

Report for the year 2018-19

From the General Secretary's Desk:

Respected President and the Members,

Today we have united once again after another year of relentless activities and endeavours on the part of Bengal Association which, I, as the General Secretary of this esteemed organisation, am feeling privileged and overwhelmingly encouraged for all the guidance and assistance I have received from all of you throughout a year of activities 2018-2019.

We pledged that we will take this renowned organisation to a much higher level of achievement. The sustained participation and sincere support from all of you, no doubt, made that Herculean task easier and bearable for us.

I would like to take this opportunity to present before you the overall scenario of numerous activities undertaken by the present Executive Committee in the year 2018-2019. Moreover an all-inclusive detailed picture of the future plans for the year 2019-2020 would also be placed before the honourable members.

Work related to overall activities of the Association:-

The permanent address of Bengal Association is - MUKTADHARA, 'Banga Sanskriti Bhavan', 18-19 Bhai Veer Singh Marg, New Delhi - 110001. All the activities of the Association and commitments of the same are being carried from here.

I, as the General Secretary, am personally grateful to all the members of the Executive Committee for being a pillar of support and encouragement in all our endeavors throughout the busy year.

Especially the designated Vice President, Joint Secretaries, Treasurer and members deserve our sincerest gratitude for their selfless contribution towards fulfilling our promises and achieving the organization goal.

This year could be termed as a specially eventful one because efforts had been taken to commence some new projects, for example, Cine Festival, Cultural programmes organised by the All India Bengali Association (AIBA) in their respective states, along with the regular activities of the institution. Besides these our regular programmes, such as, Book Fair, Borsho Biday, Borsho Boron, Rabindra Jayanti, were carried zealously by us. These programmes enabled us to build up close relationship with the friends from far and near and in turn being enlivened by their touching enthusiasm.

Membership: -

With pleasure I inform you that with our sustained efforts we have been successful in enrolling many new members. But we do understand the need of more work in this field. Many more friends are waiting to be approached. I would request all of you to reach out to them and bring them in our fold so that all of them could be personally involved in our journey to progress. This is for the first time, in the history of Bengal Association, all the members have been provided with their respective identity card, most of which have already reached the members in our fold.

Obituary: -

We have lost two of our esteemed life members:- Shilpi Sanjay Sarcar & Shilpi Dhiraj Chowdhury, this year. With a heavy heart we accept the inevitable. May their soul rest in peace.

Education: -

We are always alert, attentive and devoted towards the steps taken by the Association in supporting the education of the underprivileged children coming from the weaker economic background. Our prerogative is to empower them and place them in society as an honourable and self-sufficient individual.

To make the generation next aware of their rich cultural heritage we arranged various competitions, debates, songs, recitations, dramas & other cultural activities. We thank the academicians and the management of the participating schools for their cooperation.

We have adopted eight schools of Delhi with aim of helping the little buds to blossom through various sorts of educational and cultural competitions all the year round.

We are also looking forward to disburse financial help to the bright students for their dedication and performance round the year.

Art & Culture: -

Since last 8 years we have been celebrating 'Borsho Biday' and 'Borsho Boron'. Besides these two Baishe Shraavan, Independence Day, Theatre Workshop, World Theatre Day, were made memorable by celebrating with untoward real and enthusiasm by our Association. Many prominent Artists and illustrious persona from the respective fields contributed in the success of these programs.

Rabindra Jayanti: -

The birthday celebration of the great poet was held in the premises of Rabindra Bhawan as usual. It was commemorated with due respect and immense enthusiasm by the Association. We did arrange for more student participation which made the programme more palatable & enjoyable for the spectators and other participating artists. Care was taken to make the atmosphere comfortable by installing sufficient coolers and good

supply of drinking water. Celebration of Rabindra Jayanti is gradually emerging as a special program in Delhi. This year almost 400 child artists and students performed in the programmes of 158th Birth Anniversary of the National Poet.

Bhasha Shahid Dibas:-

In the year 1961, on 19th May, in Barak Valley's Shilchar (Assam), 11 activists became martyrs in their attempt to defend the honour of their mother tongue (Bengali). Since last 5 years we are trying hard to spread this story of sacrifice amongst the Bengalees of the Capital. We sincerely consider it our holy duty to instill a sense of pride into the heart of the Generation Next about their mother-tongue and inspire them to guard the honour of the same zealously.

Cine Festival:-

Bengal Association celebrates Bengali Cine Festival every year. It was planned meticulously and elaborately. The occasion turned out to be a huge success. Ms. Rituparna Sengupta – the artist of national as well as international fame – graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The presence of such artists as Abir Chatterjee, Gargi Roy Chowdhury added colour to the festival.

Bijoya Sammelani:-

The present committee arranged for "Bijoya Sammelani" to celebrate devoutly the victory of Durgatinashini Durga over the evil forces of the cosmos.

