



Bengali Association of Greater Chicago

সমাজ সংবাদ

Community News

Volume 28, Issue 5

অগ্রহায়ণ, ১৪১০

December, 2003

riturongo

saraswatibondona

saraswatípujo

bongosongskritidibos surer

alo soccer **Indrajal**

protídhwoní shuni

choruíbhati

bitorko

shíshudibos

sridurga nam

bhulona

durgapujo

rdrama tribute

to ponchom

golf chhutír phande

buddhubhutum

kalipujo carrom

agantuk

saraswatípujo

riturongo

arboratum

Indrajal

bongosongskritidibos

bowling

saraswatibondona surer

alo **protidhwoni** shuní

shishudibos bitorko

agantuk buddhubhutum

durgapujo **sridurga**

nam **bhulona**

choruíbhati

rdrama table

tennis **kalipujo**

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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.

সম্পাদকীয়

নমস্কার।
দেখতে দেখতে আরো এক বছর শেষ হতে চলল। সমাজসংবাদে নানাবিধ উপ-করণের লেখা সংগ্রহ করে প্রকাশ করার চেষ্টা করা গেল। লক্ষণীয় যে বহু বিষয়ে লেখার ক্ষমতা আমাদের মধ্যে নানা লোকেই রাখেন। সাহিত্য/ধাঁধা/তথ্যমূলক, সব লেখা

আমাদের সভ্যদের কাছেই পাওয়া গেল। তাঁদের ধন্যবাদ জানাচ্ছি।

নতুন কার্যনির্বাহী সমিতিতে অভিনন্দন আর আপনাদের শুভেচ্ছা জানিয়ে,

বাসন্তী বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়
ধীমান চক্রবর্তী

President's Message



Shouvik Dutta

Dear Members,

On behalf of the 2003 BAGC Executive Committee, I would like to thank all of you for your tremendous support throughout the year. The community's support and participation in all the events made our efforts even more fulfilling. We have a bright future ahead of us and I wish to take this opportunity to celebrate all the success we had this year.

This has been a fun-filled year where we have undertaken major projects. The registration system is a tremendous step which is required for planning for the events along with the actual streamlining of the registration process. The infrastructure projects (audio visual and sound) which we have embarked on will serve BAGC for years to come. The fundraising efforts and opening up of new avenues to raise money will stand us in good stead for the future. The receipt of the Illinois Arts Council Grant opens up one such new avenue for us to raise

funds. We have been very disciplined and have been able to raise a substantial amount of money for BAGC. Additionally, we have been able to attract new members to the organization and have grown as an association.

Amidst all the success and fun this year, I would like to address one aspect where we would need focus and attention from the community members. During the last two events, unacceptable behavior by the BAGC children, namely vandalizing whiteboards in the classrooms and dialing emergency numbers from public phone booth, jeopardizes our ability to conduct BAGC events in the facilities we currently rent. I urge all parents, no matter how old or young your children may be, to take responsibility for their actions at all times, especially during BAGC functions.

I would like to thank all the members of the community for their participation and encouragement. Ours is a voluntary organization, and being a committee member for BAGC is a privilege. I truly appreciate the time & energy that our committee has dedicated throughout the year to ensure the success of all events. I would take this opportunity to thank all the committee members and their spouses for their time and effort.

I wish all of you a wonderful, safe, prosperous and a Happy New Year. With boundless hope and unbridled enthusiasm about our future I thank the community and my wonderful committee for the opportunity to serve you this past year.

BAGC Committee, 2003

President	Shouvik Dutta (847) 726-0953
Vice President	Sandeep Chaudhuri (847) 358-7512
Secretary	Mondira Bhattacharya (847) 776-3979
Treasurer	Ranjan Dasgupta (630) 305-0963
Cultural	Dipali Banerjee (630) 961-0638 Chandrima Gooptu (847) 439-6251
Food	Saunak Basu (630) 323-4251 Devkumar Mustafi (773) 363-0343
Puja	Madhumita Banerjee (630) 654-1219 Soma Chakraborty (630) 820-1196
Facilities	Tunir Chatterjee (847) 358-1095 Rahul Dev (630) 236-0740
Newsletter	Basanti Banerji (708) 771-1988 Dhiman Chakraborty (630) 820-0552
Community Service	Nandini Basu (630) 427-9057
Sports	Goutam Roy (630) 357-3403
Advertisement	Bikramjit Dewanjee (630) 548-5046 Tapan Palit (847) 639-7658
Administrator	Nina Palit (847) 202-9440
Youth	Neil Chatterjee (630) 357-6135 Debika Ghose (630) 305-7937
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Notes from the Youth Committee

Debika Ghose, Neil Chatterjee

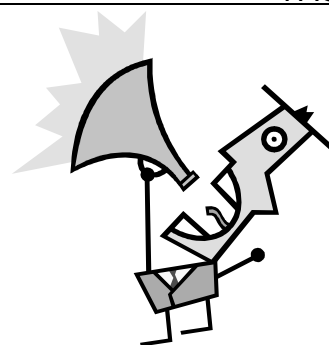
So it has come to an end. It is now our turn to pass the position of BAGC Youth Directors to the next pair of unsuspecting kids. Sure, Youth Directors may not sound like much, but as members of the committee our responsibilities extended far beyond the youth. We were at the beck and call of each committee member, doing different tasks.

For example, at the prasad distribution on Saturday of Durga Puja, the line seemed to go on forever.. What a nightmare! Luckily, on Sunday the lesson was learned and the prasad was handed out to people already seated.

Another thought: the Youth Committee learned this year that it is not a good idea to plan something big at the very first event. We realized that at Saraswati Puja when we attempted to have a debate/discussion. Our advice to the next Youth Committee is be prepared and have backup plans.

