

# AKADEMI

## SECRETARY'S

## REPORT



*Miss Nirmala Joshi, Secretary, Sangeet Natak Akademi, presenting her report.*

**P**resenting her report at the Dance Seminar, Miss Nirmala Joshi, Secretary, Sangeet Natak Akademi, said :

From its very inception, the Sangeet Natak Akademi has been aiding institutions in the country, engaged in the revival of dance traditions in various regions as well as imparting specialised training in classical dance styles. It has also started a College of Manipuri Dancing in Imphal.

### Cultural Unity

The Akademi has been alive to the fact that in order to achieve its object of fostering and developing dance, drama and music and promoting through them the cultural unity of the country, it is essential to bring together different art forms and also arrange free and friendly exchange of views and experiences of scholars and experts. With this in view the Akademi had chalked out a programme of holding a series of National Festivals and Seminars.

### National Seminars

The National Festival of Dancing was held in Delhi in 1955. Outstanding exponents of all styles of dancing took part in that festival. A special feature of that festival was that it

featured some of our less-known classical dance styles such as Odissi, Kuchipudi and Satria, for the first time on a national platform.

The Akademi has conducted three National Seminars—on Films, on Drama and on Music—during the last four years. The present Seminar is the fourth in the series.

The decision to hold the Dance Seminar was taken by the General Council at its meeting held on 17th May, 1957. A Dance Seminar Committee, consisting of Smt. Rukmini Devi, Dr. Raghavan, Shri Uday Shankar and Shri Hari Uppal, was also appointed by the General Council for the preparation and conduct of this Seminar.

### Dance Heritage

Dancing as a cultivated art has existed in our country for thousands of years. Due to various social, political and historical reasons, many a divergent trend has developed in the field of dancing. The existence of alien rule and the resulting division of the people into States and regions had fostered a sectional and parochial outlook hindering the growth of a national culture. With the achievement of independence, a strong urge for a national outlook towards our dance heritage has been developing among the people—an urge for a

common understanding and mutual appreciation. It is against this background that this Seminar is being held.

This Seminar is the first attempt ever made in our country to bring together scholars, experts and exponents of all dance styles to exchange views so that a better understanding could be achieved in the interest of further progress and development of this art.

### Scholars and Gurus

Outstanding scholars and Gurus of different dance styles are participating in this Seminar. They will read and discuss papers and demonstrate various aspects of their respective dance styles. Participants in this Seminar include Akademi Award Holders like Guru Kunchu Kurup (Kathakali), Guru Amubi Singh (Manipuri), Smt. Bala Saraswathi and Smt. Rukmini Devi (Bharata Natyam), Shri Shambhu Maharaj and Shri Lachhu Maharaj (Kathak). Apart from discussions on various papers, we have arranged detailed demonstrations and recitals by eminent artistes, which will afford opportunities for all to get a clear idea of the salient features of the different styles.

I am happy to say that we have in our midst Mme. Chen-Chin Ching, Vice-Director, Peking School of Dancing, as an Observer from the People's Republic of China. Representatives from Ceylon and Nepal are also participating.

I have no doubt that the recommendations of the Seminar will serve as a guide for the Akademi for its future policy and programme in the field of dancing. In this connection, I would refer you to the decision of the General Council of the Akademi, requesting this Seminar to guide the Akademi on its policy of awards to artistes in the field of dancing and advise the Akademi as to the categories in which these awards should be given.

The Akademi has arranged to record and film the entire proceedings of the Seminar, including demonstrations and recitals.

### Noble Task

I am conscious of the many shortcomings in the preparation and arrangement of the Seminar and crave your indulgence and forgiveness in view of our endeavour to fulfil the noble and earnest task of promoting mutual appreciation and common understanding among various dance styles of the country.

I am thankful to the members of the Dance Seminar Committee for their advice in the course of preparation of this Seminar.

I am personally indebted to the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Akademi for their invaluable help and guidance from time to time. I would be failing in my duty if I did not mention the inflexible co-operation and support I have had from my colleagues and the staff of the Akademi in this endeavour.

