

Raas leela celebration concludes



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As with the previous years, this year too, the husband-wife duo of Basanta Kumar Baruah and Bobby Sarma Baruah successfully organised Raas Leela from November 23 to 25, under the banner of BB Creation on a grand scale at the Srimanta Sankaradeva International Auditorium, of the Sankaradeva Kalakshetra, Guwahati. Besides entertaining, the cultural extravaganza, which has contributed immensely in building intercommunity bridges in Assam, celebrated its 10-year anniversary this year. It all started in the year 2011, with the participation of Bodo, Karbi, Deuri, Mising and tea tribe communities, performing Raas in their own dialects. This year, too, the artistes of the Asom Nepali Natya Sammelan from [Behali](#) and Narayanpur performed Raas Leela under the banner of BB Creation.

Till 2009, the culturally conscious people in Assam have been witnessing the Raas festival in Majuli in the form of [Bhaona](#) or in the form of idols depicting the Sishu Leela of Lord [Krishna](#) in places of Lower Assam like Nalbari, Barpeta, [Howly](#), Mirza, etc. However, from 2009 onwards, it has been made possible for the people of Guwahati to enjoy the various nuances of this highly traditional and revered Sattriya culture through the endeavour of Guwahati-based Basanta Kumar Baruah, who is the founder secretary of BB Creation as well as the producer-director of Raas Leela. The play 'Sri [Krishna](#) Purnanga Raasleela' has integrated various ethnic groups, and It has, in the process, played a vital role in espousing the rich cultural legacy and also strengthening the thread of brotherhood as well as unity and amity among the different communities in the State.

It's worthy to be mentioned that this unique Vaishnavite culture was performed in [New Delhi](#) on November 5, 2017 last under the aegis of the Sangeet Natak Akademi in collaboration with Cultural Affairs Department of Assam, attracting huge crowds. The grand spectacle succeeded in arousing audiences interests one again when Basanta Kumar Baruah presented Sampurna Raas Leela at the 8th World Theatre Olympic festival this year, at the Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre in Kolkata. It was a memorable experience for the entire cast and crew of BB Creation.

The design and shape of the Sampurna Raas Leela was completely revitalised this year with greater refinement of means in performance and presentation, in compliance with the Raas Kriya episode of [Sankardeva](#)'s Kirtan Ghosa. The participation of popular movie stars also helped in the great number of audience attendance. The three day festival was presided [over](#) by a host of dignitaries. The opening day of Raas Leela on November 23 was inaugurated by Chief Vigilance Commissioner of Assam, Himangshu Sekhar [Das](#). The presentation of the show on the opening day showcased the performances of film actress Aime Baruah, veteran stage actor Debabrat Dutta, Diganta Bhuyan, Mun Rajib, Rajib Kro, [Manoj Das](#), Mantu Gogoi, Bipul Baruah, Chandan Misra, Suman Teronpi, Larci Im Kropi, Rib Rib Ti Kropi, Tanushree Kalita, Satarupa [Das](#), Alish Sheikh, among others.

The second day's proceedings were inaugurated by the Chief General Manager of the State Bank of [India](#), Sunil Tandon. Keeping with the tradition, the souvenir – Monikut, was released by the eminent litterateur and former [President](#) of the Asam [Sahitya Sabha](#), Dr Lakshmi Nandan Bora. The star cast was led by popular artiste Barasha Rani Bishaya, who was ably supported by rising star Saranga Bordoloi.

The shows were packed with more than a thousand people each day, making it a memorable and a highly successful event. It has been observed that several hundreds were left stranded outside the auditorium. Apart from the energetic performances by the cast of artistes, the lavish settings and traditional decor made the audiences awestruck. The play also owes a lot to the painstaking directorial efforts of Basanta Kumar Baruah, who ensured that his vision was faithfully interpreted.

The Raas Leela dances were directed by noted artiste Naren Chandra Baruah. Lighting was done under the supervision of Tapan Kumar Baruah.

The final day of the show was inaugurated by the General Secretary of Asom Nepali Natya Sammelan, Purna Kumar Sarma, with the lighting up of the traditional lamp by Pranjali Saikia, who is the [President](#) of BB Creation. Raas was presented by Nepali artistes in their own dialect. The crowds and connoisseurs alike were highly impressed by the quality and creativity of the performances on all three days.

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