CHAPTER - V

IMPACT OF DR. HAZARIKA’S LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENT ON SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN ASSAM
Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s immense contributions towards social, political, literature and cultural field have made deep impact on Assam and other states of Northeast India. Since his younger days he made an attempt to reform the society through his songs. His songs could impress very deeply thousands of listeners in a moment. During his entire life time he sang for emancipation of the oppressed people. He protested against injustice through songs and inspired the people by infusing new thoughts in them to protest against all kinds of injustice in the society. Even as an MLA he tried to improve the conditions of the people of his constituency through active participation in the discussion on the floor of the house.

The devoted artist Dr. Hazarika loved the people from the core of his heart. He expressed concerns for the workers and labourers. Through songs he made an attempt to put an end to oppression, injustice, hunger and fear among different sections of the people in the region.

It is not only about political corruption, differences between rich and poor that found place in his composition of songs but also the problems, sorrows and despair of hill peoples, plain tribes and different communities were included in all his creations. In his songs the amity and emotional integration between the people of the hills and plains and Brahmaputra and Barak valley are always stressed.
Moreover the neo-globalization is also explicitly focused in Dr. Hazarika’s songs. He had also tried to focus in the international field his patriotic songs on India’s national integration and Indian Army who laid down their lives for the country.

Whenever there was crisis in the social life of Assamese people, he used to come to Assam immediately from where ever he stayed and tried to solve the problem through songs and writings. During 1983, when there were disturbances in connection with the entry of illegal immigrants in the voter’s list caused by the AASU movement the Government failed to control the situation in Assam, it was Dr. Bhupen Hazarika who visited different disturbed areas of Assam as singer to bring unity and established peace among the people.

Under that circumstances Dr. Bhupen Hazarika led a campaign of cultural integration all over the state with the help of a public organization known as Janasanskritik Parishad formed by the artists at the initiative of Dr. Hazarika. He travelled all the disturbed areas. It was possible due to his popularity among all sections of the society. Loknath Goswami writes—“Without going to the details, about cultural integration campaign, one thing can be said that due to the immense popularity of Dr. Hazarika the campaign could be carried out to the suffering people without any obstacle. Through this one can realize about the popularity of ‘Bhupenda’ and respect towards him. At the end of the campaign Bhupenda in a lighter vein said - Public make rush to come to me for presenting Gamocha, Then I pointed out towards Dr. Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya, saying offer him Gamocha… he is president of Asom Sahitya Sabha, he has won Rupees one Lakh as Gyanpeeth Award.”

All Assam Students’ Union started anti foreigners movement in 1979 to fight for the safeguard of the indigenous people of Assam comprising different tribes and
Impact of Dr. Hazarika’s Life and Achievement on Society and Politics in Assam communities. During the period of the movement, in February, 1983, the then Congress Government started holding elections without reforming the voter’s list as demanded by AASU. But AASU termed the Government’s decision as illegal and appealed to the people for movement and boycott of elections. During election there were clashes between people, students and police, military and ultimately a good number of protesters lost their lives and many were crippled for life. In memory of those people Dr. Hazarika wrote a song titled Juye pura Tirashi (83, burnt by fire)

Juye pura tirashir
83, burnt by fire

Nirbasanir bator
Year of election

Mor bhaity nohowa hol
I have lost my brother

Nepalu khabar
No information, yet

Toi Janane khabar
Do you know anything?

Toi Janane khabar
On a day, demons came

..........................
and fired in the bank of Luit

..........................
The dead were floating

Edin dekhu soupakhe
Rongpi, Pegu were with them

Daita danab aahi
Gogoi, Basumatary

Luitor parot guliaale
There were Rahim, Kurmi, Joseph

Bohutu gal bhahi Lagat asil Ronpi, Pegu
Chetri, Tewari..............

Gogoi, Basumotary,
Mother does not go for meal.

Rahim, Kurmi, Joseph asil
Students day and night

Chetri Tewari..
Peeeping from bus window

Aaiye dekhun bhator pator
The sister lightens

Kakhaloi nejai
Earthen lamp
Dr. Bhupen Hazarika beautifully depicts through this song the dangerous trend of the illegal election of 1983 and the movement. He clearly draws the picture for the future stating not to repeat such incidents. Dr. Bhupen Hazarika could influence Assamese society to feel the consequences of violence occurred during the situation.

