

Bengali Cultural Society of South Jersey

(A Non-Profit Organization)

সংস্কৃতি

Volume 25, Double Issue 2-3

April—September, 2010

Message from the President

The rise and fall of the proposed Bengali Cultural Center.

Earlier this year, most of you have heard about the possibility of establishing a Bengali Cultural Center in South Jersey. Dr Paritosh and Mrs Srimati Chakrabarti proposed to buy and donate a property to us to be used as the Bengali Cultural Center. This was followed by a flurry of activities in March and April of this year. The Chakrabarti family looked at a property at Medford along with us, and we all felt that the place can be made usable after some renovations. Dr Chakrabarti made an offer to the sellers. The offer was accepted and he submitted the Use Waiver application to the township.

During this period we met several times at the Voorhees Middle School, and called at least two general body meetings. Initially there was a lot of excitement and enthusiasm among the community members. But later on as things started to move very fast and the detail conditions of the gift were known the enthusiasm started to fade. We realized that we would be unable to raise an initial start up fund of \$100,000 followed by recurring funds every year to maintain and utilize the facility. Some members of the community questioned if we needed a Bengali Cultural Center since BCS had given only recently over \$100,000 to the Indian Cultural Center (ICC) - BCS is supposed to use the facility per contract with ICC, once it has been built. However to many people like me who were involved in previous efforts of building our own cultural center this was never an issue. In the end we informed Dr. Chakrabarti of our inability to garner enough support and raise funds for the project and Dr. Chakrabarti called it off.

Since the course of events did not have a happy ending I am not going to get into any more details. Dr. Chakrabarti subsequently wrote a closure report on this project. If any one is interested please e-mail me at president@bcssj.org and I will be happy to send you the report.

I hope everyone has enjoyed the summer.

From the Editor

I hope everyone had a great summer. Unfortunately as your editor I was very late with the second quarter newsletter, so I am combining the second and third quarter newsletters into one double issue. The president's message above was actually written months ago, so I apologize if the message seems outdated for some of you.

The Durga Puja is coming up very shortly. In less than two weeks by the time you read this. I hope everyone is planning to be there for at least one day. Location and directions can be found on the last page of this newsletter and also on our website at www.bcscj.org. I hope to see everyone there!

If you are not on our e-mail list and would like to be added, please send your e-mail address to editor@bcscj.org. If you need to make any changes to your e-mail, home address or phone numbers, please also send an e-mail to editor@bcscj.org with the update information.

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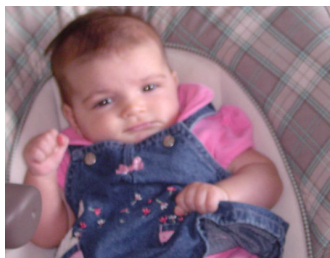
Ex-officio Members:

Indranil Sardar / 856-489-1391 / ex-officio-1@bcscj.org • Pradeep Banerjee / 856-616-9051 / ex-officio-2@bcscj.org

Announcements

Congratulations on the Birth of

- Neil and Patricia Bar had a baby girl named Kiran Marie Bar on March 5, 2010. (1)
- Paul and Vandna Bar had a baby boy named Shaurya Kanai Bar on March 29, 2010. (2)



(1)



(2)

Congratulations to the Marriage of

- Supurna Bhar and Ruchir Gupta on July 31, 2010.
- Sujata Dutta and Sean Patrick Walsh on September 5, 2010.
- Sumit Dutta and Trina Chaudhuri on October 2, 2010.

Congratulations to this Year's Graduates

Rishikumar Sarkar, Shajohn (John) and Shujosh (Josh) Basak, Nandini Sikdar, Diya Chakraborty, Alicia Jamil, Romir Ray Chaudhuri, Tiyaash Chakraborty

Condolences to

- On the passing of Shri Lalaji Deshbandhu, one of the founding members of the Bengali Cultural Society of South Jersey.
- Bishakha (Tuli) Sen on the passing of her father, Jyotsna Moy Ghosh.
- Chitrita and Dhiraj Chanda on the passing of their daughter, Tuhina Guha Majumdar.

Local Events and Activities

An expanded list of events is periodically sent by e-mail to members who are on our e-mail list. If you would like to be added to our e-mail list or would like to correct or change your e-mail address, please send an e-mail to editor@bcssj.org. Thanks.

