

CULTURAL PRESENTATION BY BINAPANI ASHRAM AT BENGAL CLUB, KOLKATA

The Bengal Club of Kolkata recently invited Binapani Ashram Girls for cultural performance at their premises to celebrate the ushering of *Bengali New year 1425*. The resident girls of Binapani ashram presented exquisite dance pieces, based on Tagore songs were showcased in all its varied brilliance and grace on the eve of Bengali ***Nababarshoon*** on 13th, April. Presentation began with display of choreographies, following various Indian styles of dances with background support of Tagore songs, sung either in Bengali or in Santhali translated format. The unique transliteration of Tagore songs has been executed by Shri Barka Saren, former Teacher of Santhali language of Visva-Bharati and Founder settler of Binapani ashram. He also shares the credit to translate Tagore songs for the first time from Bengali to Santhali language, keeping its notes and tunes to their original grammatical form as approved by Visva-Bharati. In fact, establishing **Binapani Ashram** is a fruitful conceptualisation of Barka and his wife Manjusree Saren. One may accept it as a *real life experiment* of Tagore thoughts of complete or Holistic education for the young learners.

The second item was a selected part from Rabindra Nath Tagore's Dance Drama "Chandalika". In this presentation, the character *Prakiti* (the daughter of a *Dalit* mother) is enacted by a tribal girl, Rubi Tudu. Rubi came to Binapani Ashram as a half orphaned, 8 year old child, nearly 15 years back. Now she is an emancipated woman engaged as a research scholar in the Music Faculty of Visva-Bharati. And it is all due to education and training, Rubi received during her stay at Binapani Ashram. As I often utter the word "Ashram" in my deliberation, naturally one may ask who is your Gurudev? Yes we have one. Our Guru is Rabindra Nath Tagore. Rabindra Nath Tagore is our teacher and guide, who said, "**Education is the greatest equaliser of all social inequalities of the Society and there should not be any reason to deprive a child from formal education**". The audience, who were mostly Bengal Club members enjoyed the evening profusely, congratulated the girls for their performance.

I wish to acknowledge for the sincere cooperation and logistic support, we received from the Honourable members of the **Calcutta Sorority Circle**, without which the cultural presentation at this place, would not have been possible. Thanks to Bengal Club authority for their gesture, encouraging the ashram girls for healthy cultural practices. The Club authority stood for the entire cost of production for the presentation and also donated money for the ashram.

Reported by:

Dr. S.Bhattacharya,Chairman,Binapani Ashram.

Pics: Courtesy Mr. Ashim Ghosh, and Ms. Suchita Roy Chaudhuri,
Bengal Club Members.

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