

Protest over Governor's statement



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We are highly surprised [over](#) the statement of Banwarilal Purohit, the honourable [Governor](#) of Assam in a public meeting at Maniyari near Barpeta. He has said in that meeting that Srimanta Sankaradeva did not do any thing to remove the malaise of child-[marriage](#). This is an [offensive](#) statement to say the least. The [Governor](#) should have known that the saint reformed the entire society in Assam and brought the ethnic groups together by a unified cultural bond. Srimanta Sankaradeva worked in the arena of child [marriage](#) also. In fact he took a revolutionary step while marrying Kalindi in 1503, because she was then fifteen year old. His first wife Suryavati, whom he had married in 1471 was also fourteen year old at that time. Fourteen or fifteen years was considered [as](#) too high an age for a girl to get married in those times. So this itself was a call [against](#) child-[marriage](#) during those times. Child [marriage](#) even now means the age before puberty. Teenagers were certainly old enough in the fifteenth century, rather so old that they did not find match for [marriage](#). We should remember that social context is relevant in any issue. Three or Four decades ago [girls](#) used to get married around 20-25 years of age. Two or three decades ago [girls](#) used to get married around 25-30 years of age. Now the common age is around 30-35 years. That does not mean that 20th century people were backward than the 21st century people.

The statement of the honourable [Governor](#) Banwarilal Purohit reflects the sad lack of his understanding about life and works of Srimanta Sankaradeva. The saint revolutionised the way of life in Assam and for that matter in some parts of North [India](#) too. The Yatra movement of Bengal was influenced by his Ankiya plays. The Bhagavat Tungi institution of Odisha came up after the pattern of Namghar. The Manipuri [dance](#) has been developed after the Sattriya [dance](#) created by the saint. Such a creative genius should be adored by the entire nation. It was he who revived the Vedic music in the form of Bargeet. We request the honourable [Governor](#) and through him every one to study the life and works of Srimanta Sankaradeva so that no such distortion or misrepresentation occurs in future.

Dr Sanjib Kumar Borkakoti

[President](#)

Society for Srimanta Sankaradeva

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Assam Times Staff. editor@assamtimes.org

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