



# Naamghar Association of America

## NEWSLETTER

WWW.NAAMGHAR.ORG

Volume 4/Issues 2/ April-June 2021

### MESSAGE FROM THE *BOR-MEDHI*

**Dear** community members and well-wishers of NAAM,

While the communities in North America are gradually opening up, we still have lockdown continuing in Assam due to the second wave of Covid in Assam and several states in India. We express our gratitude to all the people who are working in this environment, putting their own well-being at risk, to help others. Vaccination still continues, and some of them with only the first dose received are getting infected seriously before they are able to take the second dose. Let us all follow the prescribed guidelines not only for our own safety but also for the safety of all others around us. Thank you!

Now coming to this second quarter newsletter of 2021 from NAAM, it is my pleasure to highlight a few key points:

- A) We are very pleased to announce that we are planning a Fund Raising NAAM Event on August 28, 2021, Saturday. Please stay tuned as we give shape to the first fund raising virtual event in 2021. A community letter with a Flyer will go out prior to the event.
- B) NAAM initiated a formal dialog with the Board of Trustees of the Ved Mandir of East Brunswick, New Jersey for the space for a community Naamghar temporarily. A photo of the space requested is shown in the next column.

The *Guru Āsana* (or *Guru Axon*) that we have is approximately 4'x4'x3'. This *Guru Āsana* will be placed in the sanctum

sanctorum of our permanent *Naamghar* when we will have the resources to build it. Meanwhile, we are looking for a sacred place as described above to house it temporarily.



We want it in a place that is accessible to all, where there will be daily *Banti Prajalan*, a place where the Assamese diaspora from all over North America can visit and offer their prayers any time. (A copy of the letter sent to Ved Mandir is included in this newsletter).

C) We have also sent a letter to the current Chief Minister of Assam and copied to the Cultural Minister of Assam, seeking funding towards our permanent Naamghar and Srimanta Sankardeva Culture Center in North America.

D) I had mentioned in the Q-1 newsletter about our interaction with the HUA (Hindu University of America). Dr Babul Borah's paper submitted to HUA was shown in our Q-1. My paper is shown in this current issue of Q-2 (a photo is included in this version), titled "Importance of Hindu Studies in an Academic Environment: Case Study – Sankardeva". The president of HUA, Kalyan Viswanathan, sent me an email on May 18, 2021, which was shared earlier in our NAAM-WG team. It stated that "Your Essay covering contemporary evidence for reincarnation, as well as the life of Shankardeva from the 15th century was very well written". Thus, we are at least beginning to educate our non-Assamese friends and associates about Sankardeva and drive our cause by encouraging them to join us.

I continue to take a class in the Spring quarter currently at HUA on *Antaranga Yoga*, taught by Raghu Ananthanarayanan, who helps the students to reflect on the spiritual aspects of our own lives from the stories of the epic Mahabharata. For example, Arjuna facing the enemy at the imminent war, had the questions like – "who am I, where am I, what is the right thing to do, what choice do I make when I confront a difficult situation?" Then Krishna gave him the answers. However, when we reflect it in our own lives, Arjuna went to the meditative state by talking to Krishna, where Krishna was his own meditator. Thus, Krishna is our own meditator, and it is the process of getting an answer inside of us, and not externally. That is the *Sanatana Dharma*. We become "moral human being".

I wanted end with a quote from Swami Vivekananda (source, Ritambhara.org.in of Raghu Ananthanarayanan),

*"You have to grow from the inside out. None can teach you; none can make you spiritual. There is no other teacher but your own atma."*

Sincerely,  
Dr. Binoy K. Bordoloi, Bor Medhi  
Email: [binoy.bordoloi@gmail.com](mailto:binoy.bordoloi@gmail.com)

## UPDATE ON FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

NAAM is planning to host a cultural event to raise community awareness about NAAM's activities and to raise funds for a Naamghar in North America; details are coming soon.

NAAM also soliciting your donations via its website (<https://naamghar.org/>), NAAM Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/NaamgharAssociationOfAmerica/>), and the "DONATE" button on this page to fund a community Naamghar in North America.

