SANTINIKETAN ASHRAM SAMMILANI INTERNATIONAL

Annual General Meeting and Reunion, Sunday, July 11: 10.30 am to 1.30 pm, in Room 321 at the NABC conference, in Atlantic City

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1. AGENDA

Session 1: 10.30 am to 11.15 am

Tan Lee will chair the meeting and announce the agenda. Following is a provisional agenda.

Persons attending will introduce themselves.

Hitabrata Ray and Alo Roy will address the gathering, and introduce a memorial service for Subrata Ray, Purabi Nandi, and Shovan Shome.

Anandarup Ray will introduce the President's Report (attached)

Swapan De will present the Treasurer's Report.

Mamata De will present the Secretary's Report.

Board members Srila Chatterji and Chandana Sarkar will also address the meeting.

The above items are expected to take about 30-40 minutes.

Session 2:11.15 am to 1.30 pm

There will be a period of general discussions and questions-and-answers. Among the issues to be discussed will be:

SASI programs for 2011, Membership policy and efforts to increase membership more evenly across the globe, Fund-raising policies, How to have more effective relations with Visva Bharati, SASI elections for 2010 and 2011. Other issues that members might raise (now or at the meeting)

There will be songs, snacks and camaraderie.

2. MESSAGE FROM TRUSTEES CONCERNING ELECTIONS.

To All Members:

The Trustees of SASI are responsible for overseeing the constitutional provisions of our Articles and Bylaws. In particular they are responsible for conducting elections as and when appropriate. The Trustees are: Tan Lee, Hitabrata Ray and Alo Roy.

They have requested me to inform you that they recommend we defer elections to July 2011. Since SASI have been fully staffed for only one year, and since a great deal of momentum has been generated, the Trustees feel major changes in the team can be disruptive at this point. See attached letters from Hitabrata Ray and Tan Lee below.

This deferment only affects the President, Treasurer, and Secretary who have each served for two years. This deferment would extend their services by one year. This is allowed under the Bylaws provided the members agree.

Members who do not agree with this deferment are hereby requested to register their objection by writing an email to me and Alo Roy, within the next two weeks (June 26). Our email addresses are given below. Upon receipt of the emails, we shall turn them over to the other Trustees.

Yours sincerely

Anandarup Ray

President aray39@yahoo.com aloroy16@yahoo.com

SASI:President's Report 2010

Anandarup Ray: 5/29/2010

It is a pleasure to introduce this report to our members. I am glad to say that we have had a very good year, and I do believe that we succeeded in establishing the institutional infrastructure for SASI. SASI can take off from this base and prosper for many years to come.

I salute our members, our Trustees including the late Subrata Ray (Bheltuda), and our Board and executive officers. I shall first review the past year briefly, and then comment on future possibilities. We hope that our members will send us their views in writing, or in person if they are able to attend the Reunion in Atlantic City on July 11.

A retrospective

During the past year, we have mostly functioned with 6 Board members; Mrs Subha Addy recently stepped aside for personal reasons and now we are 5. Mrs Addy contributed very positively to the quality of our Board discussions, and through her informal advice to us. We hope she will be able to return to the Board in due course.

Our activities can be discussed in two parts: external and internal. On the *external side,* our main occupations were to build up a membership base, to start an outreach program, to undertake cultural programs, and to establish a web magazine.

Our membership today stands at 59, including 20 Life Members and 39 Annual Members. There are 21 members from India, 33 from USA, 4 from Canada, and 1 from UK. We hope to raise this level to about 100 during the next membership drive. But equally as important as numbers, we need to have greater spread across countries and continents.

We started last year with various "outreach" meetings in private households in New Jersey and the Washington Metropolitan areas. Hitabrata Ray and Mamata De took a major initiative in arranging an evening of "Sharadotsov" on October 3, at the residence of Ranjana and Narayan Khan in Potomac. The program included poetry recitals in

Bengali, English and Hindi, songs and the Tagore play "Pujarini" directed by Mamata De. The two-hour evening was very well-attended.

During Poushmela in December, we had a presence at the highly popular stall of "Chaander Hat", started and managed by Sharmila Roy Pommot and Srila Chatterji (one of our Board members).

Encouraged by our success with "Sharodotsov", we obtained a slot in the NABC 2010 for another Tagore performance. After considering logistical issues, such as the time constraint, we chose to perform Tagore's Briksharopon, which has rarely if ever been staged outside of Santiniketan. Alo Roy, a Trustee, and Srila Chatterji, both with long experience in Santiniketan-style programs, are overall supervisors, and Malabika Guha and Krishna Sengupta are the operational director and alternate respectively. Chandana Sarkar is currently the liaision with NABC.