Now on to Children's Day. This is the Youth Committee's main task of the year. Planning this event actually went smoothly. However, we weren't sure of the number of participants. One of us (Debika) was in Seattle till a week before the show. We also had heard that last year there were many walk-ins and we should expect the same situation this year. Surprisingly, the e-mails and promotion helped and there were only about five walk-ins. One thing is for certain though; we both definitely got our exercise for the day. It seemed like we were running miles during the program, making sure everything was ok backstage, checking people in, checking the sound, and making sure the MCs knew what they were doing. Yet, at the end of the day it was a success.

We feel confident that our successors will do an amazing job as Youth Directors for the BAGC. For us, it's been a blast.



Announcements

Several knots were tied:

1. Tanya, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Tamsira and Dipak Dutta, married to Neville Bamji.
2. Shamik, son of Mr. and Mrs. Subrota Mukherjee, married to Rohita Rajkumar.
3. Ranjan, son of Mr. and Mrs. Basanti and Manatosh Banerji, to Amanda Raymond.
4. Shoma, daughter of Rina and Narayan Das, to Mark Hokanson.
5. Arijit, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bani and Bishnu Dutta, to Sucharita Bhattacharya.
6. Raj Deepankar, son of Dr. Subir and Mrs. Dharitri Maitra, to Himani Gupta.

Our heartiest congratulations and the very best wishes to the newly-weds.



And a couple of families have moved away:

1. Maitreyi and Manas Roy, to Cedar Rapids, Iowa
2. Asit and Jhuma Dutta, to Columbus, Ohio.

We wish them success and happiness.

Minutes from the BAGC General Body Meeting of 25 Oct, 2003

Nandini Basu

The General Body Meeting was presided over by Mr. Shouvik Dutta. With him on the stage were Mr. Sandip Chaudhury, Mr. Ranjan Dasgupta and Ms. Nandini Basu.

Shouvik Dutta called the meeting to order and validated a Quorum at 4:45

1. President's Message—Shouvik Dutta

- Acknowledgement of those who constructed the Saraswati and Kali pratimas: Atanu Mazumdar & Sumit Roy.
- Projected surplus of \$25,000 to be given to Special Fund – the largest surplus in BAGC's history.
- The 2003 committee will also give a Durga Pratima (which has been ordered).
- Are we able to give \$1-2K to Streamwood for theatre/set use?

§The membership approved

2. Financial Update – Ranjan Dasgupta

Projected surplus of \$25,000 achieved through budgetary discipline, sponsorship and advertisement drives by Bikramjit Dewanjee, Tapan Palit and Shouvik Dutta, as well as the Illinois Arts Council Grant. Most of our costs were in Sound system upgrade and Computerized check-in (Software package), increase in Facility fees, which accounts for about 25% of our annual budget.

Ranjan Dasgupta provided a cost analysis of our events per person and showed that being a GFP and a member has significant benefits.

3. Banga Mela

The Banga Mela Nomination committee was introduced: Mr. Saunak Basu, Ms. Khona Dev, Ms. Maitreyee Ray, Mr. Girin Ray and Mr. Buddhadev Mahakul. Mr. Basu announced that only one group of nominations was submitted to the Nomination Committee and Mr.

Prithviraj Banerjee is the proposed Chairman of the Banga Mela Committee for 2005.

As the chairman for Banga Mela 2005 Mr. Prithviraj Banerjee presented the vision behind bringing the event to Chicago. He also reviewed the history of Banga Mela.

The Banga Mela 2005 will have a tentative budget of \$100,000 to be held at Wyndham Hotel in Itasca.. Shouvik Dutta proposed approval of 2005 BMOC; seconded, then approved by all without any opposition.

Questions regarding the possibility of overcapacity and operating costs were discussed and Mr. Banerjee responded saying that the budget will be adjusted according to participation.

4. 2002 Financial Statements —

Ananya Roy & Misti Mukherjee

Review of the financials:

- deficit of \$435.
- had given \$2000 to the 2003 Committee, but needed to take back.
- items like lighting equipment and the DVD player, which will be used for future, not just for 2002, should be counted as part of the infrastructure costs.

5. Review of constitutional amendments

1. Election of the nomination committee by the GBM Proposed by Mr. Subrata Roy Chowdhury

Motion 1: Proposed that the selection of the nominating committee be transferred to the general membership body from the President

- The motion was debated with various members speaking for and against the motion.
- Motion Defeated

2. Constitution Cleanup

Proposed by Mr. Sunondo Roy, Mrs. Neela Dasgupta and Mr. Shankar Sarkar

Motion 2a: Cleanup of Constitution to correct spelling, grammatical errors

- The motion was debated with various members speaking for and against the motion.
- Motion Passed

Motion 2b: Miscellaneous revisions to the constitution

- The motion was debated with various members speaking for and against the motion.
- Motion Passed

3. Change of Structure and Election process of the governing body of BAGC proposed by Mr. Debaprasad Basu

Motion 3: to restrict tenure of executive committee members for the next 2 years

- The motion was debated with various members speaking for and against the motion.
- Motion defeated

4. Election of members to the Special Funds Committee:

Northwest - Achinta Ray

West/Southwest - Dipak Chatterjee

North/City - Anindita Mukherjee

6. Q&A from 2003 Year

Food poisoning – The issue has been discussed with the vendor.

- Vendors who sell items at our events – the placement along the corridor may cause a fire hazard; we need to leave one corridor wide open.
- An advisory committee needs to look at the overall safety/risk management issues for our membership on a broader scale.
- Health, safety, security, food, liability, children's activities
- Drama group ran over budget by nearly \$200. This was an issue for the Executive Committee and not for the general body.
- This year's issue from Durga Puja will be addressed by the 2003 Ex-

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

Executive Committee

- There was discussion regarding the budget policy - as a community, do we want to leave open or set budgets and hold ourselves responsible for the same?

7. Nomination of the 2004 Executive Committee

The nominating committee was introduced: Mr. Subir Roy, Ms. Alpana Gangopadhyaya, Mr. Debaprasad Basu and Mr. Nirmalya Ghose

- One set of nominations received and the proposed President for 2004 will be Mr. Atanu Mazumdar.
- Mr. Mazumdar and his team were approved by the General Body for 2004. President-elect Mr. Mazumdar then introduced his committee.