In the same way, he wrote the song-*Swahid Pranaamo Tumaak* dedicated to the memory of boys and girls, women and men who laid their lives by joining the movement in the interest of preserving the identity of Assamese. The song also bears the testimony of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s involvement in Assamese social life and his
love for his mother land Assam. The song indicates those who died for the cause of Assam remain immortal. The song was:

- **Swahid pranaamo tumaak**
  - Martyrs, I salute you.
- **Luitar parare**
  - I salute you.
- **Tumi dekalora**
  - You are the young boys.
- **Tumieto buku patidila**
  - Of the bank of Luit.
- **Bharatir numalijik basabole**
  - You sacrificed yourself.
- **Tumieto mritu korila**
  - To save the young daughter of India.
- **Swahid pranaamo tumaak**
  - You have embraced death.
- **Swahid pranaamo tumaak...**
  - Martyrs, I salute you...

The song got wide publicity among the people as the song was written to keep up the memories of the martyrs. The song was in everybody’s lips in villages and in cities and still popular. In 1960, there was a language movement in Assam and communal riots occurred between Assamese and Bengalese. Despite its efforts the state government could not control the situation. The then Chief Minister Bimala Prasad Chaliha and his cabinet decided to make a ‘Peace and Friendship Campaign’ and requested Gananatya Sangha to take the lead. The Gananatya Sangha felt that it was not possible without Dr. Bhupen Hazarika.

During language movement Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was staying outside the state. At the request of Gananatya Sangha Dr. Hazarika hurriedly returned to Assam and formed a cultural troup for peace tour in the disturbed areas and was able to bring the situation back to normalcy through his songs with an appeal to both Assamese and Bengalese for peace.
At that time he composed his most popular and famous song *Manuhe Manuhor*.

*Babe...*

*Manuhe manuhar babe*  
*If man does not think for man.*

*Jadihe akonu nebhabe*  
*Who would think with sympathy?*

*Akonu Sahanubhutire*  
*Tell my friend.*

*Bhabibo kunenu kuwa samaniya*  
*If man wants to sell man.*

*Manuhe manuhak basibo khuji*  
*If man wants to buy man.*

*Manuhe manuhak kinibo khuji*  
*Repeating the old history*

*Purani ithakh doharile...*  
*Will it not be a mistake?*

*Bhul jano nahabo kowa samaniya...*  
*Tell my friend....*

“Even today the people in the affected areas of Assam sing the song irrespective of caste community, elites and common people.”² This proves that Dr. Hazarika’s song on humanism has remarkable impact on the Assamese society.

In Dr. Hazarika’s song one can find examples of art and culture, customs, religious belief of the people of hills and plains of Assam. As a result, he was immensely popular among ethnic tribes. “For example, sitting in the house of Mising youth Bikram Singh Yien at Disangmukh of Sivasagar district he wrote another everlasting song in the tune of Oinitam:-

*Bulu O mising Dekati*

*Bajali je pepati*  
*You have played the pipe.*

*Bajali je pepati*  
*And beautified the night of*

*Surere sajali dekhu Disangmukhar nishati...”³*  
*Disangmukh with your sweet tunes...*
Likewise another song *Paahar Bhoiamor Sangam Tholite* depicted the friendship between the people of hills and plains of Assam. A part of the song -

*Pahar bhoiamor sangam tholite*  
*At the meeting place of hills and plains.*

*Bandhu ejon mor asile edin*  
*One of my friends was there.*

*Rodalire bhora shei sonali dudin*  
*In those golden days-we played in sunlight.*

*Ekaloge khela puwa gadhuli bela*  
*And playing in the morning and evening.*

*Shei santa pahar*  
*The silent hill...*

*Shei Dhawani nijorar*  
*The echo of the stream.*

*Together, we played the veen*

*Of the golden days,*

*Full of sunlight, the golden good days.*

Like above many other songs like *Siangore Galong* and *Kohimare Adhunika Dalimi* had made impact on the greater Assamese society in Assam. “From 1926 to 1946, the first twenty years of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s life was termed as an ‘age of fire’ as the period covered freedom movement of India, initiated by Mahatma Gandhi based on non-violence Dr. Hazarika, as a youth found in himself a spark of the age of fire. His heart revolted, at his tender age when he saw the oppression of the British rulers. His heart was burning to see the physical and mental suffering of the people under British regime. His revolted mind induced him to wrote the patriotic song-*Agnijugar Phiringoti Moi* (I am the spark of the age of fire) as if he took oath of contribution towards making an Independent India. In several of his songs, the glimpses of revolution and a belief of communism in his mind are found.”  

