



bbitf

**Bhullung-Bhuthur International
Theatre Festival**

2025

Guwahati | Assam | India

3-7 SEPTEMBER

Felicitation | Performance | Theatre Workshop | Theatre Forum
Environmental Awareness Workshop | Musical Performance | Yoga Demonstration

CONCEPT NOTE



Organised by
AANK_A Creative Line

The Festival



bbitf

Bhullung-Bhuthur International Theatre Festival

2025

Guwahati | Assam | India

AANK-A Creative Line, a distinguished theatre group from Guwahati, Assam, India, proudly presents the 3rd Bhullung-Bhuthur International Theatre Festival (BBITF 2025) under the resonant theme "Theatre for Harmony." Scheduled to be held from 3rd to 7th September 2025 at the prestigious Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra Society, Guwahati, the festival continues the legacy of its impactful editions in 2023 and 2024.

BBITF emphasizes the symbolic and cultural relationship between rivers and civilizations—particularly focusing on the Brahmaputra River, locally referred to as 'Bhullung-Bhuthur', a life force of Assam's identity.

The 2025 edition reaffirms BBITF's commitment to using theatre as a medium for empathy, intercultural dialogue, and social transformation. The festival will once again bring together theatre groups, performers, scholars, and environmental advocates from across the globe to celebrate diversity and explore shared human values through the lens of performance.

This year, we are especially honoured to welcome **Ms. Jinyoung Youn**, Chair of the International Relations Committee, Korea Theatre Association, as the Chief Guest, marking a significant milestone in our growing international collaborations.

Events at a Glance

1. Inauguration Ceremony

- Chief Guest:
Mr. Jinyoung Youn
Chair, International Relations Committee,
Korea Theatre Association
- Date: **3rd September 2025**
- Time: **5:30 PM**
- Venue: **Sri Sri Madhavadeva International Auditorium**
- Highlights: Formal inauguration and release of the Festival Souvenir

2. Theatre Performances

- An exciting line-up of **11 performances** from **7 countries** will be staged at the Sri Sri Madhavadeva International Auditorium, Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra Society, Assam, India.
- Dates: **3rd to 7th September 2025**
- Time: **6:00 PM** onward

3. Culmination

- Time: **7.45 PM**
- Date: **7th September 2025**
- Venue: **Sri Sri Madhavadeva International Auditorium**
- Musical Performance
by **AT4 Boy's Hall, Gauhati University**
- Yoga Demonstration
led by **Dr. Hridayananda Tamuli Phukan** and his team.

3 SEPT

PALUNKO'S WIFE | 50 minutes
by Iva Peter-Dragan_ Triko Circus Teatar, **Croatia**

THE GIRL WHO RODE A BICYCLE | 20 minutes
by Nayan Prasad, Surjya, **India**

4 SEPT

AFTER | 60 minutes
by Kim So Jung, Sangsangchangikko, **South Korea**

5 SEPT

#NOTME | 50 minutes
by Topologeanu Casandra, Tony Bulandra Theater, **Romania**

DUMMY | 15 minutes
by Sarathchandra Walpola, **Sri Lanka**

A JOURNEY OF DESPAIR | 15 minutes
by Upeksha Lankathilaka, **Sri Lanka**

6 SEPT

THE IMMIGRANTS | 60 minutes
by Mr. Hafedh Khalifa, Art of two banks Production, **Tunisia**

IT'S NOT ME, SOMEBODY ELSE | 15 minutes
by Randika Wimalasuriya, Abhiranga Theatre Production, **Sri Lanka**

UNSEEN | 15 minutes
by Asanka Ishan Dayapala, **Sri Lanka**

7 SEPT

METAMORPHOSIS OF MITRACHI GOSHTA | 25 minutes
by Dr. Mrinal Jyoti Goswami, AANK-A Creative Line, **India**

QOUMA YABA (STAND UP FATHER) | 50 minutes
by Kassem Istanbouli, Tiro Association for Arts, **Lebanon**



4. Physical Theatre Workshop

A hands-on international workshop focused on physical expression in theatre.

