

Evergreen memories!



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Aiyushman Dutta 19 January 2009 11621 views

Promising to take one on a trip down memory lane, late Bhabendranath Saikia's immortal feature, *Xanta-Xista Hrista-Pusta Mahadusta* is soon going to make its comeback. This feature which used to be transmitted through All India Radio in the late eighties is now being recorded in video format at the behest of young theatre worker Simanta Phukan. Production has been going on at the Guwahati-based Shankardev Studios since January 1 this year. A dynamic theatre worker from Jorhat, Simanta has more than hundred theatrical plays to his credit, besides some highly acclaimed video features like *Joymoti* and *Kamalakuwari*. The attempt to record the nostalgia associated with this feature is being undertaken by Simanta in the memory of late Bhabendranath Saikia.

Xanta-Xista Hrista-Pusta Mahadusta, or the exploits of Manu, Bapu, Bhulu and Runi, is something which an entire generation of the State grew up with. In order to capture the very essence of the old feature, Simanta had launched a state-wide audition for the four main characters. More than 300 child artists from all across the State had come to participate in the audition. It was finally decided that Ekta Saikia of Guwahati, Arindam Sharma Kashyap of Dergaon, Soumabrat Bora of Sibsagar and Pranju Bora of Numaligarh perfectly fitted the evergreen characters of Runi, Bhulu, Monu and Bapu. The other members of the cast include Arun Nath, Malaya Goswami, Upakul Bordoloi, Chetana Das, Prasanta Phukan, Mridul Kakati, Jyotirmoi Sharma, Banashri Kakoti, Puwali Bora, child artists Navakishor Dutta and Anupam Gogoi besides others.

The video feature is being produced by Sonari-based cultural activists Utpal Gogoi and Debajit Bora under the banner of JJ Production. The crew for *Xanta-Xista Hrista-Pusta Mahadusta* is as follows: Munin Barua (choreography), Jitu Ahmed (camera), Rustam Bora (chief assistant director), Bubul Phukan and Rupjyoti Mahanta (assistant directors), Biswajit Kalita (make-up), Gitika Phukan (costume), Phatik Baruah (production controller), Dipak Sharma (production manager). Anurag Saikia has provided the music score for the film and Zubeen Garg has lend his voice to the beautiful lyrics penned down by Dr. Anil Sharma. The first episode of the video feature will be released on Dr. Bhabendranath Saikia's birth anniversary on February 20.

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BY AIYUSHMAN DUTTA

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