Finally our SASI webzine is now established. We have published many authors in the webzine, including Supratik Bose, Srila Chatterji, Uma Dasgupta, Partha Ghosh, Shyamali Khastgir, Subhasish Mitra, Kathleen O'Connell, Anandarup Ray, Sharmila Roy Pommot, Sudeshna Sengupta, Shibaditya Sen, Tan Lee and so on. We have a backlog of articles for publication at this time. We are beginning a review of the webzine to explore ways of making it even better and more interactive.

Regarding *internal* matters, we have had several Board meetings during the year, which have set convenient precedence for future years. These included a Board review of our Constitution, a review of Briksharopon, a review of our provisional budget, and a review of our plans for NABC 2011. A consensus was reached at the end of all meetings. Thus the procedures laid down in our Bylaws have been put to good use.

All things considered, we are not yet sure what the optimum number of Board members is. Unless we know better we should try to follow the number recommended in the Bylaws, that is 7.

The main thing is the way we have preceded with our business. We have always tried to reach a consensus. Furthermore, even though the Trustees are not members of the Board, we have tried to consult them at all stages to the extent possible. Alo Roy was very much a part of our working unit even though she did not vote in any Board meeting. Proceeding by consultation and whenever possible by consensus has been our operating aim.

Future Priorities

It was Carl Sandburg who once wrote in one of his poems that: "Nothing ever happens unless first a dream".

To begin with the immediate future, we shall mount another membership drive, several more outreach programs in various cities, and several major performances. The latter will include NABC 2011, which will probably consist of a 1-hour Rabindra Utsav program, and a series of discussions/seminars to be coordinated with Visva Bharati University. As in the past these would largely be "self-financed' by those who take part in them.

As in the case of Briksharopon we will set up a group which will take all responsibility for the NABC 2011 performance. We will need a few more groups because of the multiplicity of programs we intend to undertake. On a project-by-project basis, we will seek grants from donors. If we succeed we may be able to stage our own programs without relying on or "piggybacking" on others.

We also should be in a position to send funds to India if and when we need to do so. Because of complicated rules of the Indian government, transmitting funds from a foreign-based NGO is not easy. We will need to set up a counterpart SASI in India in a local bank, and we will need to get a permit from the Home Ministry to transmit the funds.

We need to give more emphasis on support for the difficult reform programs being undertaken by Visva Bharati. I have provided an overview of the reform program and its current status in the June issue of the webzine. Our ability to provide advice has increased because we have established contacts at high levels. But it is not just a matter of providing informal advice as friends, or joining protests from time to time, it is also a matter of doing hard analytical work. We shall be keen to support such work.

In conclusion, let me invite all our members to come forward and join us in our various activities. Our business is growing, and we are considering committees for programming, editing, policy work, fund-raising etc. We hope our members will join such committees according to their interests and expertise. Let us hope for grand things to come.

Anandarup Ray Tuesday, June 08, 2010

Letter from Hitabrata Ray

Re: Elections

Thursday, June 10, 2010 2:07 PM From:

"br29dec@aol.com" <br29dec@aol.com> View contact details

aray39@yahoo.com Dear Ananda:

I fully agree with the proposition that you have outlined. Let's not get involved in the time consuming process of an election at this phase of our activity and the impending program. Let's put our energy in that. Warmest regard

Yours Bachooda

Letter from Tan Lee

Dear Anandarup: (C.C.: Hitabrata Ray and Alo Roy)

Recently you have asked me to suggest some items for inclusion in the Agenda of the Annual General Meeting of S.A.S.I. to be held in Atlantic City. The following come to mind:

- 1. Brief memorial service for Subrata Roy (5 minutes).
- 2. Events the members of S.A.S.I. may propose to celebrate Rabindranath's 150th Birth Anniversary in 2011.
- 3. Ways to increase membership in S.A.S.I, so as to make it stronger and truly representative of its international character.
- 4. How best can S.A.S.I. interact with Visva Bharati authorities in light of the constantly challenging and evolving problems faced by the university.
- 5. Election of Office Bearers of S.A.S.I. for 2010 and 2011.
- 6. Election of chairpersons to committees of S.A.S.I.
- 7. Any other relevant items with the permission of the chair.

On item 5 - my opinion is that we are facing a very special and critical year of activities vis-à-vis Visva Bharati because of "Rabindranath 150." We will all have to work very hard to make the year productive. In light of this, I suggest that the annual election be deferred, and that the terms of office of all currently elected officers of S.A.S.I. be extended by one year, subject of course, to the officers willingness to accept such extension.

With my best wishes,

Yours fraternally, Tan Lee – Da