NAAM is looking forward to an active participation of the community (Assamese diaspora) for realizing

a common dream of building a Naamghar in North America. Please use the "DONATE" button below and/or contact Dr. Binoy Bordoloi at [binoy.bordoloi@gmail.com](mailto:binoy.bordoloi@gmail.com) for additional information.

Thank you!

Please contribute to NAAM's effort to build a naamghar in North America:



## NAAM LETTER TO THE VED MANDIR



# Naamghar Association of America, Inc. (NAAM)

*Celebrating the spiritual traditions and philosophical teachings of Srimanta Sankardeva.*

### Chairman (*Bor Medhi*)

Dr. Binoy K. Bordoloi

### Secretary

Mr. Shyam Dev Choudhury

### Treasurer

Dr. Purandar Sarmah

### Board of Trustees

Mr. Niraj Barbara

Dr. Binoy K. Bordoloi

Mr. Niren Choudhury

Mr. Shyam Dev Choudhury

Mr. Suranjoy Hazarika

Ms. Anu Perlmutter

Dr. Purandar Sarmah

### Proposal requesting use of an area temporarily for the Naamghar Association of America (NAAM) at the Ved Mandir, Milltown, New Jersey

#### NAAM contact person:

Dr. Binoy K. Bordoloi, *Bor Medhi*

Chairman - NAAM

[www.Naamghar.org](http://www.Naamghar.org)

8 Slack Court

Bridgewater NJ 08807

Tel: 908-458-2456

#### Ved Mandir contact person:

Ms. Rita Chandhok

Contact Person - Ved Mandir

<http://www.vedmandir.org/>

1 Ved Mandir Drive

Milltown, NJ 08850

Tel: 732-371-0044

### What is NAAM and what are its goals?

Naamghar Association of America, Inc. (NAAM), was established in 2016, and was granted 501(c)(3) non-profit status in 2018. It is a spiritual and cultural organization. The mission of NAAM is to construct and manage a place for community prayers called *Naamghar* for the Assamese diaspora in the United States to celebrate the traditions and to spread the philosophical teachings of the great Vaishnavite Saint Srimanta Sankardeva. Vaishnavism in Assam is termed *ek-Shoronia Namdhormo*; *ek-Shoronia* means that the devotee takes refuge in only one God, Krishna. It is also known as *Mahapurushia Namadharm*.

### What is NAAM looking for?

The sanctum sanctorum in the *Naamghar* is called the *Manikut*. The *Guru Āsana* (Seat of the Guru, it is also written as 'Guru Axon') is placed inside the *Manikut*. The *Guru Āsana* is a 7-tiered wooden structure. Within it is kept the most sacred texts of the followers of Sankardeva, the *Bhagawat Gita* and the *Kirtan Ghosha* (book of kirtans composed by Sankardeva in praise of Lord Krishna.) NAAM possesses a *Guru Āsana* that was duly consecrated by the head of the Sri Sri Auniati Satra, one of the oldest and largest monasteries in Majuli, Assam, that teaches and practices Sankardeva's philosophy.

The *Guru Āsana* we have is approximately 4'x4'x3'. This *Guru Āsana* will be placed in the sanctum sanctorum of our *Naamghar* when we will have the resources to build it. Meanwhile, we are looking for a sacred place to house it temporarily. We want it in a place that is accessible to all, a place where the Assamese diaspora from all over North America can visit and offer their prayers.

### Why NAAM is requesting Ved Mandir for a temporary space for its Naamghar?

The philosophical and religious tenets of the Ved Mandir and NAAM are in harmony. We view Ved Mandir and NAAM being two offshoots of the same religion with fundamental understanding of Hiranyagarbha:

*CONTD.*



## NAAM LETTER TO THE VED MANDIR (CONTD.)

*Celebrating the spiritual traditions and philosophical teachings of Srimanta Sankardeva.*

*Hiranyagarbha Samabart-tagre Bhutasya Jatah Patireka Asit  
Sa Dadhar Prithivim Dyaamutemam Kasmay Debayah Habisa Bidhem*

In the beginning rose Hiranyagarbha, born Only Lord of all created beings.  
He fixed and holdeth up this earth and heaven. What God shall we adore with our oblation?  
-Rigveda X/21/1

The physical space that we viewed is the appropriate size and most importantly the serene, spiritual environment of the temple made us feel this would be the right place. Ved Mandir has two priests in-residence; it is very fitting that the priests will do the honor of the daily *Banti Prajalan* (lighting of the Diya) at the *Guru Āsana*.

