



## March TANSEN URS Delhi

**U**NDER the auspices of the Sangeet Natak Akadami Tansen Urs was celebrated in New Delhi on the opening day of the Annual Music Conference of the Bharatiya Kalakendra.

Smt. Nirmala Joshi, Secretary, Sangeet Natak Akadami read a paper on "Tansen and his tradition."

In her paper Smt. Joshi observed :

"Tansen was not a mere individual genius but one of the most well-known products of a rich and very fruitful period of Indian cultural upsurge."

Tansen "evolved not only the Dhrupad, but also new melody types of which Durbari Kanra, Mian Ki Malhar, Mian Ka Sarang are well-known... He not only possessed the knowledge but also the competence to combine these various elements into his compositions which gave genuine aesthetic satisfaction to the listeners..."

Smt. Nirmala Joshi made a fervent appeal to re-evaluate our musical heritage in terms of the tradition left by Tansen. If we do so "we will inevitably come to the conclusion that there must be perfect unity between poetry, rhythm, rag and rasa, for this is the essence of all good music..."

"It is a sign of the times," concluded Smt. Joshi, "that the annual Tansen Urs is being revived in a big way this year at Gwalior and a

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happy coincidence, that at Delhi, where he composed and sang his immortal songs, eminent musicians of the younger generation are paying homage to him by singing his compositions. And it is the proud privilege of the Sangeet Natak Akadami to present it."

The day's programme began with a Shehnai recital by Bismillah and party who gave a rendering of Kanra. The famous Dagar Brothers sang four compositions of Tansen in Desh, Bihag, Basant and Suha.

A portrait of Tansen enlarged from a contemporary painting was presented to Bharatiya Kalakendra by the Sangeet Natak Akadami.

## DRAMA SEMINAR

### Delhi

Men and women prominent in the world of drama from all quarters of the country assembled at the Sapru House on 25th March to attend the first Seminar on drama organised by the Sangeet Natak Akadami.

Inaugurating the Seminar Dr. Radhakrishnan said: "We cannot make people good by acts of parliament. Nor is it possible by constitutional provisions to remove deep-seated social prejudices. But through the medium of drama it is possible to set standards of social behaviour."

"Through poetry and drama" he added, "man reveals himself to himself. He mirrors his soul, he expresses the desires, the urges, the hopes, the dreams, the successes and failures in his struggle to make himself at home in the world. All literature is the expression of intensity of feeling."

Referring to the range of the drama, Dr. Radhakrishnan said the whole plentitude of the dramatists inner vision was applied to the full extent of the world, to all its depths and heights.

Referring to the role of actors, the Vice-President said that an actor must be able to inspire in his audience the feelings of the character he represents... The actor must not be overwhelmed by emotions but interpret them in intellectual terms.

Dr. Radhakrishnan expressed the hope that the deliberations of the Seminar would rouse public interest in the country's theatre movement and art of drama and result in the improvement of dramatic standards.

Shri P. V. Rajamannar, the Chairman of the Sangeet Natak Akadami said that if the theatre was to be of any significance it must necessarily be an embodiment of the contemporary life of the nation, otherwise the theatre would cease to be a living force.

"There is nothing in contemporary life and thought that will not provide a theme for a great play, so long as of course there is portrayal of something living."

Pleading for a glorious revival of the dramatic art in the country, he hoped the seminar would devise ways for the development of stage-craft. The Sangeet Natak Akadami gave a reception to the delegates to the Drama Seminar on the same evening followed by a ballet on Holi.

In their week-long deliberations, the participants discussed papers on the progress of drama and theatre in various languages like Assamese, Malayalam, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Gujerati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Punjabi, besides papers on Sanskrit drama and Tagore drama.

The problems of production and technique were covered by a number of papers on professional and amateur stage in various parts of the country. There was also some general discussion on Indian Theatre in the context of world theatre and on traditional drama and plays of today. Two papers were devoted to the problems and growth of children's theatre in India.

The Seminar has succeeded in bringing into sharp focus the essential nature and problems of the growth of our theatre.

## **March**

### **SECOND NATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL**

#### **Bihar**

The Second National Music Festival sponsored by the Sangeet Natak Akadami and organised by the Bihar State Academy

of Dance, Drama and Music was held in Patna from the 14th to 18th March 1956.

Justice S. K. Das, Chairman of the Academy in the course of his welcome address said "this kind of function is in the truest sense a unique and impressive manifestation of the cultural unity of India." Bihar, he added "has a long—standing musical tradition and the musician of Bihar have made their contribution in the past to the development of Indian music....."