On the other hand he protested the killing of Indian Jawans during Chinese attack of 1962 and as a patriot he wrote *Koto Jowanor Mrityu Hol*
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Koto jowanor mrityu hol  So many jowans have died
Kar jibon jowbon gol  Whose youth and lives are lost
Shei mrityu aporajeo  Those deaths cannot be conquered
Tene mritak nahalu moi kiya  Could I become one of them.
Henu HimalaBharator Prahari
Tahani hunisilu kahini  I heard that Himalaya is the sentinel of India
Pise mrita jowan sobe chiorise  But today the dead jowans seems to be shouting
Lage sira jadrata eti bahini  An all time alert soldiers are call of the time...

Through this song Dr. Bhupen Hazarika made the Assamese people deeply felt about expressing condolences and sympathy for the braved families of Jawans. “In the same way the song ‘Ronoklanto Nohow’ infused the spirit among the people to fight for the country with the feeling of patriotism. In the same perspective he wrote Buku Hum Hum Kore (feeling pain in my bosom). Advocating brotherhood and patriotism leading to even spiritualism with such appealing songs- Dr. Hazarika could influence the Assamese people.” Dr. Bhupen Hazarika with his intense love and devotion for motherland Assam wrote songs that influenced Assamese Society.

“Dr. Hazarika sees his mother as the knowledge giver. He had unlimited love for his mother. He also saw Assam as his mother. His love for his Mother Assam is well-described in different ways in his songs. The natural scenario of the state find place in his songs too. That is one of the reasons why his songs are so popular among Assamese people. His songs have also played the role of a bridge between local and
Assamese people who are residing in various parts of the globe.” 6 One of the examples of his humanistic approach towards Assam is placed impressively in the song.

Asom amar rupahi gunaro nai seh
Our Assam is like a girl so beautiful

Bharatore purba dishar surya utha desh
With unlimited qualities

Another glaring example of his optimism is found in his song at the birth of Gauhati University at Jalukbari when he wrote – Jilikabo Luitore Paar (the banks of Luit will be brightened). It is a well combination of words, rhythms and progressive aspect. Inspired by the real meaning of the song the students coming for higher education got overwhelmed. Brightened by the song many students have passed out from the university and taken up their carrier for future. Even today song Jilikaba Luitore Paar is played in all functions of the University as its anthem.

Composing and singing more than thousand songs with meaningful lyrical words with listing tunes mixed with optimism, he not only won the hearts of the people, he provided space to discover a versatile genius in him. The waves of moving lives expressed in those songs make it clear that after Jyoti Prasad’s patriotism, Rabha’s humanism Bhupen Hazarika encompassed love for life to live with new mindset of love for each other in the beautiful world in happiness. Due to this soft feeling with
optimistic outlook Hazarika carried with him uniqueness of his life. That is the reason why he could impact the people of Assam speaking different languages.

Dr. Dilip Kumar Dutta in his book ‘Bhupen Hazarikar Geet aru Jibon Rath’ remarks, “In brief, in Dr. Hazarika’s life, romantic Bishnu Rabha’s revolutionary outlook and Rupknowar Jyoti Prasad’s urge to create beautiful things had much influence. It appears, as if Bhupen Hazarika stood between Rabha’s depiction of songs of the soil and the dust surrounding them and Jyoti Prasad’s colorful rainbow and started singing songs which they could not complete. He joined the broken string of Sitar of Jyoti Prasad and lighten the fused lamp left by Rabha. The tunes of that Sitar and lighting of the fused lamp brought new life, new enthusiasms which have enlivened the lives of Assamese people.”

Great men appear in this world from time to time. In the third decade of nineteenth century, Dr. Bhupen Hazarika appeared to enliven lives in Assam to bring revolution in cultural field. In this way he has left indelible mark by infusing new life, new enthusiasm for decades through his creative writings on love for Assam, Assamese people and Assamese society along with variety of devotions to almighty and promises to build up a new society. The creations not only influenced the Assamese people but also all the people who speak in different languages.

The disciplined education of the British on one hand and their ill behavior towards Indians in respect of political, economic and social aspects were noticed by Dr. Hazarika and made him to think seriously and sympathetically about unfulfilled hopes of the common men, to remove the sorrows of the people. Dr. Hazarika took his sharp
weapon through his songs for it. He protested strongly against the system of inequalities, oppressions by Ministers, Zaminders, Owners and Kings.

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika had lifelong endeavor to create amity and friendship among different tribes and communities. In due course he became hearthrob of ethnic tribes and ultimately became greatest Assamese Personality. A bridge was built up among common and tribal people for his childlike softness towards them.