- A Grand Hindustani Vocal Concert will be performed by Vidushi Shubhra Guha on Saturday, October 23, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. The concert will be held at Chinmaya Vrindavan located at 95 Cranbury Neck Road, Cranbury, NJ 08512. Tickets: \$15.00 per person/\$10.00 students with ID (Children under 12 free). Sponsor Levels: \$250, \$150, \$100. For more information, please contact: Asha Das - (609) 799-8576; Anasuya56@aol.com or Ramanathan (732) 422-6830; Ramaraj2006@gmail.com. Website: www.chinmayavrindavan.org
- Never too early to plan for next year's Banga Sammelan. The celebration is scheduled to be held from July 1st to July 3rd, 2011 at the Baltimore Convention Center in Baltimore, MD. All information can be found at www.nabc2011.net. Facebook and Twitter pages are also available for the event at the following addresses: www.facebook.com/pages/North-American-Bengali-Conference-2011/132853913414382 and twitter.com/nabc2011.
- Indian Dance Competition—Season 3. Want to be 2010 - Indian Dance Idol? Participate in the competition to show your talent. Competition will be conducted in New Jersey on November 21st. Visit www.indiandancecompetition.com for more information, or e-mail: idcdance2@gmail.com or call (240)-422-1986.
- Several members of our community will be participating in this year's Philadelphia marathon. For anyone else who is interested in running the marathon or half marathon please visit the marathon website at www.philadelphiamarathon.com. The marathon will be taking place the weekend of November 19 - 21. Hope to see some of you there.

Annual Picnic 2010

The Annual BCS Picnic was held this year on August 1st at Laurel Acres Park in Mount Laurel. Although rain was in the forecast, we were spared the rain, and many people came out to enjoy good food and fun games, including the first annual phuchka eating contest. Here are some pictures from the event.



Above - The Grill masters.



Below - Phuchka eating at it's fastest and finest.



Above - A friendly game of Kabaddi.

Left - No Bengali outing is complete without food, especially a picnic.



Below - Co-winners of the phuchka eating contest sharing a moment with the most glorious trophy.



Above - Kids getting ready for the three legged race.

Below - Everyone was pooped after a day of so much fun.



Team Rides Auto Rickshaw Through India for Charity and Fun

The Rickshaw Run is a 2,000 mile, two week trek across the entire sub-continent of India, all in the name of charity. Organized by The League of Adventurists, there's just one tiny catch to keep things interesting: the journey must be made in what is easily deemed the least suitable vehicle for transport, the Indian auto-rickshaw. Below is an account of the Rickshaw Run from a participant from the Boston area. For more information visit rickshawrun.theadventurists.com.

The three of us are sitting here in Varanasi, India, having driven over 1,000 kilometers in the last four days. The days have consisted of dodging cows (which are everywhere), lorry trucks and people that seem to pop up from out of nowhere. With a road map of India sprawled out as we bounce along in our tuk tuk, we're trying to figure out how to cover 2,000 more kilometers in 10 days in a 3 wheeler, while keeping our sanity and sense of humor. Some call it an exercise in self-torture. We call it the adventure of a lifetime.

Our team, Raiders of the Lost Tuk, consisting of Brianna Limebrook, Kate DeWald and Jim Matheson, is participating in one of the strangest charity events in the world, the Autumn Rickshaw Run. Alongside 70 other teams from around the world, we are here in India with high hopes of forcing 150cc of Indian engineering at it's...well, not it's finest...over 2,000 miles of a diverse Indian landscape. We're attempting to make a 2,000 mile dash across the sweaty jungle heat, dirt tracks, monsoon rains, and Himalayan peaks in our little 7hp, 150cc, 30mph max and prone-to-breaking-down auto-rickshaw (also known as a "tuk-tuk"), all for charity.

Leveraging the unorthodoxy of the Rickshaw Run to do a lot of good for charity while also having heaps of fun and touring India was a win-win. We have dedicated our journey to raising money for two great charities: Boston-based Friends of Maiti Nepal, who works tirelessly for the prevention and rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking in many of the areas we are traveling through, as well as the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, a cause dear to our team as teammate Jim has been living with Type 1 diabetes since being diagnosed at the age of 10.

We landed in Kolkata late on Monday night. It was total culture shock. There is no book, movie or website that can truly do justice to India. We are now 4 days into our trek and what an experience it has already been. It feels like 3 months have gone by! People flock to us wherever we stop. We stop in what appears to be the middle of nowhere, and within two minutes a crowd of 10 to 15 has surrounded us asking us questions about our family, where we're from, what we're doing.

