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The Chinese Association of Trinidad & Tobago

PRESS RELEASE NO. 1

DAI AILIAN FOUNDATION TO AWARD FIRST DANCE SCHOLARSHIP TO THE BEIJING DANCE ACADEMY, BEIJING, THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The Dai Ailian Foundation is being formed to honour Dai Ailian, a great-grandchild of Chinese immigrants born in Couva on May 10, 1916. Dai Ailian, famous dancer, choreographer and teacher, is one of China's premier dance icons and widely regarded as 'the mother of Chinese ballet and dance'. She deserves much of the credit for the founding of the Beijing Dance Academy in 1954. In the early 1950s, Dai Ailian was involved in the creation and leading performance of the first ballet in China and two other dances with a strong national flavor, titled Dance of Lotus Flowers and Flying Apsaras, which won the gold prize at the World Youth Festival. By the 1990s, authoritative dance organisations designated these two dances as the 20th century classics of Chinese dance. A dancer with international influence, Dai Ailian participated in many international activities beginning in the 1980s, including working as a judge at international dance competitions, leading Chinese dance delegations to international competitions and attending international academic meetings on dance. In 1982, Dai Ailian was elected as the Vice Chairman of the International Council for Dance of the UNESCO, the United Nations' cultural and education organ. It is with a measure of her achievement that a bronze bust of her (one of four outstanding female dancers) is displayed in London, in the reception hall of the headquarters of the Royal Academy of Dance. Dai Ailian died in Beijing on February 9, 2006 at the age of 89.

One of the objectives of the Dai Ailian Foundation is to grant scholarships to persons to pursue studies in the performing arts and this scholarship is being awarded in the field of dance at the Beijing Dance Academy (BDA), Haidian District, Beijing, The People's Republic of China. The Foundation is proud to be offering this Scholarship, which is not only the first for the Foundation but as well a scholarship to the distinguished Beijing Dance Academy, the best institution of higher education in dance in China. The Academy has produced dancers who have become professionals in companies all around the world and constantly sets a high standard at world-class competitions. The Beijing Dance Academy was recently awarded the Best School award at the prestigious Youth America Grand Prix in New York City.

The Scholarship will be awarded to an exceptional dancer who demonstrates ability, artistry and passion, with the Awardee selecting the area of specialisation, be it Ballet, Chinese Classical Dance, Chinese National and Folk Dance and Modern Dance. A full Scholarship is being offered, with the 10-month period commencing September 2011. The absolute deadline for the submission of application forms, and accompany requirements, is Friday July 29, 2011, to the Dai Ailian Foundation, c/o The Chinese Association of Trinidad & Tobago, 7 St. Ann's Road, St. Ann's.

The Foundation is also honoured to host Professors from the Beijing Dance Academy who will be visiting Trinidad to select the Scholarship Awardee, scheduled for Sunday August 7.

Applicants are invited to go to lanterfestivaltt.com or  <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Dai-Ailian-Foundation/174676999265593> for a Scholarship Information Bulletin and to download the Scholarship Application Form. Should further information be required, please call 624-7150 or email cattnews@gmail.com.

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