

Bengali Association of Greater Chicago

সমাজ সংবাদ

Community News

Volume 28, Issue 4 আশ্বিন, ১৪১০ October, 2003



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Calendar of events

Durga Puja Oct 3-5 Kali Puja Oct 25

Prayer

Akhandamandalakaram vyaptam yena characharam/ Tatpadam darshitam yena tasmai sri gurave namah//

He, Who permeates all entities static and dynamic

He, Who gives form to the entire universe

He, Who reveals the knowledge of the Absolute

The Perceptor, to Him, homage!

সম্পাদকীয়

পূজো এসে গেল। বাতাসে হিমের ছোঁয়া, বাঙালীর মনে আনন্দের দোলা লেগেছে। এবারে ঠিক ঠিক তিথিতেই দুর্গোৎসব ও কালীপূজা উদ্যাপন করতে পারব আমরা। প্রবাসে এটা একটা বিশেষ প্রাপ্তি।

আমাদের এখানে পূজার আয়োজন কিছু কম নয়। কার্যনির্বাহী সমিতি এবং তার বাই-রেও অনেকেই পূজার ব্যবস্থাপনা ও প্রস্তুতি নিয়ে ব্যস্ত কিছুদিন যাবং। বেশ কয়েক সপ্তাহ আগে থেকে শুরু হয়েছে সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠানের মহড়া। ছেলেমেয়েদের নিয়ে ত্রিশ-চল্লিশ মাইল গাড়ি চালিয়ে rehearsal-এ যাতায়াত করতে অভিভাবকদের শনি-রবি-বারের অনেকটাই ব্যয় হ'য়ে যাছে। এই সবের মাধ্যমে পূজার আমেজ আগাম উপভাগ করা যাছে। দেশ থেকে এত দূরে থেকেও আমরা যে এভাবে নিজেদের সংস্কৃতি

বজায় রাখতে পারছি এবং পরবর্তী প্রজন্মকে তার সঙ্গে পরিচিত করতে পারছি, এ আমা-দের বিশেষ সৌভাগ্য বলতে হবে।

দূর্গাপূজা উপলক্ষ্যে BAGC-র সদস্যদের লেখা গল্প-কবিতা-নিবন্ধ নিয়ে ''সমাজ সংবাদ''-এর বিশেষ ''সাহিত্য-সংখ্যা'' বেরুছে। এবারের newsletter-এ তাই প্রয়োজনীয় খবরের বাইরে বেশি কিছু থাকছে না। পরের সংখ্যা বেরুবে নভেম্বরের শেষ-দিকে। তাতে আবার ''সাহিত্য'' কিছু থাকবে। লেখা-আঁকা-ধাঁধা ইত্যাদি পাঠাতে পারেন।

''অলমতি বিস্তারেণ'' -- পূজোমন্ডপে দেখা হবে। শারদ শুভেচ্ছাসহ,

ধীমান চক্রবর্তী বাসন্তী বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়

Cover: "Boulder Creek at Fall" by Travis Smith.

Disclaimer

Articles in *Samaj Sangbad*, the BAGC Newsletter, are obtained from individual members. Verification of information contained in them is not a part of the editors' responsibilities. Any omission is unintentional. Opinions expressed by individual contributors are not necessarily representative of BAGC.







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President's Message

Let me start by wishing you all the best wishes for Saradiya. Now that Durga Pujo is upon us, the place and date dilemma is over (Streamwood High School on 3rd, 4th and 5th of October). All the committee's are busy preparing a gala and fun filled Durgot-sav weekend for you. Since pujo in India is over the same time frame I am looking forward to a large participation from the community.

I hope you all had a fun filled summer. We had a variety of different programs during summer and all were a resounding success. BAGC picnic was well attended and fun filled. We organized a limited over cricket tournament for the first time, along with the regular Mohun Bagan-East Bengal soccer match and other sporting events. The garamgaram jilipi fried right then and there was an instant hit.

PC Sorcar magic show (Indrajal) was a hit with the Bengalis vis-à-vis the Indian Community. It was a challenge for the committee to host a party of 26 for a week along with the logistics involved with a unloading and re-loading a thirty foot trailer (which carried all the equipment of the PC Sorcar troupe). The show was a resounding success and was covered in the local Indian newspaper. Not only did the program steal the hearts of the audience but helped to fill the coffers of BAGC.

Children's Day was well attended and our Youth Committee members organized the whole show with an



Shouvik Dutta

aplomb which made the rest of us proud.