**Donations and other benefits to Ved Mandir for providing NAAM a space for temporary usage?**

On Ved Mandir's approval of NAAM's request, NAAM is prepared to make a negotiated annual donation to Ved Mandir for the duration we house our *Guru Āsana* there.

We organize two annual cultural events that involve renting a hall. Your hall with the performing stage, dining area and kitchen are perfect for the kind of events we organize. We will approach Ved Mandir first and explore other venues only if your venue is not available on the dates that we need the facility. We will pay the standard rental fees for the use of the facilities. We will promote the location of our *Guru Āsana* in our website and through other communication media. The uniqueness of the structure and curiosity about how Vaishnavism is practiced in Assam will be an added attraction at the temple. It will increase visitors to the Ved Mandir from all over North America.

We, the Board of Trustees of NAAM, hope that our proposal will get favorable consideration from the Ved Mandir Board of Trustees and create a unique opportunity of doing something collectively for the two organizations and the great Hindu religion of ours. We look forward to meeting the Ved Mandir Board of Trustees in person to make a presentation and answer any questions that you may have.

Thanking you, on behalf of the Board of Trustees of NAAM.

Sincerely,



Binoy Kr. Bordoloi Ph D.  
Chairman, NAAM  
Ph: 1-908-458-2456  
June 10, 2021

**<https://naamghar.org>**  
**Email: [naaminfo@naamghar.org](mailto:naaminfo@naamghar.org)**  
**Address: 8 Slack Ct., Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

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## FEATURED ARTICLE

### ***BHAONA - TRANSITION AND FUTURE***

***By Arup Saikia***

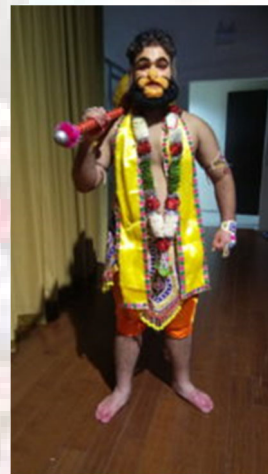
**Bhaona** is a traditional form of religious drama in Assam, created in the sixteenth century by the Sri Sri Srimanta Sankardeva, and utilized as an audio-visual medium for spreading a social and religious reformatory message among the masses. Originally, only the staging of the *Ankiya Nats* (short drama) written by Sankardeva and Madhavdeva were called *Bhaona* or more precisely *Ankiya Bhaona*. After the death of Sri Sri Sankardeva, his disciples, including Madhavdeva to Gopal Ata or *Daityari* Thakur did not intend to keep *Bhaona* in its strict original ethos. For the demand of time and realistic acceptance among common masses, the original art-form was refurbished with a new linguistic flavor and story or content. Some formalities of *Bhaona* have been shown nominally like *Nandi* (Benedictory verses) or *Mukti Managala* (the *Sutradhar* or narrator prays for forgiveness of God for any fault at the end of performances) as the role of *Bhaona*. Moreover, changes occurred in language and instead of *Brajawali*, the formal language used by Sri Sri Sankardeva, his disciples adopted the prevalent Assamese language of that period to popularize the common Assamese language and thereby eschew the elite *Brajawali* language.

In the years after 17th century, many *satras* (monasteries) had begun to

flourish and challenge the traditional and existing orthodox *satras*. Most noticeably, the *satradhikars* (head of a monastery) of these newly formed *satras* wrote many *Bhaona* scripts; these devotees of Sri Sri Sankardeva named only those plays written by Sri Sri Sankardeva or Madhavdeva as *Ankiya Nat*. Among the new generations, the cultural aspects of *Bhaona* have been emphasized and easy entertainment is more meticulously displayed. This is how it is surviving even today more and less among all classes and castes of Assam.