Due to his love for humanism and life in 1967 at the humble request of young and old, he agreed to contest election at Nawboicha constituency, despite his unwillingness. He also won the election as an independent candidate. During his five year term, eight roads were newly constructed, eight schools were rebuilt, arranged running of ASTC buses and started electricity in Nawboicha. He tried best to solve the problems of the area.

As an MLA Dr. Hazarika not only worked for Nawboicha constituency, he took part to solve burning problems of Assam also. He strongly debated in the Assembly on various issues.

After winning from Nowboicha seat as an independent candidate the speeches he gave in different sessions, gave an inkling of the relevance of his political contributions. Those speeches form an inalienable part of the Assembly proceedings. His first speech was when he responded to the Governor’s inaugural address to the Assembly on March, 21st 1967 regarding the annual and five year plans of the Government. On March 29, on the floor of the House he accused the Government for turning a blind eye towards the activities of food adulteress.
"Dr. Bhupen Hazarika supported Dulal Buruah’s ‘No Confidence motion’ against the Government and on making Guwahati the state capital instead of Shillong. The main reason was that Shillong was not easily attendable to the people of Assam. The farmers, forest dwellers and the people of the lower middle class had to visit the Shillong capital at a heavy cost. The arrogant attitude of the Secretaries brought from outside Assam and the luxurious lifestyle of the Ministers made the common people looked lost. This is anti democratic approach to the people."

On March 30, Dr. Bhupen Hazarika had given a lot of arguments while opposing the demand to give additional grants to the Police department in the following way.

"Dr. Bhupen Hazarika said, the police failed to maintain peace in the state. So the Police deserve condemnation. He asserted that the police personnel are highly corrupted. He compared Congress as rule of Ravan in Lanka. Dr. Hazarika cited an example of Lakhimpur where in broad day light a teacher was moved with hand cuff in presence of the students. Even though the teacher was released afterwards, there was a negative impact on the minds of the students and due of such act of Police they would lose respect for him."

The issues that Dr. Bhupen Hazarika had raised in the Budget session were people’s issues. As an independent MLA, he tried his best to do whatever he could.

In later part in 1971 Dr. Hazarika had contested in Lok Sabha election from Mangaldoi and Guwahati Constituencies as a candidate of Jana Ganatantrik Party and Bhaatiya Janata Party respectively, but he could not win. The people of Assam, specially the youths did not want him to enter into the narrow world of political parties
and oppose that act of Dr. Hazarika. They wanted him as singer for the humanity as a whole.

Even without representing any political party, he personally took initiative to cancel the order of the Government to close down Digboi Refinery by requesting the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Thus he made constructive contributions towards solving Assam’s various problems.

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was a people artist. Thousands of his fans gather to hear him even in bad weather, even when a Pandal is blown away by storm. He makes them spellbound even in such circumstances.

Due to his charismatic popularity in peak, lakhs of people gathered near the Judges Field to have a look at his dead body and pay tributes. As he was a people’s artist, lakhs of people gathered at his funeral at Jalukbari with chanting of –‘Jilikabo Luitore Paar’ and bade farewell with tearful eyes when he was cremated with Hindu rituals. His death cast a gloom not only in Assam but also on the political, cultural and intellectual worlds of all over the country and Bangladesh. Many famous artists, writers, journalists and social workers have mourned his death with condolence messages. Those have been preserved. Here are some remarks of some intellectuals, politician’s, litterateurs, actors, artists, social workers and common people.

"Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was the owner of a beautiful voice. The vacuum created with the demise of this symbol of the North-East, cannot be filled up". Amitabh Bachchan, Film Actor.10
“Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was undoubtedly an international star, a famous artist. In his death Assam as well as India lost a very famous artist”. Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson, UPA Govt.  

“Personally, I am a great follower of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s songs. His death is an irreplaceable loss for Indian music. His songs were not merely songs, but were reflections of the land and the people. His songs were songs for the struggle of change. He started a battle with his songs and was the commander of that battle. This battle was also the battle for national unity. He wanted to sew up the great Indian community with a single thread. To do that he sang, worshipped the beautiful till his death. I think the freedom struggle of the weak and exploited people will go on if the battle begun by Dr Bhupen Hazarika continues”. Anil Sarkar, noted poet, Minister, Cultural Affairs Dept, Tripura.