Cricket Quiz Saunak Basu

Who are the top three in:

1. Most career runs?
 2. Highest score in an innings?
 3. Most career centuries?
 4. Most career wickets?
 5. Best bowling figures in a match?
- Give your answers for
A. Test matches, and
B. One-day international matches
For ODI's, give your answers both
in terms of most number of wickets
in a match and best economy rate).

(Answers on page 5)

Think of such things Sanjna Das

A call came in . I'm covering Intake. Woman's voice... " I like to talk to someone to get a job because I have to leave my home with my daughter ". So direct, so naive and so desperate! Explained what this agency offers and how it might be helpful. This individual comes from our part of the world, a victim of spouse's alcohol addiction, a member of an established social network and a person with very little awareness of reality and resources of this part of the world.

Without delving into this particular case scenario, I would like to convey that how professional counseling can help us, the immigrant group deal with next generations (parenting, cultural integration, definition of values and realities etc.); personal changes (life-stage transitions, self image vs. self esteem, relationship disintegrations, increased dependence on alcohol or other substance to cope with stress etc.) and environmental conflicts ("back home " vs. "current home ", job loss vs. job relocation etc.). Along with challenges and opportunities, disappointments, unexpected crises, frustrations and stress can have profound affect on our daily lives.

All of us experience personal problems during our lives. Most of them we are able to solve ourselves. However, sometimes even ordinary problems can become overwhelming. It is at these times, professional counseling can provide confidential help to us. Counseling is a process of identifying a "true" problem, contemplating actions to solve the problem and then implementing actions to reach acceptable conclusion regarding the problem.

Most workplace has Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to assist staff with issues mentioned. Also,

medical insurances can be tapped as to have coverage for such intervention under mental health services (Please do not interpret this as being identified as "lunatic" or "crazy"). Area agencies providing social services anywhere in the States can be located through local telephone directories or Internet access.

In conclusion, my professional recommendation is that in emotional crisis, use family and friends for physical support (invaluable) and professionals (psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker) to obtain objective outcome (essential).

[About the Contributor: Ms Das is working as a clinical social worker with Metropolitan Family Services, formerly United Charities. Also, program coordinator of Kiran Foundation, a private medical and social service organization.]

রজার্স পার্ক অঞ্জন রায়

ভারত সেবাস্রমের উদ্যোগে সমাজসেবার এই কাজ শুরু হয়েছিল, প্রায় বছরনয়েক আগে। প্রথমে ডিভিশন স্ট্রীটের ওপরে এক গীর্জায়, তার পরে উত্তর-পূর্ব শিকাগোতেই, অ্যাশল্যান্ড আর মর্স, এই দুই রাস্তার মোড়ে অন্য আর এক গীর্জায়, ইউনাইটেড চার্চ অফ রজার্স পার্ক।

উদ্যোক্তারা শান্তিময় ব্যানার্জি, সুব্রত মুখার্জি, প্রয়াত মঞ্জু বসু প্রমুখ কয়েকজন। সেই থেকে চলে আসছে প্রত্যেক মাসে এক-দিন এলাকার গরীব মানুষদের খাওয়ানোর রেওয়াজ, অর্থাৎ, বাজার, রান্না, পরিবেশন এবং তার পরের কাজ কর্ম ইত্যাদি।

এই সংগঠনে নিয়মিত শুরু থেকে কাজ করেছেন এবং এখনো করে চলেছেন, শান্তিময় ব্যানার্জি। এ ছাড়া আরো অনেকে নিয়মিত আসেন কাজ করতে। প্রত্যেকের নাম আলাদা করে দেওয়া গেল না বলে দুঃখিত। মিলিত প্রচেষ্টাতে কাজ ভালোভাবে যাতে সম্পন্ন হয় সে ব্যাপারে সকলেই আগ্রহী। স্থানীয় কিছু লোকেও এতে অংশগ্রহণ করে থাকেন।

Answers to Cricket Quiz (from page 4)

A 1 Most career runs in test cricket:

Name	Matches	Runs	Avg.
A.R. Border (Aus)	156	11174	50.56
S.R. Waugh (Aus)	164	10660	51.25
S.M. Gavaskar (Ind)	125	10122	51.12

A 2 Highest score in a test innings:

Name	Score	Against	Venue, Season
M.L. Hayden* (Aus)	380	Zim	Perth, 2003-4
B.C. Lara* (W.I.)	375	Eng	St. Johns, 1993-4
G.S. Sobers (W.I.)	365*	Pak	Kingston, 1957-8

A 3 Most career test centuries:

Name	100s	Matches
S.M. Gavaskar (Ind)	34	156
S.R. Waugh* (Aus)	32	164
S.R. Tendulkar* (Ind)	31	107

A 4 Most career test wickets:

Name	Matches	Wickets
C.A. Walsh (W.I.)	132	519
S.K. Warne* (Aus)	107	491
M. Muralitharan* (S.L.)	82	459



B 1 Most career runs in ODI cricket:

Name	Matches	Runs
S.R. Tendulkar* (Ind)	317	12475
M. Azharuddin (Ind)	334	9378
P.A. de Silva (S.L.)	308	9284

B 2 Highest score in an ODI innings:

Name	Score	Against	Venue, Season
S. Anwar (Pak)	194	Ind	Chennai, 1996-7
I.V.A. Richards (W.I.)	189*	Eng	St. Johns, 1984
S. Jayasurya* (S.L.)	189	Ind	Sharjah, 2000-1

B 3 Most career ODI centuries:

Name	100s	Matches
S.R. Tendulkar* (Ind)	35	317
S.C. Ganguly* (Ind)	22	233
S. Anwar (Pak)	20	247

B 4 Most career ODI wickets:

Name	Matches	Wickets	Runs
W. Akram (Pak)	132	356	11812
W. Younis* (Pak)	107	262	9919
M. Muralitharan* (S.L.)	82	223	7632



B 5a Best wickets in an ODI match:

Name	Wkt/run	Against	Venue, Season
C. Vaas* (S.L.)	8/19	Zim	Colombo, 2001-2
G.D. McGrath* (Aus)	7/15	Nam	P'stroom, 2002-3
A.J. Bichel* (Aus)	7/20	Eng	Pt. Elizabeth, 2002

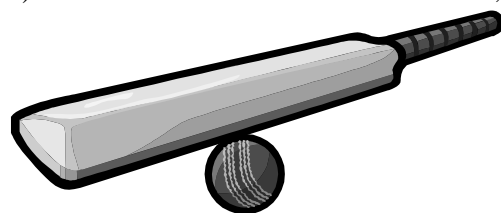
B 5b Best bowling economy in an ODI match:

Name	Figures (O-M-R-W)	Against	Venue, Season
P.V. Simmons (W.I.)	10-8-3-4	Pak	Sydney, 1992-3
D.A. Reeve (Eng)	5-3-2-1	Pak	Adelaide, 1991-2
B.S. Bedi (Ind)	12-8-6-1	E.Afr	Leeds, 1975



A 5 Best bowling figures in a test match:

Name	Wkt/run	Against	Venue, Season
J.C. Laker (Eng)	19/90	Aus	Manchester, 1956
S.F. Barnes (Eng)	17/159	S.A.	Johannesburg, 1913-4
N.D. Hirwani (Ind)	16/136	W.I.	Chennai, 1987-8



Review of the Cultural Program at Durga Puja (contd. on p. 7)

পূজোর প্রথম দিন পুরবী মজুমদার

প্রতিবারের মতো এবারেও মা দুর্গা মহা ধুমধামে এলেন বাপের বাড়ি, এবার এলেন অশ্বারূঢ়া হয়ে। কথিত আছে অশ্বারোহণ করে এলে ছত্রভঙ্গ হয়, কিন্তু শিকাগোবাসীরা চিরকালীন প্রথায় পূর্বকার মান-অভিমান মনান্তর মতান্তর ভুলে সম্মুখ হয়ে মা দুর্গাকে আহ্বান জানালেন স্ট্রীমউডের পূজো-প্রাঙ্গণে। ধূপধূনোর গন্ধ, ঢামকুড়কুড় ঢাকের বাজনা, শাড়িক্যাসেটবই এবং গহনার বিপণি তে, মহিলাপুরুষ ও দ্বিতীয় প্রজন্মের ঠেলা-ঠেলিতে, শাঁখের আওয়াজ উলুধুনিতে, পূজোপ্রাঙ্গণ আনন্দজোয়ারে গড়িয়াহাটে পরিণত হল।

পূজো ও প্রসাদের পর সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান শুরু হল দীপালি ব্যানাজীর পরিচালনায় দুর্গাকে স্তুতি ও আগমনী গানের অনুষ্ঠান ‘শ্রীদুর্গা নাম ভুলো না’ দিয়ে। উপশাস্ত্রীয় সঙ্গীতের মীড়মুর্ছনায় মা দুর্গাকে আহ্বান জানালেন দীপালি ব্যানাজী, শতরূপা বিশ্বাস, বুল্লা বা, অশোক মিশ্র এবং সুনয়না ইয়াং। যজ্ঞানুষঙ্গে অনুষ্ঠানকে শ্রীমন্ডিত করলেন মনোমোহন মজুমদার, অংশুমান চ্যাটার্জী, পিন্টু মুখার্জী, সুনন্দা বোস, বুল্লা বা, শতরূপা বিশ্বাস, অশোক মিশ্র ও দীপালি ব্যানাজী।

দেবীপ্রিয়া রায়ের লেখা এই অনবদ্য মাতৃবন্দনা/দুর্গাস্তুতি সুনন্দা বোসের সুপঠনে এবং শ্রী অনন্ত ঘোষের নিপুণ স্লাইড পরিবেশনায় যেন বাঙময় হয়ে উঠলো।

শব্দনিয়ন্ত্রণে অতনু মজুমদার ও আলোকসম্পাতে সুমিত রায় পুরো অনুষ্ঠানকে মায়াবী করে তোলেন। ‘মধুরেণ সমাপয়েৎ’ হল সুব্রত মুখার্জীর সিদ্ধহস্তের ঢাকের বাজনা।

শেষ অনুষ্ঠান ছিল কোলকাতা থেকে আগত সুদর্শনা নন্দিনী ঘোষালের ওড়িশি নাচ। নন্দিনীর তালমান অঙ্গসঞ্চালন পরিষ্কার মুদ্রা এবং অভিনয় মুন্সীমানার দাবী রাখে।

শুক্রবারের অনুষ্ঠান সুষ্ঠু ও সুন্দর ভাবে পরিচালনা করে তাপসী জাতিস প্রমাণ করে দিলেন যে অনুষ্ঠানসঞ্চালিকা হিসেবেও তাঁর দক্ষতা কম নয়।

R.D. Rama: A Tribute to Pancham Neela Dasgupta

When the curtains opened on Saturday night, we knew we were in for something different and exciting. The meticulously constructed skyline [by Sumit Roy (Bartlett), Subrota Mukherjee, Atanu Mazumder, and Indrani Mondal] of famous sites from around the globe hinted that we were about to celebrate not only a famous Bengali, but a man who spread his mind and heart beyond the borders of country and culture. The tribute to R.D. Burman, the father of fusion music in India, certainly had something for everyone, whether a fan of Hindi or Bangla, pop or jazz, the traditional or the innovative.

The timeless and trans-continental appeal of Pancham's music was reflected in the cast of experienced BAGC talents who performed along with energetic second-generationers and new friends to the Chicago-Bengali community. It was also reflected in the variety of colorful costumes: skirts and saris, ghagras and pants, salwars and leotards.

Scriptwriter, Alak Bhattacharyya carefully weaved the story of R.D. Burman's life into a series of small skits and a conversation between two students (Indrani Mondal and Dhiman Chakraborty), culminating in a delightful parody of Burman's hit “Mone Pore Ruby Roy”.