As we plan for Pujo, I would like to take a moment and recognize Mr. Sudhir Jha who passed away over the summer. Sudhir da was a tireless worker who performed all the sacred duties of pujo selflessly over the years. His sudden and completely unexpected demise leaves a large space in our community. Please join me in remembering Sudhir da for his tireless service and commitment to the community.

As always please do send your comments, criticism and compliments to any one of the committee members. We need to hear from the members of the community in what we are doing well and what we can do a better job, so that we can serve you better.

Thank you and see you all at Durga Puja.

Durga Puja Offerings

In keeping with the tradition started during this year's Saraswati Puja, and to help you preplan your puja offerings to Ma Durga, the following option for Puja offering will be available at the registration desk on Saturday, Oct 4: Puja with sweets for \$11 (includes \$1 pranami). The preparations will be done in advance for you. If you choose this option, the offering will be made on your behalf, and the "prasad" will be returned to you after the Puja.

Call for nominations to fill two positions in the Special Funds Committee Shouvik Dutta, President

Dear Members,

Two positions of the Special Funds Committee are going to open soon: North/Chicago and West/Southwest, as the current members of those two zones, Mr. Samar Kundu and Dr. Manomohan Mazumdar are about to complete their two-year term.

On behalf of the executive committee, I would like to solicit volunteers/nominations for two positions of the Special Funds Committee

from these two geographical zones. Please send me the names and/or nominations for these two positions - the nominees will have to be resident of these two geographical zones.

During the GBM at Kalipuja (October 25th at Streamwood High School), the nominations would be presented and new members elected to the Special Funds Committee.

Regards and see you all at Durga Pujo.

Happening elsewhere

Event: Bharata Natyam Dance Performance

Where: Northshore Cultural Center,

Skokie, IL

When: Sat, Sep 20, 2003.

Contact: kalapriya, 630-969-7785

Event: *Odissi Dance Performance by Padmavibhushan Sonal Mansingh* Where: Triton College Performing

Arts Center

River Grove, IL

When: Sat, Oct 4, 2003, 8:00 PM Contact: Natya Dance Theatre, 312-

942-1404

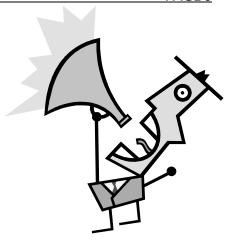
Event: NRI Home Coming - Rural India development

NRI-Home-coming is a program currently being designed to encourage senior NRI's to participate in rural village projects in India. This 1-day event in Chicago will bring NRI's who are already involved in rural projects in India and those hopingto engage for the first time. Where: The community house, 415 W 8th St, Hinsdale, IL,60521 When: Sat, Oct 18, 9 AM - 5 pm Contact: Mohan Jain 630-325-7571

An Appeal

In 1894, Swami Vivekananda conceived the idea of building a "Universal Temple" in America to disseminate the vedantic message of his guru, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. A century later, the Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago has undertaken the grand task of realizing Swami Vivekananda's vision. The land for the temple is already purchased and the temple is expected to be complete by the end of 2005. Please donate generously to this noble cause. Make checks payable to Vivekananda Vedanta Society with Temple Fund in the memo line.





Announcements

On Saturday July 12, 2003, the Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago (HTGC) in Lemont held the Dedication Ceremony of the Swami Vivekanda Shrine and Meditation Center. As part of the festivities the HTGC had organized an essay competiiton on Swami Vivekanda's life and teachings. We are pleased to announce that two of BAGC's Youth have won prizes in the competition. In the Elementary School bracket (Grades 1 thru 5), Arjun, age 10, son of Ram and Debolina Chakraborty won Second Place and a \$50 check, and Ahona, age 7, daughter of Atanu and Ajanta Mazumder won Third Place and a \$25 check, for their essays on the topic "Swami Vivekanand's Message to Todays Youth". We congratulate all of the participants who won, especially our BAGC's very own.

Sangeeta Bhattacharyya, wife of Tim Bhattacharyya, daughter in law of Dr.Benoyendu and Bani Bhattacharyya, has been back in USA after serving as Major in Army troop of USA during the recent war in Iraq. The family wishes to thank all the people who gave them mental support.

Nandita Chatterjee, daughter of Dipak Chatterjee, has graduated from DePaul University. This fall Nandita will be starting law school at the John Marshall College of Law.