“Bhupen Hazarika’s music had a profound effect on the Bangladesh Liberation War. His songs rallied the people who jumped into the liberation struggle. Dr Bhupen Hazarika’s songs gave a light of hope to the common people of Bangladesh. His songs which had such an effect on the freedom fighters of Bangladesh will remain immortal”. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister, Bangladesh.

“A creator par excellence, the voice of Dr Bhupen Hazarika was recognized all over the country. Every Indian who loves music and poetry could instantly recognize the sweetness of his magical voice. His voice enraptured the people of the nation”. Pratibha Devi Sing Patil, Former President, India.

“The people lost a famous artist in the death of Dr Bhupen Hazarika. The vacuum created by his passing away cannot be filled up. Not only in music and literature, he left his inedible mark on the world of cinema also throughout the world.
creations. Everybody knows the effect he had on the art and culture of Assam and the North-East. His popularity had no limits”. Dr Manmohan Singh, *Prime Minister*, India.15

“The sun of the east has sunk with Dr Bhupen Hazarika’s death”. Narendra Modi, *Chief Minister*, Gujarat.16

“Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s death has created an irreplaceable vacuum in the field of music not only in Assam or India, but in the whole world”. Nitish Kumar, *Chief Minister*, Bihar.17

“The voice of the Brahmaputa got stopped by Dr Bhupen Hazarika’s death. The people of the country got to know of the culture of Assam and had an impression of the huge Brahmaputra through Dr Hazarika’s creations. He was an invaluable gift of Assam to the world”. K. Sankar Narayan, *Governor*, Maharashtra.18

“Dr. Bhupen Hazarika enriched Indian culture through his creations. In his death, the countrymen have lost a famous artist”. D.V. Sadananda Gouda, *Chief Minister*, Karnataka.19

“Since our childhood days till now when we are in the evening of our lives, Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s songs have been a constant source of inspiration for us through a period of more than 50 years. He did not only win our hearts through his melodious songs, but conquered the world. Dr Hazarika who devoted himself to art and culture for a lifetime infused life into the social life of Assam. Alongside he also established the historic and unique art and culture of the various tribes and communities on the world stage.

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s talent and personality had always kept me amazed and impressed. Like his songs, his simplicity hypnotized me. Even though we had political
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differences, but due to the enormous respect I had for him, those differences could not weaken our relationship. Many beautiful moments of our meetings will remain etched in my heart for ever.

The songs and music of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika are the heart beat of life. His immortal voice will always keep on inspiring us. A man full of deep love for the nation and consciousness for the people, Dr. Hazarika was a people’s artist. He was actually a global citizen who spread the message of peace, brotherhood, equality and progress. His demise is a loss to the country’s music, art, culture and to the national life of the Assamese people, which cannot be filled up. Our government promises the people that his creations and ideals will be kept alive”. Tarun Gogoi, Chief Minister, Assam.20

“I know Dr. Bhupen Hazarika personally. He was a proud singer and musician not only of Assam but also of whole country. He was a multifaceted lyricist personality singer. He could attract the heart of people through his behaviour and patriotic songs”. Prithibi Majhi. Minister, Revenue, Labour and Employment, Tea Tribe welfare department etc, Assam.

“Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was a great patriot, especially for the state of Assam; though he also worked for Indian unity through his songs. After all he was a great humanist and his songs are now crossing beyond the boundary of any demarcated state by any Government”. Dr. Harendra Narayan Dutta, Professor, Dibrugarh University.

“You are a politician-a socialist
You conquere desire
A sentinel of social order
With patriotism in your heart
The entire English nation
Be honored in the world
For Leonard-de-Vinci of Italy and French
Be honored in the world
And racial love saturated in your entity

Endless praises to you

Are not-these true?

You are handsome

You are charming

You are brave

You are an angry man

But you offer your heartfelt love

And share the sorrow of destitute

You have a tender heart, a heart of a lover

You are so endearing

With limitless periphery of your heart.

You have spread the messages of integrity

To the people of either banks

Of the mighty Brhmaputra

Having formed a great congregation of unity of

People you showed the path of progress.

With the motherland in your heart

You composed thousands of songs

And binding those songs in tune

You have poured them in your sweetful

For Paul Robeson,

The Americans be honored in the world

If for Kavi Guru Rabindra Nath Tagore

The ‘Bangabashi’ and

The entire India be honored in the world

Then as “Sangeet Surjya”

Why not we the Assamese and the Indians,

Be honored in the world?