- Dates: **4th to 6th September 2025** (Total 6 sessions)
- Time: **10:00 AM – 4:00 PM**
- Venue: **Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra Society**

Focus Areas:

- Body Awareness and Movement
- Improvisation Techniques and Expressive Gestures
- Integration of Dance, Mime, and Physical Narratives

DATE & TIME

NAME OF THE FACILITATOR

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

4th September
Dr. Mrinal Jyoti Goswami/
Iva Peter-Dragan

5th September
Hafedh Khalifa

6th September
Kim So Jung

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Kassem Istambouli

Upeksha Lankathilaka/
Samitha Sudeeshwara

Topologeanu Casandra

5. Theatre Forum

Theme 1:

Sponsorship, Sustainability, and Survival: Rethinking Theatre Funding Models

- Date: 4th September 2025
- Time: 4:00 PM – 5:15 PM
- Moderator:

Mr. Jinyoung Youn | S. Korea

Theme 2:

Global Crises, Local Stages: Theatre's Role in a World on Edge

- Date: 5th September 2025
- Time: 4:00 PM – 5:15 PM
- Moderator:

Mr. Nayan Prasad | India

6. Environmental Sensitization Workshop

Continuing its commitment to environmental advocacy, BBITF 2025 will host an Environmental Sensitization Workshop in collaboration with **Aaranyak**, a renowned environmental organization dedicated to conservation and sustainable development. This workshop will focus on highlighting the cultural and ecological significance of the Brahmaputra River and its vital role in the lives of the people of Assam.

Key components of the workshop will include:

- **Interactive Lectures and Discussions:** Led by experts from Aaranyak, along with professionals from the fields of environmental science and cultural heritage, these sessions will emphasize the urgent need to preserve Assam's natural resources and promote sustainable practices.
- **Creative Performances:** Featuring thought-provoking student presentations, traditional dance, and poetry that celebrate the importance of rivers in sustaining life, culture, and the environment, making the discussions more engaging and relatable to the audience.

With Aaranyak joining hands in this endeavour, the workshop aims to inspire participants to become active advocates for environmental conservation, encouraging a deeper connection with the natural world and a collective responsibility toward protecting our planet's invaluable resources. This initiative is a key part of BBITF's mission to integrate environmental awareness into its cultural programming, blending the power of art with the urgent call for ecological preservation.

• **September 5, 2025 | 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM** Venue: A selected college in Guwahati

• **September 6, 2025 | 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM** Venue: A university located in Guwahati

As a part of BBITF 2025, we are also planning to extend this venture with an additional programme at Dibrugarh University in the months of November–December.



Context & Cultural Vision

The festival's vision is deeply rooted in the cultural and natural landscape of Assam, with a special focus on the Brahmaputra River, the lifeline of the region. The Brahmaputra, also known as *Burlung-Buthur, Lohitya, and Mahabahu*, holds immense socio-economic and cultural significance in the lives of the Assamese people. Inspired by the message of harmony symbolized by the Brahmaputra, as articulated by Bishnu Prasad Rabha in his work *Asomiya Kristir Samu Abhash* (A Brief Overview of Assamese Culture), BBITF 2025 aims to celebrate the inseparable relationship between rivers and human civilization.

The festival continues to emphasize the importance of unity and harmony in the arts, drawing on Assam's rich tradition of folk theatrical performances that have transcended cultural, social, and linguistic barriers for centuries. Through the legacy of Shankardeva's Naat/Bhaona and other traditional forms, BBITF 2025 will explore how culture and creative expression can promote social cohesion, foster empathy, and create a more compassionate world.

BBITF 2025 also marks a significant milestone in international collaboration. Following the success of last year's festival, we have established a strong partnership with **Inter Act Art** from Colombo, Sri Lanka. This collaboration underscores the power of cross-cultural projects in building artistic connections across borders. The Colombo International Theatre Festival (CITF)—our partner and parent festival—will be held in the latter part of August 2025 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, while BBITF serves as its parallel festival in India.

This year, BBITF 2025 will continue to harness the transformative power of theatre, creating a platform that not only celebrates diversity but also emphasizes the need to protect and preserve natural resources for sustainable development. Through a dynamic blend of performances, workshops, forums, and collaborative projects, the festival will bring together virtuoso artists from countries like Lebanon, South Korea, Romania, Tunisia, Sri Lanka, and India. It will be a space where cultural traditions meet contemporary expressions, bridging divides and inspiring new ways of thinking.

AANK-A Creative Line envisions BBITF 2025 as a global stage where theatre and cultural practices can shape a harmonious and unified society, transcending barriers and paving the way for positive social change. By celebrating Assam's rivers and cultural heritage, the festival aims to inspire a movement towards a more empathetic and unified world, where humanity's shared values rise above all else.

Objectives

The objectives of BBITF 2025 are multi-dimensional, focusing on the intersection of culture, art, and social change:

- To celebrate the relationship between human civilization and rivers, with a special emphasis on the Brahmaputra, exploring its role in shaping cultural identity.
- To promote global unity through theatre, using performances, workshops, and discussions to foster empathy, understanding, and collaborative creativity.
- To inspire environmental awareness, linking artistic expression with ecological responsibility, encouraging participants to engage in sustainability initiatives.
- To create a platform for artistic innovation, where global artists can share their work, experiment with new ideas, and contribute to the evolution of contemporary theatre.



