shakti cult of the Hindu religion. He has dedicated himself to the “Xatra” from his early teens and has completely immersed himself in the “Xatriya culture”. The learned “Xatradhikar” devoted himself to the study of the



Alipukhuri Sattrā

Hindu scriptures in Brindavan for twelve long years.

Srimanta Sankardeva left behind some relics of his simple saintly life at “Modhupur Xatra”. “Gunamala” and “Twelve Scondha Bhagavat” and some original manuscripts written in his own hand are found in this “Xatra”. The “Xatradhikars” have taken great pain and precautions to preserve these manuscripts of the saint written on strips of the bark of the “Sanchi tree” (Aquillaria Agallocha) in his own hands in the humid and semi-tropical climate of Assam.

Sri Sri Dhuahat Beloguri Xatra, Naryanpur : “Sri Sri Dhuahat Beloguri Xatra” was the auspicious location where the two jewels of the Assamese Vaishnavite movement Srimanta Sankardeva and Sri Sri Madhabdeva first met. The former was already a great saint and the latter had the potential of greatness within him.

Sri Sri Bhadra Kanta Deva Goswami is the “Xatradhikar” of “Beloguri Xatra”. He has made significant contribution to spread the Vaishnavite faith. He is a versatile genius. A renowned exponent

of “Xatriya” dance, music, art and culture, he is a perfect “Xatriya” artist of the art and culture of Srimanta Sankardeva and Sri Sri Madhabdeva. He has also contributed to the Assamese religious literature.

A major part of Assam’s culture drama songs and literature have their roots in the Xatras of Assam. Some other Vaishnavite Xatras where Srimanta Sankardeva and his followers preached the tenets of Vaishnavism are : Kamalabari, Jarabari, Barpeta, Patbausi, Samaria, and Sundaribia .

References :

1. Sanakardeva and his times - Dr. Moheswar Neog
2. The Neo Vaishnavite Movement and the Xatra Institutions of Assam – Dr Satyendra Nath Sarma
3. Bhokti Paramartha Tatta Bani – Sri Sri Bhadra Kanta Deva Goswami, “Xatradhikar”, Sri Sri Dhuahat Beloguri Xatra, Narayanpur (North Lakhimpur)
4. Adhyatmik Aru Naitik Siksha – Bipin Chutia, Dhemaji, Assam

*By Durba Choudhury,
Chitralkha Lane
Guwahati, Assam*



Do you have the video of an Assamese event the you want to show to the Assamese people around the world? Do you have a personal video you want to share with others? Do you have any other video that you would like anyone else in the world to see? Upload it at the Assamese version of YouTube at www.Chitrapith.com



www.asianviews.net

The new web-journal *Asian View* is dedicated in the loving memory of eminent littrateur, editor and freedom fighter Padma-Bhusan Sri Chandra Prasad Saikia. It is owned and managing by Hridayananda Gogoi.

Posoowa provides opportunities for commercial or non-commercial advertisement that reaches the global Assamese community. We seek advertisements so that we can keep bringing Posoowa to you every month.

Please contact
jugalkalita@yahoo.com

Amulya Baruah

What do you write about a young woman who was only twenty two and had died of leukemia? This or words to this effect formed the opening one liner of Eric Segal's 'Love Story'. The same could have been said of another young man, who had seen only twenty four summers before his life was cut short by the infamous Calcutta Carnage of 1946. It was the crucial year when India stood on the threshold of freedom from British rule. The Muslim League, which had struggled shoulder to shoulder with others for India's Independence, had suddenly made a volte-face. It demanded a separate independent state for the Muslims of India. Predictably there was strong opposition to this demand even from a major section of Mohammedans. Sensing roadblocks to their demand, the leaders of Muslim League threatened to observe a direct Action Day to Larke Lenge Pakistan (We will achieve Pakistant by force)! On the appointed day, August 18, 1946, hordes of goons and thugs professing to be League members descended on the streets of Calcutta and massacred hundreds of innocents. Amulya Baruah, a graduate student of the Calcutta University was one such victim.

