

Youth leader award for Akhil Gogoi

GUWAHATI, Oct 26: Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) secretary Akhil Gogoi received the Indian Youth Leader award instituted by the TV channel CNN-IBN at a function at the New Delhi Taj Hotel. Chairman of the Unique Identification Project Nandan Nilekarni presented the award to Gogoi and seven others selected for the award.

In the seminar on the role of the youth that preceded the award giving ceremony, noted social worker Arvind Kejriwal lauded the role played by KMSS in leading a social movement. KMSS adviser Dr Akhil Ranjan Dutta, its working president Pabitrabrata Daimary and Secretary Akhil Gogoi attended the seminar, which was also attended by industrialist Naveen Jindal, Olympian Rajyavardhan Rathore, among others. The deliberations were compered by Raj deep Sardesai of the CNN-IBN

Accepting the award, Gogoi alleged that the corporate houses have been exploiting all the resources of the country and pushing the common people to penury. Violating the provision of the Constitution of the

country they have been leading the country towards a unitary system. In NE region, a neo-colonial mode of exploitation has been

sought to be applied and States have been denied their right over water. He made an appeal to the Jindal group to withdraw from the NE hydel projects and this provoked Jindal to claim that create any adverse impact.

Gogoi refused to subscribe the view of Naveen Jindal and read out the recommendations of the expert group that studied the downstream impact of the Lower Subansiri Hydroelectric Project. This could draw applause from the audience. Gogoi's reference to his anti-corruption movement in Assam also drew applause from the audience, said a KMSS press release.



(The Assam Tribune-27.10.10)



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Glimpses of the 'Workshop' by 'Janajati Forum' at Guwahati



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Articles on Eternal Faith and Culture and different Socio-Cultural movements in Northeast are invited for publication.

Cow is God: Tripura Tribals don't Milk Cattle

Bagmara (South Tripura), Oct 25: Tribals of the dirt-poor village of Bagmara in Tripura have been holding on to their age-old custom that forbids consumption of cow milk, though nearly each household has at least one milch cow.

"We consider the cows as god; hence we stay away from any act of milking the much cow," Bagmara village chief Ranjit Tripura told IANS. The village is located 170 km south of State capital Agartala. "We also believe that depriving the calf of mother's milk is a sin and gods will not exonerate the sinner," the nonagenarian tribal headman said.

Home to 356 families, consisting of around 2000 men, women and children, the Bagmara tribal village, under the Rupaichari block in southern Tripura, has been ravaged by militancy for years.

The Tripura Government has undertaken several schemes to develop this village sandwiched between two hills.

"To remove this age-old unscientific myth, the state administration has taken plans to train the tribals in modern methods of animal husbandry and to improve their economic condition," State Information Department official Manoranjan Das said.

"A training camp on act of milking and care for much cows was held last week, and more such programmes would be held in the near future," he added. About 300 families are dependent on traditional 'jhum' cultivation (slash and burn method of farming) and 342 families are living below poverty line (BPL).

To improve the condition of the people of 26 villages, including Bagmara, the state's rural development department has constituted 441 self-help groups (SHG) and 72 more would be formed later. "Despite grinding poverty, we have full faith in our gods and customs," the headman said.

"We are a tough group; you will not find a single inch of land in and around our village not utilised," he said.

With tribals forming one third of the mountainous State's total population of 3.8 million, Tripura has a rich cultural heritage of 19 tribes, mostly Hindu.

The Tripuris constitute the largest portion of the tribal community, representing more than 50 percent of the total tribal population of the state.

South Tripura's district Magistrate Samarjit Bhowmik admitted his ignorance about the tribals not consuming cow milk. "I would definitely inquire about it and carry out some awareness campaign. However, a large number of tribals in northeastern India still stick to their traditions and customs," he said, adding that some people among the Chakma tribes never bring their pregnant womenfolk to the hospital, and follow their traditional process of using medicinal plants.

(The Sentinel -26.10.10)

Birth Anniversary of Sankardeva Celebrated in London

GUWAHATI, Oct 28 : The 562nd birth anniversary of the great saint, Srimanta Sankardeva was celebrated at Kent in London city, UK with a daylong programme recently, an email received here said. People from UK and other places thronged Kent to pay obeisance to the saint.