Scope of the Festival

The Bhullung-Bhuthur International Theatre Festival (BBITF) 2025 is designed to be a dynamic celebration of theatre, culture, and social change, bringing together artists and audiences from around the world. The festival will feature:

- **Diverse Theatre Performances:** Showcasing a wide range of styles, from traditional storytelling to contemporary works, with participants from countries such as Lebanon, South Korea, Romania, Croatia, Tunisia, Sri Lanka, and India.
- **Physical Theatre Workshop:** A hands-on training program exploring movement, dance, and body language as universal tools for storytelling.
- **Theatre Forum:** Engaging discussions on global challenges and the transformative role of theatre in society, with insights from international experts and practitioners.
- **Environmental Sensitization Workshop:** Organized in partnership with *Aaranyak*, this workshop emphasizes the cultural and ecological importance of the Brahmaputra River through interactive lectures and creative performances.

BBITF 2025 aims to create a global platform for cultural exchange, engaging over 5,000 attendees in person and reaching more than 50,000 people online. The festival aspires to blend artistic innovation with environmental awareness, uniting traditional values with modern expressions to inspire empathy, sustainability, and meaningful social transformation.



About the Group

Founded with a deep commitment to Assam's cultural heritage, AANK-A Creative Line has established itself as a trailblazing force in redefining theatre and performance since its inception in 2008. Beginning its journey with the impactful production "Xunor Xing Thoka Ghariyalar Choku," the group has continually pushed artistic boundaries, exploring new perspectives within the realm of theatre. With a repertoire of significant plays, AANK-A Creative Line has evolved its narrative to resonate with both traditional and contemporary audiences.

The group has earned international acclaim for thought-provoking productions such as "Imaan Imaan Paani," "Erikoti-Mirikoti: The Butterfly Effect," "Bhukar Xadhu: The Myth of Hunger," "Etheror Irika: Ethereal Epoch," "Eréndira's Metamorphosis," "Alice in Assam," "Premar Dolna (Swing of Love)," and "A River's Tale." These works have captivated audiences not only in India but also across the globe, showcasing Assam's rich cultural tapestry on international stages.

AANK-A Creative Line has become a symbol of innovation in theatre, seamlessly blending Assam's traditional essence with modern expression while fostering global artistic collaborations. The group's emphasis on international partnerships was further highlighted through its pivotal role in organizing the Bhullung-Bhuthur International Theatre Festival (BBITF) and its association with the Colombo International Theatre Festival (CITF). These events underscore the group's commitment to cross-cultural exchange, artistic innovation, and the transformative power of theatre.

The production "Swings of Love," which will be showcased at CITF 2025, stands as a testament to AANK-A Creative Line's visionary approach to collaborative theatre. This production exemplifies the group's dedication to creating works that transcend borders and engage audiences in a profound exploration of human experiences.

As a leader in the global theatre scene, AANK-A Creative Line continues to shape the artistic landscape, leaving a lasting impact on both local and international stages.

Festival Director

Dr. Mrinal Jyoti Goswami (MA, MPhil, PhD) is a renowned scholar, playwright, director, and theatre educator whose multifaceted contributions span the fields of academia, literature, theatre, and performance studies. Currently serving as an Assistant Professor in the Discipline of Assamese at Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University (KKHSOU), Dr. Goswami has emerged as a pivotal figure in shaping contemporary theatre discourse in Assam and beyond.

A recipient of several accolades, Dr. Goswami has been instrumental in mentoring doctoral and MPhil scholars and advancing research in Narratology, Cultural Studies, Performance Studies, and Literature. His PhD research focused on "A Study on Contemporary Assamese Theatre in the Light of Social Realism and its Performances (1967–2003)," which continues to inform his scholarly and creative endeavours. His academic and creative projects frequently explore intersections between traditional folk forms and modern experimental theatre.

Dr. Goswami is also the Founder Creative Director and present Secretary of **AANK_A Creative Line**, a pioneering theatre collective based in Assam that has gained international acclaim for its innovative productions. Under his direction, the group has staged several major works, including *Imaan Imaan Paani*, *Bhukar Xadhu – The Myth of Hunger*, *Etheror Irika – Ethereal Epoch*, *Eréndira's Metamorphosis*, *Alice in Assam*, *Tuponiye Ture Kalatalat Ghar*, and *A River's Tale*. These plays have been showcased at prestigious platforms along with the Colombo International Theatre Festival (CITF), Bharat Rang Mahotsav (BRM), and International Festival of Theatre in the Sahara (Tunisia), where his recent work *A River's Tale* was performed in May 2025. The same play was also staged at BBITF 2024, the Rai River International Drama Festival in Dhemaji (January 2025), and Natghar Majuli Theatre Festival 2025.