It was a perfect way to leave the trivialities of the mundane world behind and cultivate the seed of brotherhood and companionship amongst us.

All India Bengalee Association (AIBA):-

In the year 2015, it was for the first time a pan-Indian organisation called "All India Bengalee Association" was established chiefly by the pioneering effort of the Bengal Association. It was a proud moment in the history of Bengali people. The General Secretary of Bengal Association, Delhi - Shri Tapan Sengupta was elected the 'chairman', and Shri Moloy Roy of Bengal Association, Chennai was selected as "convenor" of AIBA.

We on behalf of Bengal Association participated in the 4th conference of All India Bengalee Association which was held in Patna. The next conference of AIBA is due in September. This institution has already successfully organised 5 conferences.

We are convinced that the strong support, meaningful guidance and valuable suggestions from all of you would lead us in future and help us in achieving our goal.

World Theatre Day:-

The World Theatre Day was celebrated on 31st March, 2019. Our main prerogative behind arranging such programs is to let the Bengali Theatre Groups of Delhi & NCR to show their talents before an intellectually matured audience as well as to motivate them to carry on their art form to excellence. This year more than 25 theatre groups presented their performance on the stage.

Celebration of the Diamond Jubilee:-

Bengal Association completed its journey of 60 years. We are carrying on many activities and arranging for many programs throughout the year to commemorate this special event.

We arranged for commemorative lectures in the memory of late members of the Working Committee in order to highlight the various aspects of social upliftment.

Our monthly literary gatherings are perfect opportunity for the budding as well as established literatures of Delhi to show their talent and progressing ahead in this field.

Our curriculum also includes Health Camps, Educational programs for the needy and coaching classes for technologically handicapped senior citizens.

Bengali Cinema:-

Bengal Association is regularly showing Bengali movie on the last Sunday of every month. Mostly the award winning films are shown so that the richness of Bengali cinema could be appreciated and would be promoted accordingly. With pleasure we inform you that our venture has encouraged many Bengali Clubs in Delhi. They have also started showing Bengali films at their respective venue. Such information are source of pleasure to all of us.

Digangan:-

Digangan - the literary magazine of Bengal Association - has undergone some changes in the form of reconstruction of the Editorial board from the last year. Our capable Editors are working relentlessly to take the magazine to a much higher level.

Association Sambad:-

From now on Association Sambad - the monthly newsletter has emerged as a herald of not only Bengal Association but also all Bengali organisations of Delhi & NCR. As a solution to the postal problem that the newsletter has faced, we have started to send a bulk supply of at least 25 copies through the local representatives for distribution in their respective areas. We are uploading the same in our Website: www.bengalassociation.com diligently within 10th of every month, as well as in the Facebook page of Bengal Association so that members can read them at their leisure. I am requesting all the

members present here to send us the news of the socio-cultural activities of their respective local groups and we will cover/include it in our forthcoming issues.

Book Fair:-

The 18th Book Fair was held in the premises of Griha Kalyan Kendra, Gole Market from 17th April to 21st April, 2019.

It was inaugurated by renowned literary figure Shrimati Selina Hossain of Bangladesh.

We are well aware of the diminishing reading habit of the present generation. The unavailability of good books, more specifically good Bengali books in this region, is for sure one of the reasons behind it. We hold the Book Fair every year to inculcate reading habit and promote the sell of Bengali books in the capital and its adjoining places. The die-hard book lovers find it thrilling to see varieties of books and publishers under one roof.

This Book Fair, like all previous ones, was organised with huge support from reputed publishers, the Department of Higher Education, Department of Information and Culture – Government of West Bengal and the Department of Culture – Government of India respectively. We extend our hearty gratitude to all of them.

The publishers and Book Sellers from Kolkata, Delhi and some other places as well, participated in the Fair. There were special mention should be made about the fact that there were more than 70 Book Stalls in this year's Fair.

Social Activities:-

Empowerment of women is an important aspect of social upliftment which needs to be seriously under taken by organisations like ours for the simple reason that it could lead to contribute in the economic upliftment of the country as a whole while taking care of the small family units.

Respected lady members of our organisation arrange for meetings to discuss and find solution of various social issues faced by women and take effort to educate and assist them with legal advices.

Madanpur Khadar: Junior School of Bengal Association:-

As you are well aware we have already pledged financial help for the education of the underprivileged children. We have established a school at Madanpur Khadar in the outskirts of Delhi, to teach Bengali to the children of financially weak families. Spreading & Popularising the Bengali language in the sole aim of these projects. Three teachers are taking care of 65 students in the school at present.