Each state has been like its own country. The Himalayas left us with no words to describe their majesty, the countryside of West Bengal, the horses and carriages in Purnea, the holy cerand everyone from rickshaw cyclists to cow herders, talking on their cell phones. It is like being taken into your history books and watching various decades of history unfold simultaneously before your eyes. A melting pot of culture and thousands of years of humanity in the works.

People do anything to avoid hitting cows, even the large and brightly colored lorry trucks careening down the 1 lane roads at 70km+ per hour. There is heat worse than east coast humidity, flies everywhere, overcrowding and noisy city traffic that has already rattled our eardrums and the occasional smell of raw sewage. The roads are dented with potholes and only after 1,000km we saw our first stop sign (which no one stopped at) and can count the number of traffic lights we've seen on one hand. Amidst all this chaos though, there is this sense of serenity and reverence in being in the birthplace of the world's oldest religion. Knowing that we are doing this to raise awareness for our charities helps us get through the low points. All we want at the end of this trip is to be able to look back and say wow, "Look at what we just accomplished." And of course, "What a ride!"



Kolkata Khobor

Mamata men sheltering Maoists: State

In a bid to counter Mamata Banerjee's allegations of excesses by CPM cadres with support from the joint forces in Jangalmahal, the state government has prepared a report alleging that a section of Trinamool Congress activists is harbouring armed Maoists.

Chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee has taken up the matter with Union home minister P Chidambaram in Delhi on Tuesday.

"There are specific intelligence inputs of Maoists having sought shelter in parts of East Midnapore. Some of them are being harboured by a section of politicians. It seems that the Maoists are extracting their pound of flesh for help provided during the liberation of Nandigram," a senior police officer said.

Though the state government and the CPM has been accusing the Trinamool of supporting the Maoists, this is probably for the first time that a list has been prepared, mentioning names of leaders who are purported to have provided shelter to Maoists.

According to police, the list includes the name of a lawyer who is alleged to have given shelter to a number of rebels. Not too long ago, the Trinamool had also brandished a list of locations where the CPM allegedly set up armed camps.

"This is nothing but an effort by the embarrassed state government to pass the blame on the Trinamool. What more can it do after the Governor and the country's home minister spoke of armed CPM camps in Lalgah? The state government is in charge of law and order. Why then are not the police carrying out raids to nab the so-called Maoists holed up in the houses of our leaders, instead of preparing false reports?" a senior Trinamool leader in Kolkata said.

Bomb threat forces plane to land at Kolkata

A Singapore Airlines plane with 250 passengers and 15 crew members, on a flight from Moscow to Singapore,

made an emergency landing at Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport following a bomb threat.

Nothing incriminating has been found in the aircraft after a thorough search by personnel of the bomb detection and disposal squad of the Bureau of Civil Aviation and Security, it was learnt.

Baggage of all passengers was also searched and cleared by the BDDS personnel. The cargo being carried by the plane was offloaded and has been taken to an isolated spot for a search by the Bomb Disposal Squad personnel.

La Marts principal to continue in job

La Martiniere for Boys principal Sunirmal Chakravathy will continue to serve the school along with the three other teachers, who were arrested and bailed out on Monday in connection with 13-year-old student Rouvanjit Rawla's suicide in February. The boy had killed himself after he was canned at the school.

The school authorities came out in their support after a governing body meeting on Tuesday afternoon. "The accused, including the principal, are yet to be held guilty and it's not binding on the school to act against them till the charges are proved," said school secretary Supriyo Dhar.

Addressing the media after the board meeting, Dhar clarified that the school wasn't contemplating any action against the teachers.

Sports

Commonwealth Games Kick off in Delhi

The 19th Commonwealth Games kicked off on October 3rd in Delhi. After the first couple days of competition, Australia has a commanding lead on the medal count. India and England are following in second and third place behind the Aussies, but the Aussies have almost double the medals than India and England.

So far, most of India's gold medals have come from their shooters and wrestlers.

Shooters Gagan Narang and Abhinav Bindra took home three gold medals, while wrestlers Renu Bala Chanu and Rajinder Singh won a gold apiece.