But unlike the young woman of Eric Segal's Love Story, there is plenty to write about Amulya. This twenty-four year young man is hailed in the literary circle as the pioneer of Modern Assamese Poetry. It is now unanimously admitted by the literary pundits that he had given a new direction, a wider dimension and a separate identity to modern Assamese Poetry. Amulya during his brief life span had written only a few dozen poems, but almost all his poems have been acclaimed as trendsetting milestones of Assamese literature. Amulya departed from the off beaten track of romantic escapism by his predecessors and decided instead to come down to stark realism. Most of his poems reflected the poet's inner turmoil and anguish at the ever-increasing chasm between the haves and the have-nots and angst for the weak, the oppressed and the deprived. Several of his path-breaking poems have been translated to En-

glish, French and German besides Bengali, Hindi and Oriya. But unlike many of his contemporaries, Amulya was not a pessimist. 'Amar Ase Manuhar Oparat Biswas, Amar Ase Bhabishyatar Xustha Ronga Xurjar Pine' Chaku" (We have faith in the fellow human being, our eyes are on the healthy, glowing sun of the future), he had declared in this poem Biplabi (The Revolutionary). Some of his most widely acclaimed poems are Beshya (The Sex Worker), Kukur (The Dog), Koyla (Charcoal), Biplabi, Andharar Hanhakar (The Wails of Darkness) and Xihat Tetia Jiba (Then They Will Come Alive!). Amulya is the only Assamese poet whose poems Kukur and Beshya have found place in the prestigious volume 'An Anthology of Modern Indian Poems', published by the Sahitya Academy when Jawaharlal Nehru was its president.

Poetry was Amulya's forte, but his literary talents were not confined to it alone. He was the first Assamese whose radio plays like Bohagir Biya (The Spring Wedding), Matir Moh (The Enticement of the Earth) were broadcast from Calcutta at a time when Assam did not have a radio station. Still a student, Amulya had edited and published Rupjyoti, a collection of poems of the doyen of Assam's romanticism, the poet Ganesh Gogoi. His preface to the book is still considered a masterpiece of constructive critical appraisal of late Gogoi's poetry. A prolific writer, Amulya had published critical appreciations of the works of many contemporary Indian and overseas litterateurs.

Amulya Baruah was born on June 30, 1922 to a middle class family of Jorhat, a town in the Upper Assam, known for its tea industry. His father Pramode Baruah was an officer of the Public Works Department. Oldest of six siblings, three brothers and three sisters- Amulya had his schooling in Jorhat. He passed the matriculation examination from Jorhat Government High School in 1941 with Competitive Merit Scholarship, did his I.Sc. from Cotton College- but for some domestic problems came back to Jorhat and graduated in the Arts stream from J.B. College Jorhat, in 1945. In the same year he admitted himself to the Calcutta University as a student of MA in English and the next year, he fell victim to communal fanatics' knives on August 18, 1946.

Poetry used to come to Amulya as naturally, as fragrance comes to flowers, effortlessly. While still a student of a junior class in school, Amulya along with a few poetically inclined classmates had edited a poetic journal "Kavita Malancha", a bouquet of poems. His first poem appeared in print in Awahan, the most prestigious Assamese literary journal of those days, in 1939. There was no looking back for Amulya. His revolutionary poems scaled Olympian heights within the short span from 1939 to 1946 to be acclaimed as the architect of avant-garde Assamese poetry. Amulya did not live long enough to see for himself the passionate ardor with which the new generation of poets and poetry lovers idolize him. If achievement is the true measuring stick of a man's life, Amulya achieved in 24 years what an octogenarian might not have been able to in several life times.

By Anil Baruah, Guwahati, Assam



Proyash (www.proyash.coz.in) is a new Assamese e-magazine by a group of Assamese literature lover from IIT Guwahati. Please visit the magazine and send us your creative writings to us.