Today you in the

Great congress of world music

Manifestating yourself

Have become ever victorious

With you the entire race

Nation of ours feel proud

Let you be ever victorious

Over time and space

By being perpetual and

Sailing in the Paancoi of lyrics

What you have created in the

World of lyrics

With your swan feather pen
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throrated voice
You have greeted the Missing with their
language
‘Oinitam’, with ‘Ribi-Ga-Seng’ and
Attiring ‘Mibu-Galuk shirt’ and with,
‘Pere-Rombong shawl’ across your body.

For that you may remain
Always be a symbol of pride
With this hope
Your admirer
Lyricist Surjya Hazarika
Salute you from heart of heart
A salute of reverence
And prostration”.

Padmashree Surjya Hazarika,
Close associate of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika

“Late Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, will always stand for the unity and fraternity of mankind. There is not a single aspect of life related to Assam and the North East which he did not beautifully sketched and portrayed through his immortal compositions. He also rose to the occasion and delivered whenever the state and the nation needed his services. The universal appeal that his immortal compositions have unmatched and unparalleled and will continue to encourage and motivate not only the for Assamese nation but also every world citizen who aspire for a newer and better tomorrow, as it appears in his song- Mor gaan houk bahu astha hinatar bipartite ....... asthar gaan...”
Dharmananda Baruah, ACS. OSD, Minister, Health and Family Welfare. Assam

“Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was a genius person. He cannot be compared to any other person. He was and he is one in all in the field of Indian Music”. Mrs Sabitri Robidas, Lepetkatta Tea Estate Dibrugarh.
"God loves him, who loves his creation. When God loves somebody. The creation of God loves him which is natural and universal. In the case of Dr Bhupen Hazarika I feel same. In the year of 1974 I first came into contact with Bhupenda and took charge as the care taker of Kuthori’s Rest House of dada. From that day gradually, day by day I have seen so many incident and feel that only dada can overcome the situation. Dada can solve critical problem by using a simple idea. Last 40 years dada played a very positive role in my life. So I feel dada is my Guru”. Suren Neog, Care taker, Rest House of Kuthari, Nagaon. Assam.

"Assam son Dr. Bhupen Hazarika is internationally acclaimed singer who brought Assam in the world map of culture. His evergreen song “Man for Man himself” (Manuhe Manuhar babe) has mesmerized the people of the every state of India. His other songs on Patriotism, Humanity and integrity can also be considered as everlasting which will remain in the heart of the people as long as the Earth exists. His contribution in making Hindi or Assamese film is also highly acknowledged. He propounded a new method or style in Assamese song. It is also believed that his selection of words, sweetness in voice and emotional tune will provide Aesthetic pleasure to every song lover forever. He was also a film critic, columnist, litterateur etc”. Pranoti Baruah, Principal, Saikhowa Higher Secondary School, Dhola, Tinsukia.

"According to me Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was one of the most loving, respected and insirable personality of Assam. He used his musical instrument on a social instrument to closer our society”. Dr. Rahul Ch. Das, Associate Professor, Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh.

"It has been only 10 days that Bhupen Hazarika has left us. The immense and totally natural sorrow that his demise has caused in Assam is really unique. But to
establish Bhupen Hazarika as the greatest Assamese of all time, a sea of tears is not necessary. In his lifetime itself he was recognized as one of the greatest Assamese and a great personality of modern India. His contribution to the cultural arena in Assam is incomparable. He was not only a great singer, an extraordinarily talented lyricist, a poet and music composer, but on top of all these he was the voice of a whole society".21

"An age has passed away with Bhupenda’s demise. A golden age has passed. We the Assamese people are very emotional and the events of the last few days have proved this. Because I know that Bhupenda died with an anger embedded in his heart while he was alive.” Dr. Lakshmi Goswami, noted educationist.22

"We had realised during our childhood days, the order of the artist that Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was. That was in the 1970s. We were then children. Whenever Bhupen Hazarika’s immortal songs like Koto jowanor mrityu hol, Modarore phool heno pujato nalage, Jilikabo luitore paar came on the big radio in our home, then watching the behaviour of our parents, we knew how massive and a heart touching artist he was. When Bhupen Hazarika’s songs were being played on the radio, it was considered a sin if we the children made the slightest of noises. It seemed that our mother-father listened to the songs on the radio with their hearts. My parents used to hum the songs for a long time attracted by their language, story, tune and the pathos. This great artiste got etched permanently in our hearts during those childhood days itself.” Anowar Hussain, Journalist, Asomia Pratidin.23