The *Bhaona* art-form has evolved into many forms, based on the overall theme or structure of Sankardeva, such as *Phaujiya Bhaona* (started in Cooch Bihar), *Mukha Bhaona* (performed wearing mask, mainly in Majuli), *Matrihashar Bhaona* (in Assamese mother tongue, popular in Upper Assam), *Baresohoria* and *Hazari Bhaona* (simultaneous performance of many *Bhaonas*, under a single pandal in the middle of North and South bank of Assam), *Dhura Bhaona* which originated from *Dhup Kirtan* of Bengal and flourished in Barpeta and Kamalabari monastery – as such *Dhuliya Bhaona*, *Sabah Bhaona*, *Juri*, and *Cukraganar Bhaona* (the traditional *Sutradhara* character is not used).

## ***Bhaona* in action – pictures from live *Bhaona* performances in Assam**



Many other little-known terms of this dance-drama form are available in the nooks and corners of Assam. Nowadays, easy cultural exchange across the globe, coupled with the fast development of digital media shows that taste and outlook of people are changing. It seems that *Bhaona*, except for the pivotal theme, cannot be performed as a medieval drama, overlooking modern trends only in the name of showcasing or preserving our heritage. The shield to safeguard the rich cultural heritage has to evolve with changing time. The fruit of these thoughts is a newly added popular dimension of this art-form, i.e., English *Bhaona* under the directorship of Arup Saikia, and Gitimallika and Arup Saikia as joint coordinators of such efforts. Besides modern Indian languages, it has been

staged in English language in India, as well as, abroad since 2018.



The classical or traditional undertone of *Bhaona* has resonated in songs, dialogues, dance and footsteps in a foreign language. *Bhaona* is a product of a composite culture and



unseen threads that contribute to unite the people of Assam. It influences Assam and the Assamese very deeply on language, economy, and society. New titles related to this art form – *gayan*, *bayan*, *pathak* – and professions of makeup artist and costume maker are created. The mixture of eastern Indian languages- *Brajawali* has further decorated Assamese modern language with many new ways.



*Bhaona* also displays the broader culture of northeastern India. The headgear or *pag* is different from one place to another because of local influence. *Ghuri* or lehenga of the narrator may be taken from *Ojapali*, jackets may be from Tiwa or Mising (two tribal communities in

Assam), and the *Tangali* is found among Bhuyan clan in medieval Assam.

For survival and flourish in a form of popular cultural, *Bhaona* has to be presented as a competitor to the existing and most prevalent modern drama festivals, with the use of ongoing dramatic infrastructure like decorated proscenium or thrust stage, besides the traditional *Namghar* (Assamese prayer house) or traverse stage. Moreover, the mode of expression, dialogue, lighting, orchestra, language, and costume should have a glimpse of its unique beauty, surmounting fundamental barriers. It is the moral responsibility of the people of Assam to vigorously defend and strongly sustain the legacy of *Bhaona* in greater acceptability with ingenuous empathy in different form as time demands.



(Arup Saikia writes about the traditional dance-drama, *Bhaona*, and its resurgence in the modern Assamese imagination. The author is an alumnus of Delhi University. He is a noted cultural activist, actor, scriptwriter, and poet.

He has authored two poetry books, namely *Silpi Satta* and *Sabda*. As the director, actor, and translator, he has performed *Bhaona* in English language for the first time from Assam in India and abroad.

The author can be reached at: [arupsaikia07@gmail.com](mailto:arupsaikia07@gmail.com)).



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## FEATURED ARTICLE

### IMPORTANCE OF HINDU STUDIES IN AN ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT: CASE STUDY – SANKARDEVA

By Dr. Binoy K. Bordoloi

**H**induism is more of a philosophy and a way of life. It is also synonymous with *Sanatana Dharma*. Its very concept is that it defines life and its soul, and thus our existence in a “timeless” manner, which is about *Anadi– Ananta*, or with no beginning and no end. We personify God in the human form of Krishna or Ram, with the poets’ imagination from the epics of *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, respectively. *Ramayana* was probably written down 400 – 700 BC<sup>#1</sup>. It appears that *Mahabharata* War took place in 3067 BC<sup>#1</sup>. However, the epic was written down between 300 – 400 BC<sup>#1</sup>. Carbon dating on Dwaraka city however revealed that it is more than 32,000 years old<sup>#1</sup>. There are estimates that one comes across that *Mahabharata* is probably about 7000 years old and *Ramayana* about 14,000 years <sup>#8</sup>. So, there is a lot of confusion.