NEDFi's Micro Finance Initiatives

Social Action for Appropriate Transformation and Advancement in Rural Areas, abbreviated as SATRA, is a non-governmental organization, established in the year 2002. It is located in Sipajhar under Darrang District. SATRA was started by a few social activists with hopes and aspirations to create self-employment for the rural people by developing and utilizing the resources available locally with scientific management. The Secretary of the Society, Nani Kumar Saikia is a dynamic man and has about 10 years of experience in micro-finance.

Initially the NGO received funds from Rashtriya Gramin Vikash Nidhi (RGVN). Then in the year 2005, North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (NEDFi) provided a loan of Rs. 2.50 lakh for on-lending to 15 beneficiaries for undertaking various income generating activities under its micro finance programs. Seeing their performance, again in the year 2007, a second loan was given. This time the loan was bigger - Rs. 10.00 lakh. The loan was for on-lending to 500 beneficiaries for initiating various farm and non-farm based activities for their livelihood. All the 500 beneficiaries are women and out of them about 24 % are SC and ST. Although the NGO intends to cover the entire North Eastern region, initially under these projects, they have covered two blocks under Darrang and Odalguri district which has about 40% BPL population.

Kunjalata Devi is a member of Pragati SATRA SHG. Before taking loan from SATRA, she and her husband worked as la-



borers in paddy fields. Sometimes they did not have any work. As a result, they and their little daughter had to go hungry sometimes. Although Kunjalata was a young, energetic and hardworking woman, she was not able to start any venture due to lack of capital. When she came to know of SATRA, she approached them for a loan of Rs. 2000/- as working capital for making gamosas (Assamese traditional towels) as she already had a traditional loom. Seeing her enthusiasm, in February 2006, SATRA provided her with the loan from the fund received from NEDFi. Within six months Kunjalata repaid the entire loan along with interest. During this time NEDFi and RGVN had jointly financed a sericulture project to SATRA under which a weaving training program was

existed. Kunjalata was one of the participants and after the completion of the training she again approached SATRA for a loan of Rs. 7000 for purchasing of a Jacquard machine. The total cost of the machine was Rs 12000. The balance amount of Rs. 5000 was to be met by the amount she had saved from sell-

ing gamosas and mekhela chadars (traditional Assamese dress) produced by her. In March 2007, SATRA provided her with the loan from the funds received from NEDFi for the second time. After installing the Jacquard machine, she is now able to produce a variety of improved handloom products. She is at present able to earn Rs. 1800/- to Rs. 2500 per month. Her husband's income is separate. Before getting the loans from SATRA, her family income per month was Rs. 1000 only. Today, Kunjalata is very happy and thankful to SATRA.

By Olee Bora, NEDFi. More information about NEDFi can be found at www.nedfi.com



Chorus by Boston Group for the Anima Chakraborty memorial chorus competition during Assam Convention 2007 recently held in Boston. The song was 'Tapta Tikhare Agni Sakti' by Bhupen Hazarika. The participants are: Pankaj Baruah, Ginima Barua, Kanak Sarma, Monalee Saharia, Debajit Deka, Venessi Rafique, Amir Rafique, Atindra Barua, Ema Gogoi, Ratul Barua, Mayuri Thakuria, Keyboard: Pranab Das, Manajit Barman, Debahuti Choudhury
Tabla: Pankaj Saharia, Electric Guitar: Prithwi Thakuria, Accoustic Guitar: Bhaskar Deka. Photo by Rupa Sarma, Boston

Letters to the Editor



Posoowa looks great! Posoowa is getting a professional look now.

Congratulations to the editors, especially to Babul for the great presentation in bringing out another fine issue of Posoowa with all the fine articles and community news.

Mahesh Baishya-da's paintings look great.

A job well done!

*Alpana Sarangapani
Spring/Houston, Texas*

Posoowa is looking good! Congrats folks.

*Chandan Mahanta
Florissant, Missouri*

Good job! Keep it up.

Thanks for taking time out from your busy schedules and doing noble work. Wish the positive energy of Posoowa to sweep the minds of all Assamese---i.e., people from Assam! Maybe, it will inspire many Assamese to be more creative so that we can change the image of our land Assam. Right now, sadly Assam is regarded by many as a

land of evil and lazy people. Let us hope that everyone who love Assam (Assamese speaking and non-Assamese speaking from Assam) shall do something to change the future of the land. This can be done in Assam and even by those outside Assam .