"There are many talented music artists in India. But the talent of Bhupen Hazarika, who kept the people of the North-East including the Assamese and those of other communities mesmerised for years together is a rarity not only in India but the whole world. Today in a family starting from the grandfather to the grandson, everyone
is Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s fan. This really is an amazing thing.” Dr. Hiren Gohain, noted intellectual, educationist.24

“Dr. Bhupen Hazarika has passed away. I did not want to believe this news. He had become the consciousness of the Assamese people. He was installed like a god. He had become a legend in his lifetime. He was the hero of the present day cultural world. This hero has left us today. The cultural world has been orphaned. This sorrow lies within each Assamese today. We cannot get him back even if we want to. We can only remember him through his songs, compositions and creations. He was not an individual, but an institution. He was also the leader of Assam’s cultural movement.” Dr. Nagen Saikia, Professor, Educationist.25

“Dr. Bhupen Hazarika built up Assam’s national consciousness in a new manner. He taught the people to think in a new way. The man who inspired the people of Assam to move ahead towards a world outside Assam, it was Bhupen Hazarika. Today the vacuum created by his demise cannot be really filled up. His image floats up before the eyes. It is really very difficult for every resident of the state to bid him goodbye. His absence will always be felt by Assam and the Assamese people.” Reeta Choudhury, Professor, noted writer.26

“Dr. Bhupen Hazarika is a musician with totality, as a composer, lyricist, voice quality everything is unique. Moreover he is a poet, painter and intellectual, writer with an excellence, I considered him as a genius of this era.” Anuradha Sarma Pujari, Editor, Sadin, A weekly Assamese newspaper.

“Dr. Bhupen Hazarika is not only a great musician of Assam but also of the world. His songs reflect the resentment of oppressed people, love and lively picture of humanism. He tried for cultural integrity through his songs among not only different
tribes of Assam, even beyond the border. In the same way he contributed politically and
socially for reforms through his songs. Though he is no more amongst us, he appears to
be alive in the minds of his listeners and audiences.” Gunabati Das, House wife,
Lepetkatta, Dibrugarh.

“Dr Bhupen Hazarika has gone. This news has cast a pall of gloom. But the
greater thing is that his creative songs will inspire the people of Assam to live on. The
Assamese people should not forget his contributions. His ideals should be followed by
everyone. Every Assamese must keep his memory alive in their minds.” Rong Bong
Terang, Former President, Asom Sahitya Sabha.27

“There is nothing special to say. Dr Bhupen Hazarika has gone. But his
creations will always remain with us. It is our responsibility to keep the world famous
artist alive through his works. He will always remain within the hearts of the Assamese.
He has not died, because a massive institution cannot die like this. Each one of us must
make an effort to keep the institution alive.” Abdul Mazid, Actor, Assamese Cinema.28

“Bhupenda was not only Assam’s, but an artist of the world. Bhupenda who
wanted to create a larger massive society based on humanism and fraternity, had an
incomparable voice. In his death, Assam as well as the world has lost a great artist
forever.” Pramila Rani Brahma, Former Minister, Assam.29

“In this death, the state has lost a man to be remembered forever. The death of
this path breaking artist of the Assamese film industry is an irreplaceable loss for the
entire nation.” Janaki Ballav Patnaik, Governor, Assam.30

“Not only the Assamese society, the respect that people have for any people’s
artist, this same respect and love they have for the unparallel artist, Sangit Suryja, Dr.
Dada Saheb Phalke Awardee Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. What life force did his talent have
which attracted people from every section across the barriers of community leaving aside the limits set by the region languages. Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s creations have echoed through the hills and the valleys across both sides of the Brahmaputra, in the process giving rise to a new stream of music – Bhupendra Sangeet.” Dr. Upen Rabha Hakham, *Professor*, Gauhati University.  

“The Asam Sahitya Sabha session of 1993 was held at Jerenga Pathar of the historical place of Sivasagar. He was the centre of attraction of the session, and was about to decorate the president’s seat. An air conditioned room had been readied for him at the circuit house, Sivasagar. Without telling anyone, Bhupen Hazarika absented himself. There was chaos all around. Where could he have gone? A search was carried out. At last it was discovered that he was having chicken at a Chang Ghar (Tree House) in a Mising village of Disangmukh. This is a real picture of Bhupen Hazarika’s normal life. He liked to live like a common man. He had no qualms in eating anywhere, was not fussy about food. The Mising society can never forget Dr. Hazarika who even used to wear Mising handloom shirts.” Gangamohan Mili, *Poet.*  