Formation of the Banga Mela 2005 Organizing Committee The 2005 Banga Mela Nomination Committee

Dear Members,
The 2005 Banga Mela Nomination
Committee requested interested
BAGC members to send nominations for positions in the 2005
Banga Mela Organizing Committee. The Nomination Committee
has received nominations from thefollowing members, along with the positions that they are interested in:

Chairperson: Prithviraj Banerjee Vice-chairperson: Dipu Mukherjee

Secretary: Sandeep Chaudhuri

Treasurer: Neela Dasgupta

Cultural Committee:

Rina Das Shouvik Dutta

Registration Committee: Ranjan Dasgupta Subrota Mukherjee

Hotel Arrangements Committee: Anshuman Chatterjee Samir Dutta

Audio-visual/Lighting Commitee: Sumit Roy Atanu Mazumder

Publicity Committee: Dhiman Chakraborty Anindyita Mukherjee

Food Committee: Prasant Banerjee Amitava Das

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Committee:

Sridhar Adya Achinta Ray

Youth Events Committee: Ananya Roy

Seminar and Meetings Committee: Dibyen Mazumder Alak Bhattacharyya

Publications Committee: Shubham Sanyal Jasendu Chakraborty

Transportation & Tours Committee: Shome Sinha Subrata Raychaudhuri

Stage Management Committee: Malabika Palit Kanishka Chaudhuri

Exhibits, Stalls and Decorations Committee:

Soma Mukherjee

Since there have been only the required number of nominations (or less) per individual position/ committee, elections will not be necessary. We are recommending that the Banga Mela Exploratory Committee be dissolved, and that-the 2005 Banga Mela Organizing Committee, comprising the above members, be instituted.

The 2005 Banga Mela Organizing Committee will call upon vounteers on an as-needed basis. We request the entire Bengali community to actively support the Banga Mela Organizing Committee's efforts.

athaka



Indian Dance Quiz Neela Dasgupta

- 1. Who is called Nataraj?
- 2. What are the major schools of classical Indian dance?
- 3. How many tribal dance forms are found in northeast India?
- 4.. What are the well-known folk dances of Gujrat and Punjab?
- 5. How did the dance form of Kathak get its name?
- 6. Where did the dance form of Kuchipudi orignate?
- 7. In which classical Indian dance form do performers wear elaborate masks and headdresses?
- 8. Which Hindu God is depicted in most performances of Mohiniattam?
- 9. What are the three aspects of dance?
- 10. What are the nine rasas or emotions depicted in classical dance?

 (Answers on p 7)











RABINDRANATH **TAGORE (1861-1941):** SOME CHRONOLOGICAL **EVENTS OF HIS LIFE**

Compiled by Ananta Ghosh

- 1861 7th May (Baisakh 25, 1268)-Rabindranath born in his ancestral home at Jorasanko. Calcutta. .
- 1873 Young Rabindranath tours western Himalayas with his father Debendranath Tagore. Death of mother Sarada Devi.
- 1877 At sixteen, starts to publish regularly in 'Bharati'- a renowned Bengali journal.
- 1878 First visit to England with his elder brother Satyendranath.
- 1883 Marriage to Mrinalini Debi.
- 1884 Death of Sister-in-law Kadambari Devi.
- 1886 Birth of daughter Madhurilata
- 1888 Birth of son Rathindranath.
- His father appoints him in 1890 charge of the family estates in East Bengal. Second brief visit to England. Starts to write prolifically for a new journal, 'Sadhana'.
- 1898 Sedition Bill; arrest of Bal Gangadhar Tilak; Rabindranath reads his paper 'Kantharodh' (The Throttled) at a public meeting in Calcutta.
- 1901 Marriage of his elder daughters Bela and Renuka (Rani). Inauguration of the Santiniketan School.
- 1902 Death of wife Mrinalini Devi.
- 1903 Death of daughter Rani.
- 1905 Rabindranath takes a leading role in the agitation agaist Lord Curzon's proposed partition of Bengal. His father Debendranath dies.
- 1907 Samindranath, Rabindranath's youngest son dies at the age of eleven.