Magical Laxman seals thrilling one-wicket win over Australia

VVS Laxman overcame his sore back to become the hero of a nail-biting one-wicket victory for India, who retained the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in dramatic fashion in Mohali. In one of the most memorable finishes in recent history, Pragyan Ojha picked up two leg-byes off Mitchell Johnson to seal the result, which until that delivery could also have been a tie or an Australian win.



Tendulkar Player of the Year

Sachin Tendulkar won the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Cricketer of the Year award while team mate Virender Sehwag was adjudged the Test Cricketer of the Year.

Tendulkar also bagged the inaugural People's Choice award and featured in both the test and one-day international teams of the year.



Bangla Movies

MON CHAYE TOMAAYE

Starring - Moubani Sorcar, Kamlesh (Mumbai), Soumitra Chatterjee, Debika Mukherjee

Directed by Prabir Kar, Mon Chaye Tomaaye is a comedic story of a road-romance that shows love blooming between a young school-girl and a young boy thrown together to journey in the latter's car to Siliguri devastated by bomb blasts. Oni (Kamlesh) is going to celebrate his widowed mother's (Debika Mukherjee) birthday while Riya (Moubani Sorcar) has hitched a ride in his car because her father is missing post the bomb blasts. So far, so good.



Above - Kamlesh and Moubani Sorcar in MON CHAYE TOMAAYE

Along the way, the story steps into a haunted house filled with ghosts waiting for the bridegroom to arrive to marry the waiting female ghost Rupeshwari whose paramour was battered to death by the family in a 'khap' Panchayat ruling. If comedy was missing from your life go and watch Mon Chaye Tomaaye.

PREM BY CHANCE

Starring: Koel Mullick and Abir Chatterjee

Directed by Abhijit Guha and Sudeshna Roy, Prem by Chance is basically a love story the director-duo rightly have played down the romantic angle to bring out the action angle, the extended family angle with characters of all ages, sizes and colors popping out from everywhere. The action scenes are well-choreographed and orchestrated, compared to the stuff dished out in the average Bengali masala film. Also, the music tracks are original and fit into the changing ambience of the film. Prem By Chance has all the ingredients of entertainment, so if you are looking for unabashed, unapologetic and undiluted entertainment, please don't miss this film even by chance.

Below - Movie still from PREM BY CHANCE



Entertainment

Artists for Leh: Kolkata celebrities and stars to help flood victims

Former Indian cricket captain Sourav Ganguly, kicked off a signature campaign 'Artists for Leh' -- a fund-raising initiative for the victims of the Aug 6 flash floods in the north-eastern region of Kammu and Kashmir.

As Leh still reels under the impact of the landslides and is poorly equipped to fight the wintry blusters, where temperatures fall to minus 20 degrees, the campaign will attempt to unite the people of Kolkata in their pledge of support towards the Leh, said the organisers.

Apart from Ganguly, the event also saw pledges from a wide range of eminent people including writer Sunil Gangopadhyay, veteran footballer P K Bannerjee, theatre personality Bratya Bose and tabla maestro Bickram Ghosh.

Dancer Mamata Shankar, actors Rituparna Sengupta, Abir Chatterjee, singers Lopamudra Mitra, Srikanto Acharya, Indrani Sen, Bangla bands Bhoomi, Cactus, Dohar, Chandrabindoo have also pledged their support for this movement.

'Artists for Leh' signature campaign also marked the start of a drive towards a fundraiser that hopes to donate substantial funds to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for the people of Leh.



Kids Corner

We will be having a coloring contest at the Durga Puja, so here is a picture of Durga Thakur for everyone to practice your coloring skills.



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(A Non-Profit Organization)

P. O. Box 307
Voorhees, NJ 08043

SANSKRITI
(A Quarterly Newsletter)



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We are on the web

www.bcssj.org

Upcoming Events



DURGA PUJA

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 15th to 17th at the Lenape Regional High School, 235 Hartford Road, Medford, NJ 08055

DIRECTIONS

From North Jersey/New York
I-295 S - Exit 40 - Rt 38 West (Moorestown), Make a left/U-turn onto Hartford Road.

FROM BEN FRANKLIN BRIDGE
Take Ben Franklin Bridge to Rt 38 East - turn right onto Hartford Road.

FROM DELWARE SOUTH
I-295 N - Exit 36A - Rt 73 S - Slight left onto Church Road - left onto E Greentree Road - right onto Church Road - left onto Hartford Road.