As the Festival Director of the Bhullung-Bhuthur International Theatre Festival (BBITF) since its inception in 2023, Dr. Goswami has transformed it into a vibrant international platform promoting intercultural dialogue, environmental advocacy, and performative innovation. His visionary leadership has also strengthened BBITF's strategic partnership with Inter Act Art, Sri Lanka, and its sister event, CITF, underlining the significance of collaborative theatre practice in South Asia.

In July 2024, Dr. Goswami was invited as a guest at the Yongin International Theatre Forum (YITF) in South Korea, where he presented a paper titled "Fostering International Theatre Interactions: Lessons from India's Bhullung-Bhuthur

International Theatre Festival." At this historic forum, he was instrumental in signing an MoU with nine countries—India, North Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, and South Korea—leading to the establishment of the **New World Theatre Network (NWTN)**, aimed at fostering long-term international collaborations in performance.

Beyond his theatrical contributions, Dr. Goswami is an accomplished researcher and author, with numerous publications in Scopus-indexed journals, UGC-CARE listed journals, and other reputed academic journals and books. His academic focus includes Assamese Literature and Culture, Assamese Theatre (from ancient to modern periods), Performance Studies, and Cultural Studies, among other related fields. He authored the seminal *Online Short History of Assamese Literature* and has edited numerous volumes and author of e-books including *Aytijyar Nirjash* and *Bhinnaxuree Emuthi Prabandha*.

He has also presented papers at international conferences organized by esteemed institutions such as the Shanghai Theatre Academy (China), Gauhati University, Dibrugarh University, Tripura University, IGNOU, Visva-Bharati University, and many others. His recent scholarly engagements include delivering the keynote address on "Evolution of International Festivals in Assam, India" in the Theatre Forum of the Colombo International Theatre Festival (CITF) 2024, held in August 2024 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. He also served as a committee member of the 10th edition of CITF in 2024 and has been engaged in various capacities in earlier editions of the festival.

A skilled light designer, scriptwriter, and translator, Dr. Goswami's theatrical ethos is rooted in interdisciplinarity, regional rootedness, and global reach. His projects have received multiple grants from the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, and his theatre pedagogy continues to influence emerging practitioners across institutions.

In 2025, his collaborative project "Swings of Love"—featuring narratives from India, Sri Lanka, France, and Australia—is set to be performed at CITF, further extending his reputation as a visionary theatre-maker and cultural ambassador of Assam.

Dr. Goswami's work continues to bridge traditional values with contemporary practices, inspiring a new generation of artists and scholars. His leadership and artistic legacy make him a distinguished and transformative figure in the global theatre landscape.



Join Us

We warmly invite you to be part of this extraordinary journey as we celebrate the unifying power of theatre to inspire, connect, and create positive change. Whether you're a dedicated theatre enthusiast, a passionate advocate for the environment, or simply someone who believes in the transformative potential of the arts, BBITF 2025 welcomes you with open arms. Together, let's embark on a shared path of discovery, creativity, and cultural exchange as we work towards building a more empathetic and harmonious world through the magic of theatre.

BBITF Committee

Festival Director:

Dr. Mrinal Jyoti Goswami

Festival Secretary:

Mr. Anupam Saikia

Publicity & Media Designer:

Dr. Sanjib Borah

Members:

Oinau Jengrai, Dr. Junmoni Gogoi, Dr. Hari Prasad Baruah, Ms. Jahnabi Bora, Ms. Nilutpala Pachani, Ms. Namrata Sarma, Dr. Manabendra Sarma, Dr. Hridayananda Tamuli Phukan, Dr. Saikat Routh, Ms. Rengani Handique, Dr. Surabhi Chutia, Ms. Mallika Kalita, Dr. Bristi Kalita, Dr. Halim Hussain, Mr. Jintu Thakuria

Media Coordinator:

Ms. Darshana B Baruah

Legal Advisor:

Mr. Dipta Prasad Goswami

Advisory Team:

Mr. M.Safeer (Sri Lanka), Mr. Prasad Wikramarathna (Sri Lanka), Mr. Sujeewa Pathinisekara (Sri Lanka), Dr. Padmapani, Mr. Chitra Ranjan Kalita, Mr. Kaustav Moni Saikia, Mr. Nuruddin Ahmad, Mr. Utpal Datta, Mr. Nayan Prasad, Dr. Ajay Joshi, Mr. Tarun Chandra Kalita, Mr. Tapan Dutta, Dr. Bipuljyoti Saikia, Mr. Gopal Jalan, Mr. Sibanu Borah, Mr. Kishor Kr Das, Dr. Pratibha Sarmah, Prof. Joydeep Baruah, Dr. Partha Jyoti Das

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