

CULTURAL NEWS....

YOUNG MUSICIANS AWARDED PRIZES

TWENTY-SEVEN young musicians between, the ages of 16 and 21, were awarded prizes by the Rashtrapati at a function held on the lawns of the Broadcasting House on 7th November. They were winners of various events in the 2nd All-India Radio Music Competition in Hindustani and Karnatic music.

Of the 1,300 participants in the preliminary contest 160 were selected for final competition of which 27 were awarded prizes.

In the course of his speech the Rashtrapati expressed his firm conviction that music was a great training ground for man both from the spiritual and worldly plane. Praising the services of the A.I.R. in the cause of art and music, the Rashtrapati said: "With a large number of listeners spread all over India the musicians who broadcast from the A.I.R. and the kind of music they broadcast were bound to get a big audience. The A.I.R. had therefore to give thought to questions like what kind of recreation it should offer, the relationship between recreation and popular taste, the place of classical music in its programmes and how a promising artiste should be encouraged.

RADIO SANGEET SAMMELAN

ANNUAL Radio Sangeet Sammelan was held in Delhi from 10th to 15th November at the gaily-decorated Sapru Hall. The Sammelan was inaugurated by Dr. Radhakrishnan, the Vice-President of India.

A galaxy of eminent musicians regaled the audience at the various sittings of the Sammelan. Among them were Pandit Anant Manohar Joshi, Ustad Allauddin Khan, Ustad Vilayat Hussain Khan, Pandit S. N. Ratanjankar, Ustad Mustaq Hussain Khan, Smt. Rasoolan Bai, Shri Chandrasekhar Pant, Ustad Dabbar Khan, Shri Abdul Halim Jaffar, Smt. Gangubai Hangal, Shri Radhika Mohan Maitra, Dagar Brothers, Shri Pannalal Ghosh, Shri Shiv Kumar Shukla, Smt. Girija Devi and others.

A folk-music concert was also organised as a part of the Radio Sangeet Sammelan. This concert was held at the Talkatora Gardens which afforded an excellent setting for the folk-music concert. Parties from various States attired in their colourful costumes, danced and sang to the great delight of the audience. This item was repeated on the 15th for the benefit of a wider section of people.

MALAYALEE ART FESTIVAL

DELHI Malayalees held a Second Annual Art Festival on 10th and 11th November at the Constitution Club. The Festival was inaugurated by Dr. Radhakrishnan, the Vice-President of India.

In his address, Dr. Radhakrishnan said that art needs encouragement as it was essential for the life of a nation. Art, music and dance, he said, were various expressions which made man's life worth living.

A series of Kathakali numbers, Mappilakali and Mohiniattam, were presented to the art lovers of Delhi. Prominent among the performers were the 75-year old Guru Kunju Kurup, Kalamandalam Ramankutty Nair, Kalamandam Haimavati and Vidya Vinodini and others.

FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL OF U.P.

November 15, 16

UNDER the auspices of the Information Department of the State Government a Festival of Folk Dances was organised in Lucknow. The Festival, now an annual feature, has been a great attraction to the art lovers of the city.

Participants in the Festival were mainly students from various educational institutions in the State, who performed folk dances of Bengal, Rajasthan, etc., as well as classical dances like Bharatnatyam. The real colour to the Festival was lent by the participation of the tribal people from Naini Tal and Mirzapur

Districts whose rhythmic and colourful dances were very much appreciated. Prizes were distributed at the conclusion of the festival to various groups and individual performers.

TANSEN SANGEET SAMMELAN

November 16

The Annual Conference of the Tansen Sangeet Sangha was held in Calcutta from 16th to 20th November. The All-India Tansen Sangeet Sangha has as its object the propagation and popularisation of Indian Classical Music, holding of monthly soirees and imparting training in vocal and instrumental music and dancing. In furtherance of this object the Sangha has established a Tansen Music College.

The Conference was presided over by Dr. N.K. Sidhanta, Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University.

Among well-known artistes who participated in the Conference were: Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Pandit Ravi Shankar, Ustad Nisar Hussain Khan, Ustad Dabir Khan, Pt. Narayan Rao Vyas, Ustad Majeed Khan and Gangubai Hangal.

The highlight of the Conference was a discussion on various aspects of Hindustani Music, in which most of the prominent artistes participated.

ASSAM INTER-COLLEGE MUSIC CONFERENCE

18 December

THE Third Annual Conference of the Assam Inter-College Music Association was held in Shillong on the 18th December. Over 180 delegates representing various Colleges of Assam attended the Conference, which was presided over by Rev. Father D.J. Wollaston, Principal of St. Anthony's College.

