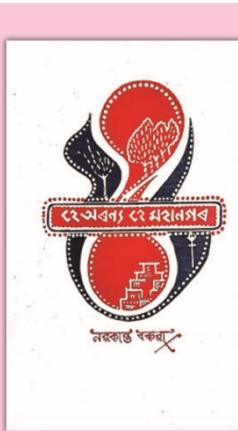


A Note from PWF

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Modernity in English poetry arrived primarily through the Imagist movement and French Symbolism. In Assamese poetry, however, modernity first emerged through the progressive poems published in the magazines *Awahon* and *Jayanti*. It was only on the pages of the magazine *Ramdhenu* that the direct influence of English modern poetry—enriched by Imagism and French Symbolism—became clearly visible.



In 1951, Navakanta Barua's collection of modern poems, *He Aranya He Mahanagar*, was published. Just as T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* had a massive impact on the transition of English poetry, Barua's collection had a similar effect on Assamese poetry. The "city" described in *He Aranya He Mahanagar* was not Guwahati; rather, the poet used his foresight to reflect the decaying life of the metropolis and the human consciousness. In Navakanta Barua's work, the modernist sensibilities and modes of expression of the Anglo-American poets were seamlessly integrated. While his poetry was somewhat complex for the average reader, it was never unintelligible.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the publication of *He Aranya He Mahanagar*. This is undoubtedly a significant milestone for Assamese poetry. Furthermore, this year also coincides with the birth centenary of the poet himself. It serves as a wonderful occasion to celebrate the history and tradition of modern Assamese poetry.