The global population at that time period of 300 – 700 BC was probably of the order of only 100 million or less. Population was reported to be 190 million at the time 0 BC or 0 CE<sup>#2</sup>. It began to grow at a much faster rate from about 1400 AC or AD<sup>#2</sup>. We are talking about spiritual life in Bharat at a time when the population density was very low, as compared to today’s India in year 2020 with a population of 1.3 billion, though the political boundary of Bharat or India is now somewhat different. During this long period, the culture and the mind-set of the inhabitants in India have undergone profound changes, even influenced by the invasion by the Moghuls and the Europeans for colonization. While some concepts must have been passed on by word of mouth from generation to generation, the

original materials were written in Sanskrit. *Brajawali* was another written form of language in later days. This is a vast amount of material and accumulated knowledge that one needs to comprehend to appreciate the Hindu way of thinking for the *Sanatana Dharma*.

This article attempts to explain why it is important to get into the Hindu studies in an academic environment for both its breadth and depth. Two examples were picked by the author here to select two widely different topics to convey the divergence of ideas that may be investigated and researched.

- 1) The first example is our soul and its reincarnation as understood from *Sanatana Dharma*, and its scientific and clinical evidence as described by a Psychiatrist at a major US healthcare institution.
- 2) The second example is a brief description of the management of the *neo-vaishnavite* monastery in Assam of North-East India, the core of which is the *Naamghar* (prayer house), started by Srimanta Sankardeva 500 years ago, and its comparison with the European counterpart.

#### Reincarnation of Soul and its Clinical Evidence - Dr Brian Weiss MD in “Many Lives, Many Masters” <sup>#3</sup>:

Psychiatrist Dr Brian Weiss had been working with Catherine, a young patient, for eighteen months. Catherine was suffering from recurring nightmares and chronic anxiety attacks. When his traditional methods of therapy failed, Dr Weiss turned to hypnosis and was astonished and skeptical when Catherine began recalling past-life traumas which seemed



to hold the key to her problems. Dr. Weiss's skepticism was eroded when Catherine began to channel messages from 'the space between lives', which contained remarkable revelations about his own life. Acting as a channel for information from highly evolved spirit entities called the Masters, Catherine revealed many secrets of life and death.

This fascinating case dramatically altered the lives of Catherine and Dr Weiss<sup>#3</sup> and provides important information on the mysteries of the mind, the continuation of life after death and the influence of our past life experiences on our present behavior.

### **Srimanta Sankardeva : Vaishnava Saint of Assam and the contemporary history in India and Europe:**

It would be important to introduce Srimanta Sankardeva here, the Vaishnava saint of Assam<sup>#4</sup>. An attempt is made here to highlights a few milestones in his life and to draw comparison with what was happening in India and Europe at that time<sup>#4, #5, #6</sup>. These are summarized in the form of Table-1 and Table-2 as shown below. Table-1 shows the milestones in his life<sup>#4</sup>. Table-2 summarizes the *neo-vaishnavite* monastery in Assam, the core of which is the *Naamghar* (prayer house), started by Srimanta Sankardeva 500 years ago, and its comparison with the European counterpart<sup>#5, #6</sup>.

Srimanta Sankardeva's literary contributions included Religious books (The *Kirtana*, *Gunamala*, *Bhakti Pradeep*, and several more), Epic (*Harischandra Upakhyan*, *Kurukshetra* and *Rukmini Haran*), Ankia Drama (*Patni Prasad*, *Parijat Haran*, *Rukmini Haran* and more), Translation (The *Bhagawata* – 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> cantos, *Uttarakhand Ramayana* and many more), Borgeet (120 devotional songs; there are a total of 191 Borgeets including those written by his disciple Madhabdeva), *Bhatimas* (*Dev*

*Bhatima*, *Raj Bhatima*, and others), *Brindavani Bastra* (a woven depiction of Krishna, made under the patronage of King Narayana), and the first *Bhaona/Drama* (*Chihnayatra*) <sup>#5</sup>. While he wrote the above literary work in the language of a common man in Assam for easy comprehension, he also wrote one book in Sanskrit known as *Bhakti Ratnakar* <sup>#4</sup>.