Shri Rupnath Brahma, Health Minister, Assam, in his inaugural speech referred to the cultural heritage of Assam, such as: Kamrupi Art, Bodo Art, Pre-Sankarian Art, Sankarian Art, Manipuri Art and also the varied arts of the tribal people and he appealed to the "crusading spirit of the students of music and culture" to unravel the mystery of the rich culture of Assam. "In the development of culture our youth have a very important part to play and, therefore, the cultivation of the fine arts

in our schools and colleges has now become imperative", he said. Thanking the Governor of Assam, Shri Jairamdas Daulatram, for his keen interest in the development of Assam's cultural heritage, Shri Brahma stated that it was due to Shri Jairamdas' sincere efforts that Assam had been able to establish the State Branch of the All-India Sangeet Natak Akadami. He also referred to the useful services rendered by Rani Sabita Devi, Secretary of the Assam Sangeet Natak Akadami, for the development of Assam's cultural life.

The day's programme included a Bodo Tribal song, orchestra and Jaintia song as well as two dramas staged by students of local colleges.

BOMBAY MALAYALI CULTURAL SHOW

A NINE-DAY cultural show was held by Bombay Keraleeya Samaj in celebration of its Silver Jubilee during the 2nd week of December. It was a rare treat for the citizens of Bombay as they had an opportunity to witness various forms of Kerala's art treasure which included Kalaripayattu, Kathakali, both in their old form and modern compositions, the latter presented by Natana Kalanidhi Shri Gopinath and party. Other items included music recitals by well-known singers of Kerala and a superb performance of drama. Kathakali in its traditional form was performed by well-known exponents like Shri Nanu Nair, Kunchu Nair, and Raman Kutty.

MUSIC FESTIVAL AT JULLUNDUR

THE four-day long 80th Harivallabh Music Festival was held at Jullundur during the 3rd week of December. Top ranking artists among whom was Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali of Pakistan regaled the thousands of music lovers during the 12 sittings of the Conference. The Session was punctuated by dance recitals by well-known artistes.

ALL-INDIA MUSIC CONFERENCE AT CALCUTTA

CALCUTTA had recently a series of Music Conferences in the wake of the successful Conferences held by the Tansen Sangeet Sangh and the Allauddin Sangeet Samaj—the Grand All-India Music Conference was inaugurated by Shri K.M. Munshi, the Governor of U.P. on 24th December. In the course of his inaugural address, Mr. Munshi said: "The time had now

arrived when Indian music should find a place in the curriculum of universities”.

Referring to Vedic days when Indian culture was permeated by music he said: “We have now to recapture this close association of music with life, which we had lost during the British period. Even classical music had lost its fascination during the last century except in very limited circles.”

The seven-day Conference that concluded on the 30th of December had featured the topmost artistes of India and Pakistan.

Dance performances by Shri Brijmohan Maharaj (Kathak) and the Travancore Sisters and a few others were organised as part of the Conference.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF MADRAS MUSIC ACADEMY

THE Annual Conference of the Madras Music Academy was held from 24th December to 3rd January with great eclat.

The Conference was inaugurated by Shri C.D. Deshmukh and presided over by Vidwan Maranugapuri Gopalakrishna Iyer.

Apart from a galaxy of leading artistes of South India, a few North Indian artistes also took part in the Conference. Dance recitals organised by the Conference included Smt. Balasaraswathy and the Academy broke new grounds when it invited for the first time a Kathak dancer of Shri Brijmohan Maharaj's repute to give performances.

Side by side with the Conference the Academy also organised a 9-day long discussion on various aspects of music by an Expert Committee.

The agenda before the Expert Committee included illustrated talks on “singing and voice production in the West”, “Music, dance and drama in Germany and India”, “Ethnomusicology in India”, “Regalakshana”, “Nerval” “Turuppagazh-Chandams”, etc.

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3rd December

UNDER the auspices of the Sanskrit Parishad of Delhi Kalidas's earliest play *Malavikagnimitra* was staged in Sanskrit on 3rd

December at the New Convocation Hall, Delhi University. The play was staged by the students of M.B. Higher Secondary School New Delhi. 21 girls under the direction of Smt. Ratna Devi Dixit, gave an excellent account of their fine acting and elocution.

11th December

The Lodi Road Sanskrit Parishad presented Tagore's *Muktadhara* on Sunday at the Y.W.C.A. Constantia Hall.

16th December

The Little Theatre Group staged on 16th December “*Aurat Jaagi*”, a Hindi version by Shri Hardayal Soni of Ibsen's play the *Doll's House* at Y.W.C.A.

17th December

The Government of Bombay proposes to establish a department of Music, and Dance in the Sir J.J. School of Art for the promotion of practical training and research in these arts.

The three-year course in each of these branches will lead to Diplomas. It is also proposed to start a two-year post-diploma course for research in music and a one-year course for research in dance.

MANUFACTURE OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

THE All-India Handicrafts Board is setting up a training centre in Madras for manufacture of Indian musical instruments. The Government of India is understood to have given a grant of Rs. 52,200 for the project. The centre will offer a course in the making of Indian musical instruments on scientific lines.

A selected number of students, who possess some knowledge of music as well as a taste for the study of the making of musical instruments, will be trained at the centre. The centre proposes to select 12 students from outside Madras on a scholarship of Rs. 40 per month and eight students from Madras on a scholarship of Rs. 25 per month.