While inaugurating the festival Shri R. R. Diwakar, Governor of Bihar and President of the Academy said "It is Bihar's fortune to celebrate the Second National Music Festival, a festival which embraces all aspects of music in this vast country. Indian music dates back to very ancient times and it is difficult to get its many sides represented fully. Still, the organisers have left no stone unturned to make necessary arrangements for the session....."

The eminent musicians who participated in the five-day programme of the festival were:

#### **Vocal.**

Amir Khan, Bade Gulam Ali, Altaf Hussein, Kesar Bai, Gangu Bai, Girija Devi, Bhimsen Joshi, Rasoolan Bai, D. K. Pattamal Prasoan Bannerji, Dagar Brothers. Raghu Jha, Nilima Lahiri, Hari Shanker Misra, Ram Chatur Malik and others.

#### **Instrumental:**

Bismilla Khan (Shehnai), Govind Rao Burhanpurkar (Pakhawaj), Mustaq ali, Ravi Shankar and Halim Jaffar (Sitar), Dabbir Khan (Veena), Shakkoor Khan, Gulam Sabir and Gopal Misra (Sarangi), Radhika Mohan Moitra (Sarod), Kishan Maharaj, Alla Rakha, Habibuddin and Mehdi Hussein (Tabla), Gajanan Rao Joshi (Violin).

## **April**

A cultural delegation sponsored by the Union Ministry of Education left for South East Asia on 14th April under the leadership of Shri Prithviraj Kapoor.

After touring Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines the delegation returned on 7th June, 1956. The delegation consisted of distinguished dancers like Smt. Mrinalini Sarabhai, Chathuni Pannikar, Singajit Singh, Suryamukhi, Tombinou and other artists of Nrityashram, Manipur, and musicians like Ustad Ishtiaq Ahmad (Sarod) and Ram Ganguli (Sitar).

## **FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL**

### **Bombay**

A 5-Day Folk Dance Festival was celebrated at Bombay organised by the Indian National Theatre Bombay. 18 troupes consisting of nearly 400 members from various parts of the country participated in the Festival, which began on 19th April, 1956.

The Indian National Theatre had built a huge semi-circular stage to give a panoramic view of the performances to the large gathering of audience. Some of the troupes invited were the Akadami's Trophy holders of the Folk Dance Festivals in Delhi.

## **GURUDEV'S BIRTH DAY CELEBRATION**

### **Calcutta**

A five-day festival in celebration of Tagore's 96th birth anniversary was organised by Gitanibitan. The festival opened with Tagore's drama "Natir Puja". Inaugurating the festival, Professor Siddhanta said it was an inspiring task to interpret properly and bring home to the people the inner beauty and significance of the poet's writings.

### **May**

## **FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL**

### **Madras**

The first Madras State Folk Dance Festival organised by the Madras State Nataka Sangham was inaugurated on Saturday 12th May by Mr. J. Abdur Rahim, District Judge of Tanjore at the open-air theatre, Art Gallery, Tanjore.

The three-day festival was attended by over 170 artists from all the districts in the South. The programme included Kummi, Pinnal Kolattam, Villupattu, Bommalattam, Lavani, Oyil Attam and Dummy-horse dance.

The Tanjore Art Exhibition was inaugurated on Saturday, 12th May by S. Venkateswaran, Vice-President of the Sangeeta Nataka Sangam. The proceeds of the exhibition were to be given to the Raja Sarfojee College.

## **STATE AKADAMI**

### **Calcutta**

A step towards advancement and enrichment of Bengal's Culture was taken when the State Chief Minister Dr. B. C. Roy laid the foundation stone of the Academy of Dance, Drama and Music inside the compound of Rabindra Bharati Bhavan at Dwarkanath Tagore Lane, Jorasanko. The Academy will be housed in a three storeyed building which is proposed to be constructed by the State Government at an estimated cost of Rs. 5½ lakhs. While inaugurating the function Dr. Roy referred to the noble influence which music exercises on the mind of the individual as also on the nation as a whole.

He hoped that the teachers and students of the Academy would, through music, hold aloft before the people the rich contributions which Rabindranath had made in this field.

## **FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF ALANKAR**

### **Bombay**

Sur-Singar Samsad celebrated the first anniversary of its music circle "Alankar" with a four-day music and dance festival at the C.J. Hall Bombay.

On behalf of the Samsad the Governor of Bombay, who inaugurated the festival presented a shield to Ustad Bismillah Khan, this year's

Akadami Award holder for instrumental music.  
Artists who participated, included:

Bismillah Khan;  
Nissar Hussain Khan (vocal);  
Kesar Bai (vocal);  
Begum Akhtar (vocal);  
Sitara Devi (Kathak);  
Bala Saraswati (Bharat Natyam);  
Ali Akbar Khan (sarod);  
Ravi Shankar (sitar);  
Uma Shankar (sitar);  
Sharan Rani Mathur (sarod);  
V. G. Jog (violin);  
Pannalal Ghosh (flute).