Regards,

*Bidyut Bora
Samsung Corporation*

Thanks to the editorial board for bringing out such a beautiful, highly professional online magazine in all respects. Each issue is getting better and better. Please keep it up.

With love,

*Mahesh Baishya
Dublin, California*

I would like to thank Nava Thakuria for writing a magnificent piece about Aditya SHG. Assam is moving ahead with the vision of such entrepreneurs. This what I would like to call "RESURGENT ASSAM". I live in a tea garden-

Majagram Tea Estate- in Cachar District. Here also the poor people have formed SHGs and are becoming financially stronger. People, who never knew what a bank was, are taking loan from banks and improving their quality of life. SHGs are also making an impact among tea garden workers. THANK YOU AGAIN for bringing a deserving group to light

Bikram Kairi

Congratulation to Monmi Goswami for her success in graduating from the Osgoode Hall Law School of York University, Toronto. Hope Monmi will do something in the process of stop violation of human rights in Assam. I request her to start any action oriented program in Assam with her expertise.

With best wishes,

Manash Patgiri

The July issue of Posowa was really very good. I printed it in color and the printed copy really looked very good. Please convey to Babul Gogoi that we do appreciate his dedication to this project and his beautiful work. I will sponsor another 3 months and also request others to sponsor whatever they can.

*Dhruba Das
Coatesville, Pennsylvania*



Prioyaska Barua, daughter of Bharat and Reema Barua of Fort Collins, Colorado, celebrated Annapraxon on the 5th of August, 2007, with family and the Assamese community of Colorado.



In preparation for the dance 'O O Kopou Pahi' a song by Sabita Choudhury rendered by Puja Sarma and Megha Baruah (watching them in the picture is li'l Anubhuti Deka) during Assam Convention 2007 recently held in Boston. The dance was choreographed by Rupa Sarma. Photo by Kanak Sarma.



*Enjoy the Freshness & Flavour of
100% Garden Fresh Assam Tea
.....in your home*



**KORANGANI
TEA**

The freshness and flavour of Assam

*Our range of teas also includes Specialty Teas –
Green, Organic, Darjeeling & Masala (in tea bags also)*

*To order directly from the Company please visit
www.koranganitea.com*



World Gold Standard

Visit www.Assam.org and its sister sites:
www.Guwahati.com, and www.Shillong.com.

Blog in Assamese at www.Bihu.in

Find your classmates from Assam in www.ClassAmigo.com

Find your Assamese social network at www.Melahi.com

Send your books for review at www.puthi.com



Posoowa is published monthly. Dhruva Das, on behalf of Assam Society of America, has published this issue of Posoowa. The editors are Babul Gogoi (New Delhi, India), Ganesh Bora (Lake Alfred, Florida), Jugal Kalita (Colorado Springs, Colorado, Editor-in-Chief), Kaushik Phukan (Seattle, Washington), Sanchayita Sharma (London, UK), Satyam Bhuyan (Ames, Iowa), Umesh Sharma (College Park, Washington D.C) and Umesh Tahbaldar (Princeton, New Jersey). **Design and Layout:** Babul Gogoi.

The ASA Executive Committee is composed of Dhruva Das, President (Coatesville, Pennsylvania), Kabita Sharma (Hillsborough, New Jersey), Vice President, Mukul Chowdhary (Edison, New Jersey), Treasurer, and Ganesh Bora (Lake Alfred, Florida), General Secretary.

We invite contributors from all over the world. We appreciate your valuable feedback, comments & suggestions, and of course, news from your part of the world for inclusion in the coming editions. Please send your written contributions to posoowa@assam.org. If you prefer, you can send your contributions directly to any of the editors listed above as well. Any contribution must be 750 words or shorter in length. Please include a scanned image of the author. We also request you to submit other pertinent photographs if possible.

পছোৱা

3235 Hollycrest Drive
Colorado Springs
CO 80920

Enjoy Your Complimentary Copy