The production was a feast for the senses. As musicians played, singers sang and dancers danced in the foreground, periodically film clips and photographs appeared projected above the skyline in the background. A great deal of effort

and attention was put into the special effects by Kanishka Chaudhuri, Roshan Kamath and lighting by Sumit Roy (Naperville).

The momentary loss of power just reminded us that we were watching an amateur, community production; a fact that was easy to forget when listening to the melodious gifts of Bula Jha, Angshuman Chatterjee, Roshan Kamath, Srini Iyengar, Gaurav Venkateswer, Subrata Mukherjee, Ajit Paul, Sudeshna Dutta and Dipali Banerjee. It was a wonderful treat to hear Indrani Joshi sing for us again. Her music direction along with Anjali Bhattacharyya's coordination resulted in a flawless music production.

The dances were choreographed in a variety of styles, which included jazz, kathak, tango and folk, once again reflecting the fusion style of Burman's music. Each dancer performed beautifully and it would be very difficult to choose a favorite dance but the show stopping “Duniya Mein Logon Ko” (performed by Soumya Bhattacharya, Neil Chatterjee, Manjima Bose, Leena Bhattacharya and Moulee Dutta) and the graceful “Raina Bit Jaye” (performed by Satarupa Biswas, Anindita Basu and Samarpita Saha) would be on my list.

As the long list of those to be thanked showed, a lot of hours, talent, commitment and love went into the birth of this production. Unfortunately there is not space to list all the participants but they should know that the audience appreciated their effort. RD Rama will go down in BAGC history as a personal success for producer, Jyoti Mondal and as a memorable production that left a smile on our face and a song in our hearts.

Review of the Cultural Program at Durga Puja (contd. from p. 6)



ছুটির ফাঁদে খনা দেব

গত ৪ঠা অক্টোবর অষ্টমীপূজোর দিনে শুভম সাম্যালের পরিচালনায় মঞ্চস্থ হলো সমরেশ বসুর গল্প অবলম্বনে রচিত ‘ছুটির ফাঁদে’ নাটক। পূজোর ছুটির আমেজ মেশানো হাল্কা মেজাজের এই নাটকটি দর্শকদের মন কেড়ে নেয়। অসুখের মিথ্যে অজুহাত দেখিয়ে অফিস থেকে ছুটি নিয়ে বেড়াতে গিয়ে, গীতিন ও তার স্ত্রী যে বিড়ম্বনার সম্মুখীন হয়েছিল, তাই নিয়ে গড়ে উঠেছে নাটকের কাহিনী কাঠামো।

সুন্দর দলগত অভিনয়ের গুণে নাটকটি প্রথম থেকে শেষ অবধি ভালো লাগে। গীতিনের ভূমিকায় ধীমান চক্রবর্তী ও জয়তীর ভূমিকায় সোমা সাম্যালের সাবলীল অভিনয় উপভোগ্য। গীতিনের বস ‘পিকভট্টে’র ভূমিকায় যশেন্দু চক্রবর্তী, জাঁদ-রেল স্বভাবের আড়ালে স্নেহপ্রবণ ব্যক্তিতিকে সুন্দরভাবে ফুটিয়ে তুলেছেন। স্বপ্ন পরিসরে নিজ নিজ ভূমিকায় জায়গা করে নিয়েছেন - বেয়ারা: বিশুজিৎ চক্রবর্তী, মিঃ গুপ্তা অসীম গঙ্গোপাধ্যায়, চিত্ত: বিতোষ সিনহা, ও বিজেশ: প্রশান্ত ঘোষ। রাণার ভূমিকায় চুটিয়ে অভিনয় করেছেন দেবশঙ্কর হাজরা। প্রয়োজনাটি পরিচ্ছন্ন, পরিশ্রমী ও সুপরি-কল্পিত। বাথরুম থেকে ভেসে আসা সোমা সাম্যালের কণ্ঠে জয়তীর ‘আকাশ প্রদীপ জ্বলে’ গানটি খুব স্বাভাবিক বলে মনে হয়েছে। অত্যন্ত সামান্য উপকরণে মঞ্চ সাজিয়েছেন প্রশান্ত ঘোষ। সংলাপে অল্প ভুলত্রুটি নাটকের গতি ব্যাহত করেনি। এই উপভোগ্য নাটকটির পরিচালনায় শুভম সাম্যালের মুন্সীয়ানা সাধুবাদযোগ্য।

Buddhu-Bhutum Indrani Mondal

Dasami is always a day of parting and farewell. However this year, on the cool, sunny, fall afternoon, when we bade goodbye to Ma Durga with heavy hearts, the magic returned as soon as we saw and heard the wise Thakurma bringing in her precious pouch and displaying her wealth of folk-lore therein. Out spilled the intriguing story of *Buddhu-Bhutum*, the endearing owl and monkey cousins whose adventures eventually transport them to a land of wealth and beauty. And so were we transported, surely and truly, to the enchanted land of Bengali fairy tale, by more than fifty enchanting young members of BAGC. The eternally bewitching tale was brought to life in a gorgeous dance-drama by these

little kids. The eloquent storyteller, the graceful princess, the energetic Buddhu and Bhutum, the lively country maidens, the beautiful court dancers, the sporty courtiers, the regal king and his zesty entourage left an indelible impression on our minds. The razzle-dazzle of royalty was recreated meticulously in the vivid color of beautiful costumes. The painstakingly hand-crafted sets were minute in every detail adding authentic ambiance to a great performance. Good quality digitized music was a rare treat for the ears and added depth to an already rich and multilayered presentation. And all this was made possible by the excellent coordination and superb efficiency of a great director. Indeed if there was anything amiss it was in the length of the performance, for many of us would have loved the enchantment to continue !



Images of BAGC Durga Puja, 2003



BAGC's Kali Puja Alak Bhattacharyya

BAGC celebrated Kali Puja on October 25, 2003 at the Streamwood High School. About 600 people attended the occasion, which included the annual general body meeting, the puja ceremony, prasad/dinner, and a cultural program.