## MUSIC AND DANCE CENTRES

### Patna

Government of Bihar has sanctioned a sum of Rs. 2000/- for the purchase of musical instruments for the music and dance centre to be opened in the Local Chapman Government Girls H. E. School. Similar Centres will also be opened at Patna, Bhagalpur and Ranchi, it is understood. The music centre will impart training to teachers.

### June

## DRAMA FESTIVAL

### Delhi

A Summer Drama Festival was organised by the Song and Drama Division of All India Radio—About 200 artists drawn from Madras, Rajasthan, Delhi and Allahabad participated in the festival which lasted for a month.

Four dramas and 2 puppet plays were staged. Out of the Four Dramas, three dramas were intended to arouse popular interest in the Five-Year-Plan, while the fourth was a Hindi version of Bhasa's Sanskrit classic "Swapna Vasavadatta".

The plays were put up at the pleasantly situated open-air theatre at the Talkatora Gardens.

### July

## DRAMA FESTIVAL

### Cuttack

The Utkal Nrutya Sangeet Natyakala Parishad organised the first Drama Festival which lasted for 2 weeks—prominent

dramatic clubs and institutions of the State staged 14 plays.

A dance-drama "Sakhi Gopal" in Odissi style was presented by the artists of the Parishad on the day of inauguration.

The Festival was inaugurated by Orissa's Finance and Education Minister Sri Radhanath Rath who spoke of the pioneering work undertaken by the Parishad in conducting research on the ancient Odissi music and dance forms and revitalising them.

## CULTURAL DELEGATION

At the invitation of the Governments of the U. S. S. R., Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Poland, Yugoslavia and Hungary an Indian delegation of musicians and dancers visited these countries.

The delegation led by Mr. A. K. Chanda, Deputy Minister in the Ministry of External Affairs left Delhi on 10th July and returned in October after a very successful tour. The delegation consisted of eminent artists like Sitara Devi, Vilayat Khan, Shanta Prasad, Bahadur Khan, Nirmalendu Chowdhury, Kumari Sharda, and others.

### September

## UNIVERSITY FOR MUSIC

### Nagpur

Smt. Indira Gandhi inaugurated the Indira Kala Sangit Viswa Vidyalaya, a university for music at Khairagarh. The University which is the first of its kind in the country will have the faculties of Fine Arts, Music and Dance.

It is housed in the 100-roomed palace donated by Raja Bahadur Birendra Bahadur Singh, the former ruler of Khairagarh.

The University is a growth from the Indira Sangit Vidyalaya established in 1944 by Rani Padmavati Devi of Khairagarh in memory of her second daughter, Raj Kumari Indira Devi.

Inaugurating the university Smt. Indira Gandhi hoped that the Vidyalaya would undertake research in the ancient art of Indian music without which "our cultural development would not attain perfection".

## **KATHAKALI IN HINDI**

### **Trivandrum**

The Rajpramukh of Travancore-Cochin inaugurated the premiere of a Kathakali play with Hindi lyrics staged by a Kerala Troupe.

This is the first time that a play in Kathakali has been rendered in a language other than Malayalam.

## **FESTIVAL OF DANCE AND MUSIC**

### **Kashmir**

A festival of dance and music was held at Srinagar, Kashmir, when thousands of visitors to the valley were acquainted with the ancient culture of Kashmir.

The festival was inaugurated by the Sadar-i-Riyasat who took the salute at a mass youth rally of over 5000 students of various schools and colleges of the State at the Polo Ground, Srinagar. The same day a cultural pageant arranged in six tableaux was carried through the city. Each tableau displayed the way of life and cultural aspects peculiar to the State represented. The states being Laddakh, Kargil, Kishtwar, Bhaderwar, Jammu and Kashmir.

The programme consisted of a feast of music, dance and colour, a number of evenings being devoted to music in which leading musicians participated. Besides the folk dances like Bhangra, Bachnagma, Gilgati, Pakhtoon and Laddakhi, Bharatnatyam, Kathakali, Kathak and Manipuri were performed for the first time in authentic style in Kashmir.

A famous Kashmiri Opera "Heemal-Nagrai" was performed at the Open-Air Theatre. Another colourful feature was the Mushaira at which the life and works of the Kashmiri poets of the past were brought to light.

## **October YOUTH FESTIVAL**

### **Delhi**

The Third Inter-University Youth Festival organised by the Union Ministry of Education was celebrated at the Talkatora Gardens from 22nd to 27th October. The various items of

competition in the programme were arts and crafts, drama, radio play, classical dancing, vocal and instrumental music, group singing and group dancing. The festival which is an annual feature attempts to provide opportunities for the young men and women from the Universities to exhibit their skill in fine arts, music, drama, etc.

