

ASSAM'S ALL ROUNDER – ELI AHMED.



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Eli baidew was impeccably dressed in a Mekhala Chadar. It was late evening as I walked into her apartment. Eli baidew (Eli Ahmed) was waiting for me after completion of a discussion on a new play. As I walked in, I was greeted by a number of bookcases stocked with files and books. The walls were decorated with photographs which contained wonderful memories 75 years. If there was ever an “All Rounder” for Assam, it is Eli Ahmed. She is a renowned writer, script writer, director, lyricist, costume designer, actress, social activist to mention just a few of the things she has done in her life. Versality in simple words is Eli Ahmed. Eli Ahmed has been conferred various names by famous personalities. Dr Nirmalprabha Bordoloi used to call her ‘Beli’ (The Sun) for her strength of mind which even the deadliest of storm could not more. She is a boundless source of energy & enthusiasm.

Eli Ahmed has more than 1000 articles, stories, poems etc written in various Assamese Newspapers and souvenirs so far. She is also renowned for the various Dramas and Dance Dramas for which she has written the story, script and also given direction. Her name has been included in the Who’s Who’s of Indian writers as well as in international lists like Indo European Who’s Who and Asian American Who’s Who. Her books like ‘Romanthan’ and ‘Asom Jyoti’ have won International acclaim and have been displayed in book fairs across the globe as well. She is the Editor, Publisher and Proprietor of “ORANI”, the only women magazine in Northeast since 1970.

Ms Eli Ahmed has also been associated with the Assamese Film Industry. She has written scripts, directed, given art direction and also assisted as the Costume designer in a variety of films. She has given lyrics for films like Dr Bezbaruah, Baruar Sansar, Sonmoina, Sadan, Bordoichilla, Zakhinee, etc besides having written the story and script for movies like Dhrubotora, Devata, Mukhagnee, Janambhumi, Bonful etc. She has also acted as the Chief Asst Director for a number of movies like Dhrubotora, Rickshawala, Bordoichila, Zakhinee, Devataa, Pratidin, Mukhagnee etc.

Some excerpts from my interaction with her:

On her early days:

I was born into an artistic & cultured family in Nazira. Though born into an affluent family, I had to face the travails of life very early as my parents expired and all my brothers were younger to me. So we moved to Guwahati to try our luck. Through sheer grit and determination, we all came up in life. My youngest brother is Dara Ahmed, the renowned film maker.

Some things about her which the outside world does not know:

I have performed magic shows also at places like the Rabindra Bhawan. I have a hobby of making decorated items from waste products like disposed cups, onions and ginger peels, broken glasses etc.

Her plans for the future:

To continue writing & publish books for the younger generation. Make the younger generation aware about the rich Assamese culture. We should never forget our mother tongue. Currently I am in the process of publishing a collection of short stories in English.

Her message for the Assamese people across the Globe:

The challenge is to keep the Assamese people across the globe in touch with Assam and the Assamese language. More importantly how do we ensure that the younger generation remains connected to their roots in Assam.

Her message for the youth of Assam:

We need to be proud of the fact that we are from Assam. Assam has a rich background & heritage behind us. We can achieve anything if we believe in ourselves.

Arindam Garg

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BY ARINDAM GARG

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