The day began with the traditional 'naam-prasanga' The makeshift Namghar situated in Kent, known as the 'Garden of England,' at Harton Kirbe and South Dareth auditorium at the altar of the 'Guru Ashan', the symbol of devotion of the Assamese people, was redolent with the aroma of incense and echos of drums, khols and claps. In the naam-prasanga, Boloram Dutta led the group. All the devotees from London and other places participated in it. Surjya Hazarika and his wife Dr Eva Hazarika came from Assam to attend the naam-prasanga. The devotees from England included Dr Anil Ranjan Borthakur, Bhuvan Baruah, Kamal Hazarika, Gagan Hazarika, Dr Khogoswar Lahon, Dr Karuna Sagar Das, Tapan Sarma, Dr Tarun Choudhury (Bhortal), Dr Saroda Sarma, Dr Apurba Chandra Baruah, Dr Deva Bora, Binod Sarma and others. Lahori Barthakur, Dhira Hazarika, Jevan Kumari Baruah, Manjeera Choudhury, Puspa Hazarika, Binita Dutta, Surabhi Lahon, Christiana, Binu Sarma, Geeta Baruah, Krishna Baruah, Geeta Sikdar and others added emotions with spiritual flavour to the naam-prasanga institution followed by the distribution of maah prasad to all devotees. On account of the cooperation extended by Dr Mitam Baruah, Pranab Dutta, Arun Bora, Rashmi Baruah, and Arnav Agarwala, the members of the organisation expressed their gratefulness to them.

In the evening, a cultural show began with a song sung by an elderly citizen of London, Kamal Hazarika. Satriya dance was performed by artiste Satarupa chatterjee. Later the president of the Asam Sahitya Sabha unit of London, UK, Lahori Borthakur introduced Padmashree recipient Surjya Hazarika to all the devotees and other people present there as a special guest of the day. The eldest citizen of England among the Assamese people in the UK, Bhuvan Baruah offered public felicitation to Surjya Hazarika on behalf of the Assamese residents of England. He mentioned the contributions made by Hazarika to the cause of

Assamese art, culture and literature and conferred the 'Achievement of Excellence Award, 2010, UK' for his outstanding contribution.

Having received the award at the international forum, he appealed to all to take pragmatic action for the spread of the name and works of Srimanta Sankardeva who was born in Assam and threw light on how to proceed in this respect. He also appealed to the Assamese residents in England to establish an international cultural centre styled as the Srimanta Sankardeva International Cultural Centre. In the meeting, Dr Eva Hazarika who came from Assam read out a self-composed poem, Asomee Air Ekajali Ashirbad.

Two books published by Surjya Hazarika were released - one has been authored by Dr Sanjib Barkakoti under the title Srimanta Sankardeva and Sri Sri Madhavdeva in English and the other one is a book of poems composed and compiled by the younger brother of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, Prabin Hazarika entitled Mon Sagaror Dhou. Both the books were released by Gagan Hazarika, the ex-president of the Asam Sahitya Sabha, UK.

Another attraction was the screening of the feature film, Srimanta Sankardeva, directed by Surjya Hazarika and produced by Paran Barbarooah under the banner of the SH Educational Trust, Guwahati. Dr Anil Ranjan Borthakur, Dr. Tarun Choudhury and other eminent dignitaries appreciated Hazarika as one of the most skilful and efficient film directors at the international level.

The Assamese residents of England also appealed to Surjya Hazarika to make necessary arrangements to showcase the film at the world forum. The people present there felt that owing to lack of publicity the name of Srimanta Sankardeva has failed to receive the same status as those of Swami Vivekananda, Guru Nanak, Swami Narayan and others as a household name. But they expressed the hope that with such type of work as the film, a time would come when Srimanta Sankardeva would become a household name, too.

At the end, the vote of thanks was offered on behalf of the organising committee for the all-round success of the programmes of the day. (The Assam Tribune 29.10.10)