## **SADARANG MUSIC CONFERENCE**

### **Calcutta**

The third session of Sadarang music Conference of Calcutta was held in September.

The artists who participated were Smt. Mogu Bai Kurdikar, Amir Khan, Bade Gulam Ali Khan, Smt. Girija Devi, Ravi Shankar, Kishen Maharaj, Ali Akbar, Alla Rakha, Dabir Khan, Sharan Rani Mathur, Brij Mohan Maharaj and Roshan Kumari besides a number of local artists.

A unique feature of the Conference was an Orchestra presented in the Kirwani Raga by the Ali Akbar College of Music directed by Annapurna Devi and Ali Akbar.

## **WORLD THEATRE CONFERENCE**

### **Bombay**

The First World Theatre Conference was held at Bombay from the 29th October to 3rd November, 1956; under the auspices of the International Theatre Institute, which is affiliated to the UNESCO.

The Conference, inaugurated by Sri M.C. Chagla, the acting Governor of Bombay, was attended by over 100 delegates from 40 countries including the USA, UK, USSR, France, Yugoslavia, Italy, Netherlands, China, Japan, Indonesia and Burma and 25 Indian delegates representing every branch of theatre movement in India.

While inaugurating the Conference the Governor expressed the hope that the Conference would devise ways of supporting and organising a National Theatre Movement for the good of the people.

Smt. Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya, President of the Bharatiya Natya Sangh, the centre which organised the World Conference, was unanimously elected President of the Conference.

Welcoming the delegates, Sri S. K. Patil, Chairman of the Reception Committee, said: India was very lucky in having been chosen as the venue of the first World Theatre Conference which would coordinate the theatre movement in various countries and give them the necessary impetus and a world appeal. In her presidential address Smt. Kamladevi said that powerful challenge had been thrown to the theatre by the film and now the television but "it is in the very nature of things that the theatre can hold its own if it is maintained as a living expression of a people". She referred to the theatre as "an effective medium and instrument for the transmission of East-West influences....."

Sri Prem Kirpal, Director, cultural section of UNESCO conveyed the greetings of the UNESCO to the Conference.

## **November TANSEN MUSIC CONFERENCE Calcutta**

The Ninth Session of the All India Tansen Music Conference held towards the end of November provided classical music of a high order.

Veteran artists like Pandit Omkarnath Thakur, Ustad Alaudin Khan and Pandit Kanthey Maharaj were the principal participants.

Apart from Saraswati Rane, Manick Verma, Sandhya Mukerji, Vilayat Khan, Imrat Khan, Bhimsen Joshi and Ali Akbar a number of local artists took part in the Conference.

## **FOLK DANCES Lucknow**

A programme of folk dances of Uttar Pradesh sponsored by the Information Department was held at the Bhatkhande University on 14th November to celebrate the birthday of Pandit Nehru. Seventeen items were presented.

The running shield for the best dancing team went to the Tehri-Garhwal troupe for their "Chauphala" dance.

## **MUSICIANS FELICITATED Madras**

The well-known musicians, Vidwans Maha-

rajapuram Visvanath Aiyar, Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar and Vidwan T. Chowdiah were felicitated on the occasion of their "Shashtiabdapoorthi" at a function organised by the Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha Egmore, Madras.

## **CULTURAL FUNCTION FOR U.N.E.S.C.O. DELEGATES Delhi**

The UNESCO Session held in Delhi in November was packed with special cultural functions.

Delegates from 76 countries had an opportunity to see the best of India's Art and Culture during their stay.

The Sangeet Natak Akadami organised a series of cultural programmes.

The first of the programmes was the Deepawali, the festival of lights. The Tal-katora Garden was converted into a miniature village where the peculiar features of village fares in various regions of the country were presented. There were shops selling cloth, bangles, toys, sweetmeats. Acrobats performing breath-taking feats, the magician snake-charmers and puppet players were drawing large crowds. Gaily attired women were grinding corn and singing songs in a hut typical of Uttar Pradesh while a group of women were performing *Teratali*, a folk dance of Rajasthan. The *Kavadi* dancer from Tamilnad and dummy horse dances and Karakam dances from Bangalore, Garba dance from Bombay and Bhavai dance from Rajasthan formed the other attractions. Myriads of light and wonderful fire works contributed to create the atmosphere of a village estival.

Other programmes presented by the Akadami for the delegates consisted of a selected and varied cultural fare of music, dance, ballet, film and opera. A special feature of the 12-day programme was a series of items presented by the Children's Little Theatre.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting treated the delegates to a rich fare of films and songs.