- 1910 Bengali 'Gitanjali' published.
- 1912 English 'Gitanjali' published by McMillan Co. of England. His 3rd visit to England; First visit to the U.S.A.
- 1913 Rabindranath awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.
- 1915 First meeting with Gandhi. Receives a Knighthood from British Sovereign.
- 1916 Visits Japan and USA. Lectures on Nationalism and Personality.
- 1918 Death of eldest daughter Bela.
- 1919 General Reginald Dyer's Amritsar Massacre; Rabindranath returns his Knighthood.
- 1921 Travels England, France, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, Austria & Czechoslovakia. After meeting with Gandhi in Calcutta, Rabindranath detaches himself from the 'Swaraj' campaign.
- 1922 Tours West and South India.
- 1924 Travels to China and Japan. Sails for South America: Stays as a guest of Victoria Ocampo in Buenos Aires.
- 1925 Returns via Italy. Gandhi visits Santiniketan. Rabidranath declines to be actively ivolved in Swaraj movement.
- 1926 Travels to Italy, Switzerland (stays with Romain Rolland at Villeneuve), Austria, England, Norway, Sweeden, Denmark, Germany (meets Einstein), Bulgaria, Greece and Egypt.
- 1927 Extensive tour of South East
- 1928 Starts painting at the age of 67.
- 1929 Travels to Canada, Japan, and Saigon.
- 1930 To England via France to deliver Hibbert Lectures at Oxford University (The Religion of man; to Germany, Switzerland, Russia, Germany again, USA. Exhibition of his painting in Birmingham, London, Paris and sevaeral European capitals.

(Continued on page 7)

Transition Sancheeta Chaudhuri

"Hey look! It's so beautiful! They look like soft cotton balls", I exclaimed as I watched fascinated at the snowfall outside the window of my seat while our plane prepared for the final landing over O'Hare. Within half-an-hour Saunak and I were out in the baggage claim and I struggled to hold onto every moment that was passing by at a racy pace since the past few weeks. I was married for only two weeks. I met Saunak on the Internet seven months back, which led to where I was right now. For the first time in my life I was far away from my home and family, and I felt strange walking beside this man who was my only acquaintance-friendrelative, all rolled in one, in this strange land, and he was also my partner for life.

As we stepped out of the baggage claim, I felt a sudden chill of horror of what might be. I remembered reading horrible stories about new brides leading a miserable lonely existence in this country. My mind went back to my life that was. What was I thinking? Why did I leave my parents, my friends, my job, and my cozy, secured life and come away to a faraway land with someone who I knew but only a few days? Saunak chattered away happily, assuring me how wonderful our life would be together. I didn't want him to know that he had a weakling for a wife, so I smiled bravely and sulked inwardly thinking how lonely the two of us would be. Just then, Saunak waved at a smiling group of people whose features seemed very familiar to the clan I had left behind in my homeland. Then there were series of introductions, hugs and handshakes. All my fears suddenly melted away and I smiled, laughed, hugged, shook hands and almost cried with



relief to know a few more names other than Saunak's.

Growing up in Mumbai, I had always experienced a winter that had nothing to do with cold. Hence the necessary Chicago clothing, the coats, earmuffs, gloves, boots, everything added to an exciting experience for me. The term "layers" found a new meaning in my vocabulary. As Saunak drove to our apartment, my eyes feasted on the blanket of snow on the trees and rooftops, the street lights, the malls, McDonalds and Pizza Hut. Reaching the apartment, Saunak opened the back door that led to the kitchen and said to me – this is your home and kitchen, build it up the way you always wanted to. It was an incomprehensible emotional moment of apprehension, sadness and joy all at once.

My earlier anxiety of being an alien in a strange place now seemed so juvenile as our phone kept ringing from the moment we stepped home. A plethora of wishes, invitations, and concerns started pouring in from people I knew nothing

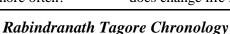
about. Saunak quickly briefed me about each of them as the calls came in. He started jotting down dates in a calendar for parties, gatherings, events, etc. My head started reeling, I didn't know whether it was out of jet lag or it was due to the struggle to keep up with what was going on. Saunak looked at me, smiled and said – don't worry, you will get used to it.

I soon learnt about a huge culturally thriving community in Chicago of which Saunak was an active member. I met and got to know his friends and acquaintances from this community. Initially, it was overwhelming for me to have so many strangers chitchat so warmly and casually as if they have known me all my life. But, it was a pleasant art of communication, which I later started enjoying. Simultaneously, I was also trying to adjust to my new life, playing the role of a wife, trying to understand a 'husband', and experiencing the hiccups of a new relationship. I realized over time that I had watched too many Indian movies back home that had formed the basis of my theories of a married life. I slowly learnt that Saunak and I could be great friends sharing a life together and still keep the title of being a husband and a wife.