Future Plans & Programs - Mission 2020:-

- *Tourist Lodge in Haridwar:* We took the initiative last year and have already surveyed the lands identified for the project. We have started working on the legal procedure as well. We are hopeful of getting some good news, in this regard, very soon.
- *Old Age Home:* To build an Old Age Home in Delhi is one of our dream project. We have already held some meaningful discussions with the officials of the Urban Development, Housing and Urban Urban Poverty Alleviation Department and Social Justice and Empowerment Department of the Government of India.
- *Bangla Academy:* Our dream of establishing a Bangla Academy in Delhi is going to be fulfilled soon. The chief minister of the Delhi – Shri Arvind Kejriwal declared the much cherished news of establishment of Bangla Academy from the platform of Cine Festival. Our heartfelt thanks to Mr. Kejriwal for that.
- *Artist Benevolent Fund:* We are aware of the plight of the distressed Bengali performing and creative artists of Delhi. Their dedicated performances entertained us for long. Hence it is our moral responsibility to stand by them in their hour of need. With this aim we have created a fund to help these artists and provide some financial support to their families. But without your unflinching support our mission will remain unfulfilled. This year we could provide health insurance to some of the needy artists by using Artist Benevolent Fund. We thank you profusely for your co-operation.
- *Medical Camp:* Medical expenses, as we all know, has reached sky high now-a-days, more so for the economically backward sections of the society. We are struggling to reach them by arranging Medical Camps in those areas so as to provide them medical facilities without financial burden. We undertook the arrangement of 4 Health Camps in various places of the city and in the premises of Bengali Medium Schools.
- *To arrange suitable accommodation for poor visitors in Delhi:* Many people visit Delhi each year to avail of the advanced medical treatment. Hotels being too expensive they often face great difficulty in getting good but cheap accommodation. We are considering of negotiating with the guest houses of different Kalibari's of Delhi to charge these helpless visitors a subsidized amount for their stay, while the Association will reimburse the concession.
- To donate computers to all our affiliated schools.
- To provide financial help to atleast one needy student in each of our affiliated schools.

- *Adult Education Centre:* We have noticed many uneducated poor Bengalees working as vegetable vendors, rickshaw pullers, domestic helps for their livelihood in many places of Delhi, for example, Dwarka, Rohini, Seemapuri. Many of them could have enjoyed better life style with confidence had they been better educated. We need to focus our attention on this area urgently.
- The Association has already initiated the elephantine task of preparing a comprehensive list of famous Bengalees from different professions in and around the capital. This list would include doctors, lawyers, engineers and all the persons of other modern categories of professional backgrounds your help in this field would be deeply appreciated.
- We have also started compiling a 'Members Directory' with all the relevant information. We need your co-operation in this area.
- We also want to establish a branch of Bengal Association in West Bengal.

Annual Account and Balance Sheet:-

We have already sent you our annual accounts statements for the period ending 31st March, 2019 along with auditor's report and observation. This will be discussed separately in detail. We are happy to inform you that with good wishes of our members and patrons, despite several difficulties, we have been able to save some funds.

I convey my heartfelt thanks to our respected President Shri Amitabha Mukherjee, Treasurer Shri Debashish Bhowmick and other members of the committee on behalf of Bengal Association and as the General Secretary of the institution. I also thank our auditor M/s D.C. Bhattacharjee for scrutinizing our accounts within a short time.

I appeal to all the honourable members that in future also we will take strong and careful steps ahead so as to build up the financial muscle of the Bengal Association.

Acknowledgement:-

I thank all our patrons, organisation and individual, for their strong support and co-operation for all our projects throughout the year. They are the inspiration behind all our social and cultural activities.

On behalf of the Bengal Association, I extend my gratitude to the Department of Higher Education of the Govt. of West Bengal (Samajik Shiksha Shakha Kolkata), Chief Resident Commissioner Department of Culture & Information, New Delhi (Govt. of West Bengal), Sahitya Academy, Sangeet Natak Academy and Lalit Kala Academy for their facilitation in the cultural area which uplifted our spirit with inspiration and motivation.

I sincerely thank all the participating cultural groups, various other associations and schools for their active enthusiastic participation in all our cultural events. We are also

thankful to the Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Delhi Kalyan Samiti and Department of Art & Culture & Languages, Govt. of NCT, Delhi.

My sincerest thanks to all our Sponsors, Advertisers and respected Donors. Without their financial help our dreams would have remained unfulfilled.

Our Book Fair has successfully reached a different dimension altogether. The inspiration, co-operation and strong support of the publishers of Kolkata, Department of Higher Education, Department of Culture and Information – Govt. of West Bengal, Department of Culture – Govt. of India and other well-wishers helped us to achieve this success.

We express our deep regards for all of them. I am personally thankful to each and every member of Bengal Association for motivating and encouraging me to keep my promises and fulfill my commitments.

I hereby thank all of you not merely for giving your valuable time to attend this meeting but also for your esteemed suggestions and valued judgements which enabled us to establish our organisation firmly on a higher pedestal.

Tapan Sengupta
General Secretary