It is well known in India that the Bengalis celebrate a month long fall festival, which starts with four days of Durga Puja and ends with two days of Kali Puja. Keeping that tradition alive, BAGC has been celebrating this festival for over a quarter of a century. The day started with a general body meeting presided over by the 2003 BAGC president, Mr. Shouvik Dutta. The general body praised the 2003 committee for their financial success. Then the 2004 executive committee, headed by Atanu Mazumder, was welcomed by all.

The next part of the program was the puja rituals performed by the volunteer priest Subrata Banerjee. At the end of the hour-long puja ceremony, the devotees offered flowers at the feet of the mother Kali. The goddess Kali (feminine form of *kal* or time) is the consort of Lord Shiva in her manifestation of the power of time. She represents an aspect of Shakti or dynamic energy. She usually has four arms, symbolizing absolute domination over all finite things all the time. Two of her four hands symbolize the destruction of evil and the other two are believed to be as granting peace, bliss, and *abhaya* or fearlessness. Kali, omnipotent, absolute, and all-pervasive, is beyond fear and finite existence and is therefore believed to protect her devotees against fear and give them infinite peace. The city of Calcutta (Kalikata), now called Kolkata, received its name from Kali. Two of the world's largest Kali temples are in Kolkata, one is in Kalighat and



the other in Dakshineswar.

Kali puja signifies many other aspects as well. Another name of Kali is Shyama. In Bengal, there is a saying, "*Shyam (Krishna) o Shyama (Kali) akara tafaath...*" meaning that the only difference (*tafaath*) between Shyam and Shyama is in the letter "a" or in how they look. But, the deeper meaning is that the supreme God, Krishna, can be worshipped through the puja of Kali. Through Kali, the devotees thrive to remove darkness and ignorance from their lives, and attain union with the absolute One. Kali Puja signifies the victory of good over evil, knowledge over ignorance, illumination over darkness, *Sat* over *Tamas*. It reminds us that evil existed in the beginning of time and a force higher than the evil was necessary to destroy the evildoers.

After the puja all the devotees enjoyed the *prasad* followed by a sumptuous dinner catered by the Cuisine of India.

Many critics say that the puja is just an excuse for the Bengalis to perform cultural programs. The program started with a nostalgic medley of Bengali songs directed by Subrata De. The next program, a drama named "Aagantuk", was written by Param Bandopadhyay and directed by Anjan Roy. While the actors and actresses performed well, the story did not develop to satisfy the high expectations of the audience. The third program of the evening was a song recital by guest artist, Suranjan Choudhury. Bidip Sinha provided an exceptional tabla accompaniment in addition to his melodious guitar performance. The program concluded with Mr. Choudhury's daughter, Shreya, creating much enthusiasm with her beautiful voice.

This 9-hour long Kali Puja ceremony was the last program of the 2003 executive committee. The Bengali community congratulated them for a memorable year.

শ্যামলীর অভিষাপ অচিন্ত্য রায়

(এ গল্পটি সত্য ঘটনার উপর, সুতরাং একে স্মৃতিচারণও বলা যেতে পারে। গল্পে ব্যবহৃত নামগুলো অবশ্য সবই কাল্পনিক।)

সুকান্ত প্রবাসী বাঙালী। পাটনা ও নিকট-বর্তী এলাকায় তার বেশীর ভাগ ছাত্রজীবন ও তার পরেও কিছুকাল কাটে। পাহাড় ও নদীতে ঘেরা সেই কৃষিপ্রধান শহরের জন-সংখ্যা খুব একটা কম ছিল না। জনবহুল অঞ্চল থেকে বহুদূরে শহরের দক্ষিণপ্রান্তে অবস্থিত পাহাড়ের এক বিশাল শিলাখণ্ড সম্বন্ধে লোকের কৌতূহল ছিল অসীম। সেই শিলাখণ্ড আঘাত করলে ধাতব শব্দ শোনা যেত। অথচ ভূতত্ত্ববিদদের বহু গবেষণা সত্ত্বেও তাতে কণামাত্র ধাতুর অংশ পাওয়া যায়নি। বলা বাহুল্য সেই কারণে পর্যটকদের যাওয়া-আসা লেগেই থাকত। সুকান্তর বেশ মনে পড়ে, আত্মীয়স্বজনরা যখন দেখাসাক্ষাৎ বা কোন অনুষ্ঠান উপলক্ষে আসতেন, তাঁদের নিয়ে গিয়ে ঐ বিশাল শিলাখণ্ডটা দেখানো একটা নিয়মিত করণীয় কাজে দাঁড়িয়ে গিয়েছিল। পাহাড়ের গায়ে হেলান দিয়ে- ছায়াছবির তারকাদের মতন - কত যে ছবি তোলা হয়েছিল, তা মনে করে বলাও এখন সুকান্তর পক্ষে অসম্ভব। তাই ফেলে আসা দিনগুলির দিকে ফিরে চাওয়ার জন্য যখন সে মাঝে মাঝে পুরানো অ্যালবাম খুলে দেখে, স্বভাবতই তার মনটা এক অনাবিল আনন্দে ভরে ওঠে।

সুকান্তর বাবা বিকাশবাবু ফৌজদারি মামলার উকিল হিসাবে বেশ সুনাম অর্জন

করেছিলেন। দেশ স্বাধীন হবার আগে ও তার বেশ কিছু পরেও পূর্বভারতের বহু শহরে বেশ কিছু পেশায় বাঙালীদের বেশ একচেটিয়া প্রাধান্য ছিল। আইনব্যবসা ছিল সেই পেশাগুলোর অন্যতম। বিকাশবাবুকে তাঁর মক্কেলরা দেবতার মতন ভক্তি, শ্রদ্ধা ও বিশ্বাস করতো। তাদের মধ্যে অনেকেই একাধিক খুনের দায়ে অভিযুক্ত ছিল। অথচ তাদের সঙ্গে কথা বলে সুকান্তর কখনো মনে হয়নি তারা কোন ঘৃণ্য অপরাধ করতে পারে।

