

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika portrait placed at Nehru Centre, London



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Rini Kakati 4 July 2012 19808 views

Assam has been fortunate in giving birth to a great musical genius in Bhupen Hazarika. "He was an ardent supporter of Assamese nationalism and wrote many stirring compositions about the cultural heritage of his native State, but his work transcended regional boundaries and the values he espoused were universal. Now that mighty voice has fallen silent. Assam is poorer for it. The world is poorer for it".

It is a significant step towards our endeavour to take Dr. Bhupen Hazarika to the international platform. His artistic excellence and qualities of head and heart set the perfect example of an artist in the truest sense of the term. 5 crowded years of meaningful existence having added significantly in uploading the rich culture and tradition flourishing in Assam for ages.

On Tuesday evening 6,, June, 012 - Dr. Jaimini Bhagwati, High Commissioner of India, unveiled the picture of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika at Nehru Centre, the heritage cultural building, Govt. of India at London. The dignitaries present were Dr. M. Sayeedur Rahman Khan, High Commissioner of Bangladesh, his wife - Ms. Quamrun Rahman Khan and Lord Swraj Paul, prominent industrialist. This event has been organized by Rini Kakati, Director, FASS, NRI Co-ordinator for UK.



From Left: Dr. Jaimini Bhagwati, High Commissioner of India, Rini Kakati, Dr. M. Sayeedur Rahman Khan, High Commissioner of Bangladesh, his wife - Ms. Quamrun Rahman Khan

In his opening speech Gowri Shankar (Deputy Director of Nehru Centre) welcome everybody to Nehru Centre and spoke highly about Bhupen Hazarika. Rini Kakati introduced the dignitaries and invited guests, felicitating with phulam gamosha and Asomiya japi by GeetupalaShah.

Messages from various people have been received including Javed Akhtar, wellknown Bollywood poet, lyricist and scriptwriter, Dr. Samujjal Bhattacharjya, Advisor-All Assam Students' Union (AASU) and Chairman-North East Students' Organisation (NESO)

Friends of Assam and Seven Sisters (FASS) is an International NGO and have various plans and projects to keep Assam on focus at world map. Thinking of various ways of preserving the memory of the (late) legendary Assamese maestro Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, Rajen Barua, President from Houston, Texas said through an e-mail.

Dr. Sangeeta Datta, well-known academic writer and filmmaker compere the evening program with a power-point presentation of Bhupen da's short clip - Rudali. His love for Ganges and Brahmaputra - 'Ganga Behti Ho Kyon'. Sangeeta has been closely associated with Kalpana Lajmi and Bhupen Hazarika.

Dr. Jaimini Bhagwati, High Commissioner of India, remembering his personal memories of time spent with Bhupen Hazarika in the 960''s when his late father - Bijoy Bhagwati was an MP at New Delhi

residence. "It was the underlying sentiment of solidarity with the downtrodden in Hazarika's work that made him truly great".

Dr. M. Sayeedur Rahman Khan, High Commissioner of Bangladesh, put a white flower at the photograph. He had mentioned that Hazarika was highly respected and considered a source of inspiration for Bangladesh. His support for Bangladesh Liberation Struggle has honoured him "Muktijoddha Padak" the highest civilian award by Bangladesh Government. His emotional song "Ganga Amar Maa, Padma Amar Maa" is popular amongst every Bengali in this earth.

Lord Swraj Paul slowly made to the stage with his walking stick shows how much he loved Bhupen da. And said "everyone whose lives Hazarika touched through his work will remember him for his warmth and sincerity".



From Right: Rini Kakati, Dr. Jaimini Bhagwati, High Commissioner of India, Lord Swraj Paul, prominent industrialist, Dr. M. Sayeedur Rahman Khan, High Commissioner of Bangladesh, his wife - Ms. Quamrun Rahman Khan, Dr. Ananda Gupta, Dr. Sangeeta Datta

Tej Hazarika, Independent publisher, writer and teacher, the one and only son of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika who lives in New York with his wife and son. Was in contact with the organizer for this event. He said "My father looks really handsome in this photograph".

Prabin Hazarika, younger brother of Bhupen Hazarika was in tears when he and his wife, Trisha arrived from Leicester for this historic occasion. He recited his older brother's last poem, 'Akash Saboty' (Embracing the sky) and recalled his childhood days with his brother at their Nizarapara residence.

Kailash Budhwar of BBC Hindi Service, called Dr Hazarika a patriot as he devoted his entire life for the uplift of the poorest of the poor across his region, State, country and the globe. Rita Payne, (President of the Commonwealth Journalists Association (UK) and Editorial Director, Global magazine) - said he was a multifaceted genius, his creativity and love for the nation will always be remembered.

Bhuban Baruah, retired BBC Bangla Service, remembered Bhupen Hazarika as one of the great soul of Assam.

Gulam Mustafa, Director of Udichi UK, spoke highly about Bhupen Hazarika his attachment with Bangladeshi Community in London. Sreeparna Debsarkar performed a dance of Bhupen da's popular song 'Aire chute Ai'.

The evening came to an end with a vocal tribute by well-known singer Dr. Ananda Gupta singing "Shobar Hridoye Rabindranath".

London, UK

BY RINI KAKATI

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