

1st Meeting of the Academy

The first meeting of the General Council of the Assam Sangeet Natak Academy was held in a two-day session on 14th and 15th June, 1953 in the Durbar Hall, Raj Bhavan, Shillong. The meeting was attended by 39 members of whom 8 were Founder-Members, 3 nominees of the Assam Government, one nominee of the Gauhati University, one representative each from 14 Satras, 13 representatives of different cultural institutions of Dance, Drama and Music of both hills and plains. Many distinguished visitors attended the meeting including Shri Kuladhar Chaliha, Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly and Shri Rohini Kumar Choudhury M. P. Several prominent artists of the State also attended the meeting and read articles and gave talks on subjects assigned to them.

On the first day Shri Jairamdas Doulatram, Governor of Assam presided. The proceedings commenced at 3 P.M., with an Arambhani-ghat.

The president formally announced the formation of the General Council in accordance with Clause 6 of the Constitution of the Academy.

The President in his address stressed the great importance of the Academy and said "a great unifying and cementing force can be generated by a proper utilisation of a common cultural platform. It is on such a platform that men and women meet in a mood of mutual appreciation with no controversies and no conflicts, each intent on contributing his or her mite to a common pool so that all may refresh and re-invigorate themselves from the same life-giving sources. It is open to us to take the fullest advantage of an organisation of this character and build up an abiding basis of friendship and mutual regard in an atmosphere where emotion is ruling force and where the heart warmed by music and dance, knows no barriers of rivers or forests or hills." Continuing he said : "I have the fondest of hopes that with their tireless efforts the Academy's workers will surmount every difficulty and they will be able to record tangible progress before long in all directions.

I also entertain the expectation that in these efforts the Academy would be able to secure the moral and financial support from all those who are interested to see that the people of Assam stand shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the nation in its onward march in the domain of culture."

The President paid glowing tributes to the Adhikar Goswamis of the Satras for their valued co-operation to the Academy. He stressed the need for research and development of Satriya dances, Oja Pali dances, the Boró-Kachari dances and the hill people's dances and music.

The President announced that the block of an original portrait of Mahapurush Shri Shankardev found in the ancient Puthi, Burhi Dasam was given over to the Academy by Shri Khagen Das. The Academy after a good deal of investigation had verified the authenticity of the said block. Shri Hara Mohan Das had conducted the investigation.

After the President's address, the Honorary Secretary, Rani Saheba of Bijni read out the messages from Shri B. R. Medhi, Chief Minister of Assam, Shri O. K. Das, Education Minister of Assam, Shri U. K. Goswami, Ex-D. P. I., Shri M. R. Bora, Minister of Finance, Assam, Dr. S. K. Bhuyan, M.A., B.L., Ph.D., D.Litt., M.P., Shri Deveswar Sharma, M.P. and the Secretary of the Sangeet Natak Akadami, New Delhi, who could not attend the meeting but sent their messages wishing the Academy success.

The Honorary Secretary then submitted her report dealing with the establishment of the Academy and the progress so far made by it.

A resolution condoling the sudden and sad demise of Sreemati Damayanti Brahma wife of Shri Rup Nath Brahma, Medical Minister, Assam and conveying heartfelt sympathy of the Academy to the members of the bereaved family, was moved by the

President and was passed by all standing and observing silence for two minutes.

The Council unanimously elected Shri Kuladhar Chaliha, Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly, as the Vice-Chairman of the Academy.

The meeting was then adjourned till next day with a vote of thanks to the President.

The General Council re-assembled at 9 A.M., on the 15th June, 1953 under the Presidentship of Shri Kuladhar Chaliha, the Vice-Chairman of the Academy.

As many as 10 appointed speakers were called upon to deliver their talks as noted below:

Shri Pradip Chandra Chaliha a young artist from Golaghat who has been making researches into ancient dances, read a learned paper on Oja-Pali. He demonstrated his thesis by depicting different kinds of mudras and tunes of Oja-Pali through a promising disciple of his Shri Mani Kanta Sharma, and this was very much appreciated by all present.

Shri Bapuram Bayan of Natun Kamalabari Satra demonstrated some poses of Satriya Sutradhari dance.