বিকাশবাবুর অনেক সখ ছিল। কোর্ট থেকে ফিরে স্থানীয় ক্লাবে নিয়ম করে টেনিস ও ব্রিজ খেলতেন। রাতে তিনি যখন বাড়ি ফিরতেন, সুকান্ত প্রায় দিনই তার আগে ঘুমিয়ে পড়তো। পিতাপুত্রের মধ্যে পারস্পরিক বাক্যালাপ ছিল খুবই সীমিত। এ ছাড়া গুর আর এক সখ ছিল, বাড়ীর পাশে বিস্তীর্ণ এলাকা জুড়ে গোশালা তৈরী করিয়েছিলেন। পরিচর্যার জন্য লোক থাকলেও বিকাশবাবু অবসর সময়ে তাদের খাবার ও সেবায়ত্নের দিকে লক্ষ্য রাখতেন। গরুগুলোর আসন্ন প্রসবের সময় খানিকটা ব্যস্ত ও চিন্তিত থাকতেন। প্রসবের সময় বাড়ীর সবাই উৎসবের আনন্দে মেতে থাকত কিছুদিন। জন্মবার এক বছরের মধ্যে বাছুর গুলোকে তিনি দান করে দিতেন। সুকান্ত ছোটবেলা থেকে শুনে এসেছে গো-দান নাকি খুব পুণ্যের ব্যাপার। দানের ব্যাপারে সুকান্তর মা সুপূর্ণা দেবী খুব সজাগ থাকতেন, ত্রুটি-বিচ্যুতি যাতে না হয়, সে দিকে তাঁর প্রখর দৃষ্টি থাকত। গোমাতার জীবনে আপন সন্তানকে হারানোর বিচ্ছেদ ব্যথা যতই দুঃখের হোক, অপরিষ ঘটনা ঘটেনি কখনও। শুধু

একবার এর ব্যতিক্রম দেখা গিয়েছিল।

সুকান্তর স্পষ্ট মনে আছে, শ্যামলী - যে নামটা বিকাশবাবুই আদর করে রেখেছিলেন, তার বাছুরকে হারিয়ে একেবারে দিশেহারা হয়ে উঠেছিল। সারাদিন উচ্চনাদে ডেকে চলেছিল ক্রমাগত। সামনে রাখা পাত্রের ভেজানো খড়-বিচুলির একটা গ্রাসও গ্রহণ করেনি বহুক্ষণ। তার বড় বড় দু চোখ বেয়ে জলের অঙ্গুর ধারা গড়িয়ে পড়ছিল অবিরত। শান্ত স্বভাবের শ্যামলীর আশেপাশে কারুর যাওয়া অসম্ভব হয়ে উঠেছিল সেদিন। হয়ত প্রতিহিংসার জ্বালায় সে জ্বলছিল সে প্রতিমুহূর্ত। দোতলার বারান্দা থেকে সবকিছু দেখে সুকান্ত ভীষণ অস্বস্তি বোধ করেছিল। সময়ের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে সব দুঃখ ব্যথারই উপশম হয়। শ্যামলীও ধীরে ধীরে নিজের স্বভাবিক অবস্থায় ফিরে এসেছিল।

এই ঘটনার মাসখানেকের মধ্যে একটি ঘটনা বাড়ীর সবাইকে শোকে মুহম্মান করে তোলে। সুকান্তর ভগ্নিপতি ভাস্কর জীপ দুর্ঘটনায় মারা যায়। ওর বোন শিউলি ও তাদের ছয় মাসের সন্তান সেই জীপে থাকা সত্ত্বেও বিস্ময়করভাবে রক্ষা পায়। ভাস্করের অকালমৃত্যু-তে সুপূর্ণাদেবী খুব ভেঙ্গে পড়েন। রাশভারী বিকাশবাবুও নিজেকে গুটিয়ে ফেলেন। এখানেই শেষ হয় তাঁর ‘কীড়ার নেশা’। নষ্ট হয়ে যায় ক্রমশঃ তাঁর সখ আহ্লাদের জনিষগুলো।

আজ তিরিশ বছর পরেও সুকান্ত ভুলতে পারে না শ্যামলীর চোখের জল। ভুলতে পারে না মাঝরাতে দরজায় টেলিগ্রাম-বাহকের কড়া নাড়া, হাতে করে যে এনেছিল ভাস্করের নিদারুণ মৃত্যুসংবাদ।

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Remaking of a Season Indrani Mondal

Honestly,
I don't think I belong
In this season –
At least, not in yours Chacha
With sweeping windy accusations
Which bite into personal territory
With reckless cold,
Nor in yours Anji
With measured thoughtful sun
And preemptive floods –
That doesn't mean
I don't appreciate,
You're both
Trying to help.
Do you see though
I have a mission
To calm and contain
Someone's turbulent, overflowing
Memory spill,
With currents and undercurrents
Of gurgling creative color
And frothy overtiness,
That I cannot comprehend or recognize.

I don't know why
I even care to fathom
Or make excuses
For so many cross intentions
Quick to create
Quicker to negate
In a jumbled tangle
Of colliding egos
And conflicting priorities
Spiraling out of hand
In never-ending giddy spins.

All I know is
Even when I want to communicate,
I am caught
In the middle of a crossfire
Where I have no camouflage
Of sharp tongue
Or hammered words
Both sides can survive
Without me, everyone knows,
In fact, so do I.