The Borgeet (devotional song) music of Sankaradeva appear to have striking resemblance to the Medieval and Renaissance Era (1450 to 1600 AD) European music, and it is a remarkable co-incidence<sup>#7</sup>.

Stradhikars of the various Sattras meet with the visiting *Bhakats* and *Bhakatanis* in an open public forum for a dialog at or near the Naamghar in the monastery. Community events and projects are discussed in that forum. Visitors also come to see the Satradhikar to wish him good health and the Satradhikar offers his blessings in return.



The author participated in one such meeting with the Satradhikar Dr Pitambar Dev Goswami, Auniati Sattra, Kaliapani, Teok, Jorhat in 2015. A photo of this meeting is shown above.

**Table-1 : Srimanta Sankaradeva - Vaishnava Saint of Assam<sup>#4</sup>**

Year	His Age	Milestone in His Life	Contemporary History in India & Europe
1449	0	Srimanta Sankaradeva was born in Nagaon, Assam	Ramananda became 49 years old; 5 <sup>th</sup> Nicholas of Rome became the Pope at Vatican
1469	20	He finishes schooling (in Sanskrit)	Guru Nanak was born in Lahore; Germany discovers first modern printing press
1492	43	In Pilgrimage to Indian cities	Christopher Columbus discovers America
1493	44	Composition and display of his first drama, <i>Chihnayatra</i>	William Shakespeare was not even born yet, born in 1548 when Sankaradeva was 115 yrs old
1499	50	Continues Propagation of religion and culture in Assam	Guru Nanak starts propagation of Sikh religion and culture at the age of 30
1517	68	Establishes the monastery of Belguri Sattr, Majui, Assam	Martin Luther in Germany starts the agitation for the Protestant section of Christianity
1526	77	Busy in literary work and spreading of religion	Moghuls enter India and conquer Delhi; first translation of Bible new testament to English
1532	83	Busy in literary work and spreading of religion	Tulsidas was born in Uttar Pradesh, India; churches in England give up the Catholic church
1547	98	Establishes the Sattr at Patbausi of Barpeta, Assam	Mirabai of India passes away at her age 49
1564	115	Immersed in literary work	Born: Shakespeare, England; Galileo Galilei, Italy
1567	118	Undertakes the weaving project of 'Brindabani Bastra', the depiction of life of Krishna in Brindaban	A museum in Paris has a part of this Bastra and the main section is in British museum of London; Akbar is busy preparing to conquer the fort of Chittorgarh in Rajasthan, India
1568	119	He makes Madhabdeva the heir to his vast literary assets of culture and religion; passes away with his disciples singing devotional song before his <i>Naamghar</i>	Akbar conquers Chittorgarh in Rajasthan, India; Tulsidas of India was of age 36; Spanish sailors discover the islands of Solomon in the Pacific ocean

**Table-2 : Comparison of a Sattr with a Catholic Monastery<sup>#6</sup>**

Attributes	Catholic		Majuli Sattras
	Monasteries	Parishes	
Organization	These house monks (or Convents for nuns) who have given their life to the services of God and will perform prayerful activities to serve the community; pontiff at the Roman Catholic Church is the Pope; the hierarchy is : Pope > Cardinals > Archbishop > Bishop > Priest	Parishes are large groups of worshipping lay people at neighborhood churches, whether Catholic or Protestant; individual Catholic church is headed by	Sankaradeva's socio-cultural-religious innovation was Decentralized Leadership Management; every Sattr has its independent <i>Satradhikar</i> , who is the chief executive officer, and he may form a committee of <i>Bhakats</i> for their view points; <i>Satradhikars</i> do not report to any centralized authority

<b>Earning a Living</b>	Living expenses of inmates are from donations, alms and sponsorships; certain orders earn money, but none is individually kept, all goes back to Monastery or Convent	Chief Priest, always a man, whereas the Protestant church is headed by a Minister, who can be a	<i>Bhakats</i> live on agricultural activities; Sattras generate their own income from assets they own, though donations are received also
<b>Cultural Activities</b>	There is no cultural activity requirement, though they can have special calling for music, teaching or nursing	woman; Catholics have confessionals, but Protestants do not	Participation of <i>Bhakats</i> in <i>Satriya</i> cultural activities is a requirement, e.g. in <i>Satriya</i> dance, Borgeets, music and dramas/ <i>Bhaonas</i>
<b>Practicing Celibacy</b>	Only Celibates; Roman Catholic priests take a vow of celibacy and abstain from sexual relations		Sattras have both celibates and householders or families; celibacy seems to be a minority; one example is Auniati Sattra