Shri Satish Chandra Basumatari spoke on the Boro songs and dances and a group of Boro artists gave demonstration of their music and dance.

Shri Indreswar Barthakur, renowned dramatist delivered an illuminating speech on the place of drama in the cultural life of Assam.

Shri Gajen Barua read a paper on the art and culture of Mahapurush Shri Shankardev and stressed the need of developing the Bhawanas.

Principal Hem Barua of B. Barua College read a learned paper on folk songs and folk music. He suggested the formation of an Editorial Board to undertake research in folk songs.

Mr. Ripple Kyndiah read a very nice paper on songs, music and dances of different tribal areas in Assam.

Shri Khagen Das, Sangit Bisharad who has done research in Borgeet read a thesis on the Borgeets of Mahapurush Shri Shankardev and Shri Madhabdev.

Shri Charu Bardoloi a promising young artist gave some suggestions as to the preparation of a syllabus for dance in Assam.

Shri Chandra Kanta Phukan a reputed stage and film actor, in an extempore speech outlined the scope of films in popularising the music and dances of Assam in wider field.

Shri A. C. Barua speaking on Drama stressed the need of preserving the purity of Indian Dramas.

The General Council then elected the following members as its representatives to the Executive Board of the Academy:

1. Shri Rup Nath Brahma, Minister, Assam.
2. Shri Chandra Kanta Phukan, Nowgong.



Running Trophy Awarded by the AKADAMI to the winning party in the Folk Dance Festival 1954.

3. Shri Pradip Chaliha, Golaghat.
4. Shri Paragdhara Chaliha, Sibsagar.
5. Shri Kali Prasanna Bhattacharyya, Silchar.
6. Shri Sundar Bardoloi, Gauhati.
7. Shri Nirmal Chandra Chakravarty, Dibrugarh.
8. Shri Harendra W. Marak, Tura.
9. Shri Ananda Chandra Barua, Jorhat.
10. Shrimati Rani Saheba of Bijni, Shillong.

Besides the above, the Executive Board will consist of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Treasurer and two nominees of the Government of Assam.

The Governor of Assam was unanimously elected the Chairman of the Academy.

The Council elected Shri L. P. Changkakoti and Rajyarnatna S. V. Mukherjee as its representatives to the Finance Committee of the Academy.

The Council also constituted an Advisory Committee with the representatives of all the Satras represented in the Academy to assist the Executive Board, whenever necessary.

The Council adopted the following resolutions unanimously:

RESOLUTIONS

1. Resolved that it is the considered opinion of the General Council of the Assam Sangit Natak Academy held in the Durbar Hall of the Raj Bhavan, Shillong, on the 15th June 1953 under the Presidentship of Shri Jairamdas Doulatram the Governor of Assam that

(a) The Government be requested to grant recognition or financial help to different types of cultural organisations and associations in the State only on the recommendation of this Academy in view of the urgent necessity of bringing about a co-ordination of different individual efforts in the cultural field.

(b) In view of the fact that such a venture needs the all-out co-operation and patronage of the Government and that the Government of Assam has already taken keen and active interest in the cultural regeneration of the State, the Ministry of Education, Assam be requested to kindly grant financial help to this

Academy in the shape of annual grant of Rs. 25,000 (Rupees twenty five thousand) and a lump sum grant of Rs. 10,000 as an initial expenditure.

(c) In view of the fact that such a venture needs the all-out co-operation and patronage of the Government of India, the Ministry of Education, Government of India be requested to kindly grant financial help in the shape of a lump sum amount of Rupees One lakh.

2. Resolved that in order to further the cause of the Assam Sangit Natak Academy during its formation stages the Governor be requested to become the Chairman of the General Council instead of appointing his nominee under rule 6 (iii) of the Society.

3. Resolved that the anniversary of the inauguration of the Assam Sangit Natak Academy be observed throughout Assam by institutions associated with and affiliated to the Academy by holding in their respective areas public meetings and cultural shows and by raising funds of which 25 per cent should be contributed to the State Academy.



Soviet Ballerinas inspecting Manipuri dance dress at the cultural function on 27th January.