Still, I continue frantically
To keep the snipers at bay
With this frail instinct

Of simple concern
And faint anticipation,
That may be, just may be,
Someone is trying
To remake a season –
Unconnected to me,
And half-forgotten
Even by the maker,
Therefore helpless, unformed
And raw
With exposed nerve-endings,
Gasping and bleeding profusely
With the ache and thrill
Of remembered beginnings
And once-discovered heart-throbs,
Yet alive and palpable, perfect
With the possibility of reawakening
That I can help gather,
Reorganize, form, and perhaps,
Even flower toward beauty,
If only I can hold still and wait
For it to stretch out, turn,
And reach for me,
If only I can make
Those around me
Do the same –

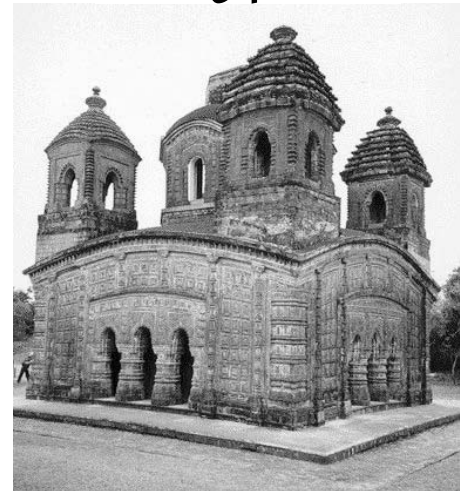
But all I can do in the meantime
Is cry for you
Not just for untimely outpourings,
Cry for them
Not just for frenzied blame throwing,
Cry for me
Not just from self-pity –
And all for the remaking of a season
That was never mine.



GLIMPSES



OF



BENGAL



Mainstreaming with Mr. Bradshaw Bakul Banerjee

Mr. Terry Bradshaw is everywhere on TV. He cheers me up every time he appears, whether pitching for the phone company or doing sports commentary.

One might say what is so special about him? The answer is simply that I just love the way the behemoth advertising industry portrays him as a common guy who can do creative things, of course in a silly way, with a dollar for example. Whenever I see him, I remember the candy man who used to board the Calcutta state-run double-decker bus every evening. "Ladies and gentleman, there is no need to sit quietly. Keep your figures and mouth busy. Buy some of my delicious candy now." He went on. While I waited impatiently in the heat and oncoming darkness for the bus to start, his pitch made me smile without fail. Indeed, the candy man ran a brisk business. That was about thirty years ago.

However, to explain myself, I have to get back to the instruction my mother gave around the same time. "You must make sure that you support any hobbies that your new husband might have." Her eyes were wide open behind her gold wire-framed glasses. Her thinning lips were clamping down between words, as if to prevent any faint smile that might creep out in-between. Her rather fair face was ever so slightly flushed. Only a few days before, I went through an arranged marriage. A few days later, I left India for America.

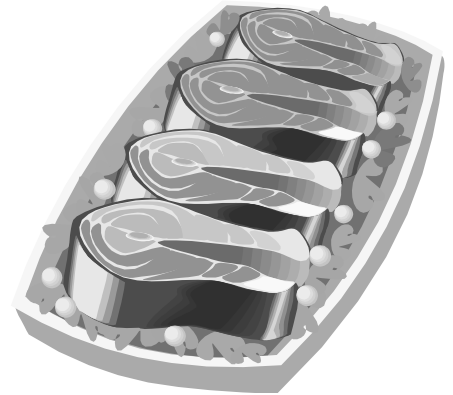
Within a week of my arrival to America, I realized that my husband's most important hobby was watching sports - any kind of team sports, on TV. I was a rather bookish person and never liked sports. However, like a very good girl, I

tackled the issue of supporting his hobby by learning the game. Football was on my agenda first. I was smitten by the beauty of limber giants moving through neatly marked fields, wrapped up in colorful quilts and masks. Later, I learned the finer points of touchdown to appreciate the concentration of Mr. Bradshaw as a quarterback for Pittsburgh Steelers, one of the top teams of the time. The trouble of hosting football parties with full-course Indian meals was not too much for me then. Unfortunately, it was impossible for me to watch Mr. Bradshaw's superior performances during those evenings, as I used to be busy in the kitchen. My peers, other Indian wives, thought that it was weird that I knew the game and wanted to watch it with men.

After a decade, I fumbled and stopped watching games. Approvals were not important to me any more. I assumed that my husband could support his own hobby. My daughters never showed a shred of interest in football, even when their schools did well. Their early exposures to TV sports did not work. However, my knowledge has become a handy tool for my almost exclusively Caucasian male work environment. I continue to pick up bits and pieces of the results from the early morning news clips to be able to participate in sports discussions in a subtle manner.

As new immigrants, my friends in Indian community occasionally tell their children, "Don't be an American!" However, whenever I see Mr. Bradshaw hawking for the phone company, I think of the perfect pitchman on that Calcutta bus who knew that his pitch was rather funny. Mr. Bradshaw puts me in touch with nostalgia with a humorous face. I question myself, "Who am I just now? An American, Asian American, Indian, or just a wise woman?"

Ghorkonna Aloka Bose



“খাই খাই কর কেন? এস, ব'স আহা -
খাওয়াব আজব খাওয়া, ভোজ কয় যাহারো”
-- সুকুমার রায়

Broiled catfish

Ingredients:

- Catfish steak, 6-8 pieces,
- Onion, medium, 1,
- Garlic, large clove, 1,
- Tomatoes, large, 2,
- Green bell pepper, 1/2,
- Red bell pepper, 1/2,
- Green chilli, to taste
- Cayenne pepper, to taste

Smear the steaks with salt and turmeric paste. Slice the tomatoes. Mince the garlic and the onion. Chop the red and green bell peppers into small pieces.

Place catfish pieces in a single layer on a greased baking pan. Broil one side in toaster-broiler for 5 min., then turn over to broil other side 2-3 min till golden-brown. Spread onion and garlic mixture over, broil to golden-brown, Spread over chopped tomatoes, sprinkle red cayenne pepper to taste. Broil till somewhat dry. Mix this superficial layer gently with a fork. Add chopped red and green bell pepper on top, add salt and sliced whole green chilli in appropriate amounts (fish is already salted), broil to soften slightly, again mix gently with fork.

Serve with rice.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO SAMAJ SANGBAD

We invite original articles, essays, poems, short stories, sketches etc. from BAGC members for publication in the newsletter. Please provide your name, address, and phone number. If your article includes material from other sources, please provide appropriate references. The editors reserve the right to reject or edit articles submitted.

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***The 2003 BAGC Executive Committee
wishes you
a very happy and safe holiday season
and a prosperous 2004.***

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