## References:

#1: Dr Sanjib K Borkakoti, President, Society for Srimanta Sankaradeva, Assam, India; [www.sankaradeva.com](http://www.sankaradeva.com) and [www.drsanjib.net](http://www.drsanjib.net)

#2: Kalyan Viswanathan at the Fall-2020 class, 'HSF5000 Orientation to Hindu Studies', the Hindu University of America, [www.hua.edu](http://www.hua.edu)

#3: Dr Brain Weiss, MD, is a psychiatrist who lives and practices in Miami, Florida, USA. He is a graduate of Columbia University and Yale Medical School and is the former Chairman of Psychiatry at the Mount Sinai Medical Center. Author has attended a seminar presented by Dr Weiss in New York City. Dr. Weiss is the author of the international bestseller "*Many Lives, Many Masters*" (first published in US in 1988), and several related books including "*Through Time Into Healing*", "*Only Love is Real*", "*Messages from the Masters*", all published by Piatkus, and others.

#4: Dr Bimal Phukan, author of book titled, "*Srimanta Sankaradeva : Vaishnava Saint of Assam*" (2010)

#5: Dr Pitambar Dev Goswami, author of book titled, "The Blazing Talent – Srimanta Sankaradeva"(2016)

#6 Dr. Binoy K. Bordoloi, article, "*Life & Living : Influence of Majuli Sattras in Assam*", published in the annual convention souvenir *Lutor Pora Mississippi* of Asom Sahitya Sabha North America, July 2015.

#7 Website for Naamghar Association of America (NAAM); participation at the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Virtual Choir Festival 2020, 1-6 December 2020, Bandung Choral Society, led by J B Rupam as Choir Conductor; Gold Medal recipient of the Borgeet Choir, "*Gobinda Chintohu*"; [www.naamghar.org](http://www.naamghar.org)

#8 Nilesh Oak, lectures on Sanaatan Sanskriti; his video's are in YouTube. (Dr Sanjib Kr Borkakoti, who does research on related areas, has stated that a recorded lecture of Nilesh Oak was very valuable.)

(The author is the Chairperson of NAAM aka Bor-Medhi and can be reached at: [binoy.bordoloi@gmail.com](mailto:binoy.bordoloi@gmail.com)).

## RECENT AND UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

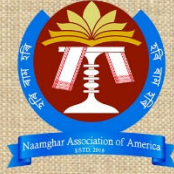
NAAM is planning to organize a fundraising cultural event in Summer 2021. The promotional poster is on the next page; additional details are coming in the upcoming weeks for more details.

We look forward to you attending this summer (summer 2021) event which will feature Assam's traditional Gayan Bayan,

Sattriya Dance, Bhaona, and Borgeet among other cultural forms of the Sankari culture.

**A portion of the proceeds from this fundraising event will be donated to the artists promoting Sankari Culture who are facing hardship due to the ongoing pandemic.**





NAAMGHAR ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (NAAM)

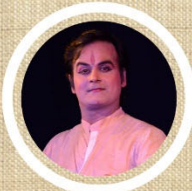
presents

# Sutradhar (ସୂତ୍ରଧାର)

A fund raising cultural event by NAAM

Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> August 2021 | 1:30 PM (EDT) / 11 PM (IST)

Register now at: [www.naamghar.org](http://www.naamghar.org)



**Hemanta Kumar Kalita**

Kathak Nritya



**Jina Rajkumari Goswami**

Folk Artist



**Priyanka Jagat Saikia**

Dhool Ojapali



**Arunabh kr. Talukdar**

Khool Badan



**Sankumani Sarma**

Singer, New Jersey



**Gayatree Sarma**

Singer, New Jersey



**Rabin Goswami**

Singer, Washington DC

JOIN via ZOOM

TICKET ONLY \$25

additional donation is welcome

Pay via



VISA

zelle



**+1 484-945-2429**

Contact Us on: [naaminfo@naamghar.org](mailto:naaminfo@naamghar.org)