I was learning a whole new way of living and surviving. At first, there was a lot of resistance from my own immature and typical mind-set in which I grew up, but slowly began to appreciate the true meaning of the magic words 'Juto shelai theke chondi path'. Before I knew it I got embroiled in my own life, with my husband, my 'Shongshar', my home and my own activities of entertaining and getting entertained, gatherings, dance performances, parties, picnics, etc. Soon after, my wish to get a taste of the world outside the community landed me a job at a retail store. I thought it the best platform to meet people from different cultures. I soon picked up the common lingo and knew that the weather and the weekend were the safest topics to harp on when talking to strangers. Although initially, it was difficult for me to understand why people would look at me as though I have lost it when I told them that I wished it snowed more often!

A whole year had passed; it was the same day of the year as last year. We decided to celebrate in a new Japanese restaurant that had opened nearby. We both loved sushi with wasabi. As we drove up the ramp to the highway Saunak put on the new Srikanta Acharya CD that my mother-in-law had sent as an anniversary gift. My mind trailed off to the one year that had gone by. I had seen enough in this past year - the excitement and struggles of getting into a new life, the complexity of society without the parental umbrella, the joys of independence and the helplessness of isolation.

I thought of all the experiences I had gathered in the past one year, and I could see this naïve, apprehensive girl change into a woman of the world, if I can say that! My parents would be so proud of me. I smiled, leaned back on the seat, and relaxed with a feeling of completeness. I started planning some new goals to reach – a career and a profession. It would be a whole new world of explorations and opportunities. As we walked into the restaurant I thought - Wow! Marriage does change life forever!



(Continued from page 5)

- 1932 Travels (by air) to Iran, Iraq. Only grandson Nitindra dies.
- 1936 Tours Ceylon (Srilanka) and India with a dance troupe from Santiniketan.
- 1937 Rabindranath delivers Convocation address to Calcutta University, in Bengali. Starts Department of Chinese Studies at Viswa-Bharati. Falls seriously ill in September.
- 1940 His last meeting with Gandhi at Santiniketan. Death of very close friend and staunch supporter, C.F.Andrews. Oxford University holds special Convocation at Santiniketan to confer Doctorate on Tagore.

1941 August 7 (*Sravan 22, 1348*) Rabindranath Tagore dies in Jorasanko, Calcutta.





Answers to "Dance Quiz" (p 5)

(drama).

10. Hasyam-happiness
Krodham- anger
Bhibastam-disgust
Shokam-sorrow
Veeram-courage
Karuna-compassion
Adbhutam-wonder

9. The Natya Shastra by Sage Bharatha says the three aspects of dance are: Nritta (the movements of the body), Nrithya (facial expressions and gestures) and Natya

8. Lord Vishnu or Lord Krishna.

7. Kathakali

6. Andhra Pradesh.

of storytellers.

4. Dandiya and Bhangra5. Kathak, gets its name from the word "Katha" (story) because it began from the devotional recitation

known.

hiniattam.

3. Each tribe has its own tribal dances and there are over 60. The dances of the Nagas and the Bihus of Assam are perhaps the most well of

I. "Nata" means dance in Sanskrit and "Raj" means king or lord. Nataraj or Lord of Dance is Shiva.

2. Kathak, Manipuri, Odissi, Bharat Natyam, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, Mo-

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শব্দসন্ধান

জুজুবুড়ি

(গত সংখ্যার সমাধান)

উপর-নীচ

- ১। চিঠি (৩),
- ২। ব্রাহ্মণ (২),
- ৩। শেষ (২),
- 8I শ্রীকৃষ্ণ (8),
- ৫। প্রবল (২),
- ৬। আদর্শ স্ত্রী (২),
- ৭। শহর (৩),
- ৯। চাঁদোয়া (৪),
- ১১। প্রাচীন ভারতীয় মহাবিদ্যাপীঠ (৪),
- ১৩। টেউ (৩),
- ১৫। পড়ে যাওয়া (৩),
- ১৮। মহাদেব (৫),
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- ২০৷ কর্মক্ষম (৫),
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- ৩০। ছুঁড়ে দেওয়া (৪),
- ৩১। চারাগাছ (৪),
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- ৪৩। বন্ধু

পাশাপাশি

- ১। বর্তমান কাঠমান্তু উপত্যকায় প্রাচীন রাজ্য (৩),
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- ৩৩। এক মহাকাব্যিক রণাঙ্গন (৪),
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- ৩৭। যুদ্ধ (৩),
- ৩৮। ধূলো (২),
- ৪০। ইচ্ছা (৩),
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- 88। নারী (৩),
- ৪৫। বাঙালী সম্প্রদায় (৫),
- ৪৬। খাদ্য (৩)

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