



GANGEYA RANGAMANCH OF BAMANDA

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A stage where various forms and colours of performing arts are displayed. Where a new perspective of the culture and tradition of human society is seen. On the stage actors, dancers, singers, and musicians through their art present the images of various events to the audience and at the same time entertain the audience and win their hearts.

According to the Puranas, the Natyaveda created by the creator lord Brahma is considered to be the 5th Veda. The first use of which was done by Bharata Muni in the flag ceremony of Devraj Indra. The first play of the creation '**Sur Vijay**' was performed in it. The play showed how the demons were defeated by the gods. The demons got angry at this and destroyed all the drama with the power of Maya. Although his mind was not at peace, he repeatedly tried to destroy Bharata Muni with the Natyaveda. Later, on the orders of lord Brahma deva shilpi lord Vishwakarma built a theatre house for the performance of the drama. Lord Brahma deployed all the deities there for the purpose of protecting the theatre and the performers. Therefore, according to Natyashastra, before starting the stage work, the worship of the stage is a must. According to Natyashastra, three types of theatre house have been divided into Vikrashta, Chaturashtra, and Trashtra. It is now slowly disappearing.

For many decades, according to classical and folk-drama era, there was a huge demand for theatre stage in India. After the arrival of the British in India, modern drama was started in Bengal by the British. It attracted the attention of the whole of India. His stage was monotonous which was named '**Proscenium stage**'. As the spread of modern drama progressed, many proscenium stage were set up in different parts of India. At many places in Utkala (Odisha), it was appreciated and some permanent and temporary stage were built in different parts. The kings were also influenced by this and built the Ekamukhi Stage. It is called the court stage "**Darabari Mancha**". '*Padmanabh Rangalaya*' of Parala, '*Veer Vikram Theater*' of Khariyal and '*Gangeya Rangmancha*' or '*Divya Shankar Rangmanch*' of Bamanda Garh were prominent court stage of that time.

The Gangeya Rangamancha was built by the 23rd king of Bamanda (now Deogarh) Dibyashankar Sudhal Dev. It was built at the end of the First World War. King Dibyashankar had employed many skilled craftsmen from Kolkata for the construction of this stage. The building was constructed of wood, brick, and stone. At that time, the Gangeya Rangamancha was one of the most advanced stages in Odisha. The stage was inaugurated by the Odia translation of the Bengali play 'Bhishma.' At that time, many mobile commercial theatre companies used to get the opportunity to perform here. Balanga Theatre, Sakshi Gopal Natya Sangh, Mohan Gosain's Rasparty, Annapurna Theatre's artists and many other Natya Sansads used to come here and perform their dramas. From time to time, plays were staged here according to the wishes of the king. Many successful Bengali plays were translated and performed in Odia language at that time. This stage remained active for more than two decades and developed a lot of theatrical consciousness among the people of Bamanda. When Bamanda Garh was included in the Garhjat mixture then the decline of the Gangeya Rangamanch happened gradually.

On studying the heritage of Bamanda, it is found that long before the construction of the Gangeya Rangamancha, the tradition of dramatizing and enacting many Odia poems by the then kings originated from Bamanda, such as Radhanath Ray's Usha, Chandrabhaga, Yayati Keshari and Nandikeshwari and Satchitananda's Mayashvari.

Deogarh is a land of art and culture. All the people here are art lovers. Many folk and tribal arts have survived with the people in this holy land for many years. In modern times, the ancient folk-dramas and folk-dances of Deogarh are also performed in rural yattras. It has always been the endeavour of the people of Deogarh to promote folk art and modern art by awakening the true consciousness among the people.

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