Website: [www.naamghar.org](http://www.naamghar.org)

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[facebook.com/NaaamgharAssociationofAmerica](https://facebook.com/NaaamgharAssociationofAmerica)



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## Q&A

### **Q: What is NAAM?**

**A:** Naamghar Association of America, Inc. (NAAM) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit spiritual and cultural organization formed to construct and manage a Naamghar for the Assamese diaspora to celebrate and perform the spiritual traditions and philosophical teachings of Srimanta Sankardeva. With strong ties with all the *Satras* of Assam, NAAM seek to provide a forum for learned spiritual leaders and traditional artistes to share their knowledge and talent with the current and future generations of the Assamese diaspora.

### **Q: What are the immediate goals of NAAM?**

**A:** Some of the immediate goals of NAAM include spreading awareness on NAAM initiatives, build a digital media platform, plan for fund raising, and participate regularly in Naam-proxongo. NAAM seeks volunteers from

the large Assamese diaspora across the United States to achieve these goals. Please join us (details at the bottom of this newsletter). In our planning activity, the first priority is to identify what is needed to establish a temporary *Naamghar*. This will make the *Guru Axon*, consecrated by the Sri Sri Auniati Satra Satradhikar, more easily accessible to the public, while we work on the longer-term project of building a permanent *Naamghar*.

### **Q: Does NAAM collaborate with other organizations?**

**A:** NAAM is actively seeking to collaborate with all community organizations which are willing to help achieve NAAM's mission. NAAM plans to have meaningful discussion with all organizations in our community; please contact us if you would like to be a part of this conversation (contact details at the bottom).

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## HOW TO GET INVOLVED WITH NAAM?

### **JOIN THE NAAM WORKING GROUP**

**(WG):** We need your help in achieving the dream of building a Naamghar in North America. Therefore, NAAM is open to everyone who is interested in building the Naamghar.

If you are interested in getting involved actively in NAAM's mission, please join the NAAM by sending an email to: [Naaminfo@Naamghar.org](mailto:Naaminfo@Naamghar.org). The WG meets regularly via teleconference/video conference to discuss various issues that are related to NAAM and its mission and goals.

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## NAAM WORKING GROUP TEAM MEMBERS

Following individuals comprise the current NAAM working group (WG) team. ***We invite all individuals who are sincerely interested in the Mission and Goals of NAAM to join the NAAM team.*** The current WG members are:

- Iswar Agarwalla, NC
- Niraj Barbara, PA
- Dr. Rajen Barua, TX
- Dr. Sanjib Bhuyan, NJ
- Pranab Bora, WI
- Lolit Bora, PA
- Subhasini Bora, NC
- Dr. Babul Borah, OH
- Utpal Borah, VA
- Dr. Binoy Bordoloi, NJ  
(*Bor-medhi*)
- Manoranjan Bordoloi, NJ
- Monidipa Bordoloi, CA
- Susanto Bordoloi, CT
- Malabika Brahma, NJ
- Debojit Chowdhury, CA
- Niren Choudhury, NJ
- Dr. Pradip Das, MO
- Shyam DevChoudhury, PA  
(Secretary)
- Dr. Saswati Datta, OH
- Hemanga Dutta, NJ
- Panchali Dutta, NJ
- Sawmick Dutta, CA
- Prandeep Gogoi, NJ
- Kamalakshi Hazarika, NJ
- Suranjoy Hazarika, NJ
- Priyadarshini Inman, NC
- Dr. Jukti Kalita, NJ
- Rashmi Kalita, CA
- Sangaurav Kaushik, NC
- Nilanjona Mahanta, CA
- Nabanita Mazumdar, WA
- Chayanika Mohan, NC
- Rachna Nath, AZ
- Shakhyar Neog, NJ
- Dr Yashwant Pathak, FL
- Anu Perlmutter, VA
- Gayatree Prasad, CA
- Dr. Purandar Sarmah, NJ  
(Treasurer)
- Vavani Sarmah, CA

### Contact Us

**Email:** [Naaminfo@Naamghar.org](mailto:Naaminfo@Naamghar.org)

**Website:** [www.naamghar.org](http://www.naamghar.org)

**Facebook:** Naamghar Association of America – NAAM