“Bhupenda is not present today. I am watching the proceedings of his funeral on TV washing away tears from my eyes. No one can fill up the vacuum created by his death. I understand that. So we will have to keep him alive through his songs in the people’s hearts, because Bhupenda is an ideal for every Assamese.” Ratan Lahkar, *Noted Dramatist.*  

“He himself said that in life you cannot count your profits or losses. We are only actors in this huge theatre whatever act we may carry out. Our only purpose is to bring a small smile on the lips of the audience. In the name of success, we may not get even one paisa in life, but even in the midst of this, misfortune, this defeat, this
exploitation, this unhappiness, his tunes will fill our spirits like no one else. When the pollen grains of flowers disperse, who can well sit glum faced dripping with sorrow through songs, poems, tunes and talks. He tells us – go! Move ahead. Don’t keep on sitting. Somewhere hope and beauty are beckoning with flying hands amid a stream of light, the forests, the rocks, land, birds, insects, flower gardens, hills, rivers, sea ports and the people of towns and villages. Get lost in the crowd. Collect as much as possible the jewels of life. Who knows, this moment may not return. Yes, this man was the supreme commander of the ageless voice, Bhupen Hazarika, a world artist in the true meaning of the word.” Samir Tanti, Noted Poet.34

“I did not have the good fortune of meeting Bhupenda personally. But his writings and songs have fascinated me, every song touches you. With his death we have lost a very much loved one, lost someone who was an Assamese to the core. There were many who had made adverse comments on his political position and on a particular advertisement. This still hurts me. He was really above all this. He was a great man, an Assamese in the correct sense of the word. We are really proud of such a person.” Bishnu Khargharia, Actor, Assamese Cinema.35

“I don’t exactly remember the year. I was in Shillong. Bhupenda was also at Hotel Pinewood. I met Bhupenda at the hotel’s lobby one day with two other persons. One was a little dark. Bhupenda called me towards them and told them regarding me, that he is Assam’s Malbhog Banana. I did not know what they understood. We got introduced. One was Sachin Dev Burman and the other Shakti Samanta. The latter’s Aradhana had released a few days back. During the music recording of Chameli Memsahab, Bhupenda had taken Nirod Choudhury and me to Lata Mangeshkar’s home. I remember my eyes welling up with tears on hearing O Bidesi Bandhu for the first
time. Today Bhupena’s death has again made me cry. There are many memories with Bhupena, with Jayanta. Bhupenda was like a guardian for me. Without Bhupenda, I am feeling a total vacuum around me.” George Baker, Actor.36

“Bhupenda had intimate connections with Joytiprasad Agarwala and Bishnu Prasad Rabha. The sudden death of the backbone of Assamese culture, Jyotiprasad Agarwala and Bishnu Prasad Rabha made Bhupen Hazarika the all in all of Assamese culture. His death has made me think that the backbone of Assamese culture has broken down. Now the present generation’s responsibilities have increased manifold. Just like Bhupenda following Jyoti-Bishnu, had strengthened the temple of Assamese culture, in the same manner, the new generation following Bhupenda’s footsteps, must make the cultural field fertile.” Khagen Mahanta, vocal artist.37

“I am deeply hurt by the news of my elder brother Bhupenda’s death. He had from pre-independence days composed songs in Hindi, Bengali etc, apart from Assamese and he even composed music, had directed movies etc. In the absence of my father, he was my father and guardian. He was full of love and had a child like simplicity. He helped those in need every time. He wanted to live as the people wanted. Bhupenda was a genius, who liked the mass people.” Sudhakhshina Sarma, Sister of Dr Bhupen Hazarika.38

“In one word Bhupen Hazarika was incomparable. He had his own stream of music. A world wide affection, love towards every community of Assam and the North-East. Everything was worth illustrating, different from everybody else. His streams of songs have left a lot for us. He had warned the Assamese – if you are a disabled part of the body of the world, will the world like you.” Kanaksen Deka, Former President, Asam Sahitya Sabha, Editor, Dainik Agradoot.39
"Many vocalists or music directors have been in the Indian music field who may have been superior to Bhupen Hazarika technically. But is there a second person who could sing of society of the people's dreams. He was a true successor of Jyoti Prasad Agarwala and Bishnu Prasad Rabha. If the world gets to know that an Assamese person has died, they well know it is Bhupen Hazarika." Akhil Gogoi, President, Krishak Mukti Sangram Samittee, Assam.\textsuperscript{40}

"Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was a representative of Assam and the Assamese people. He had taken Assam's literature and culture to the world stage. To fill up the vacuum created by his demise, many years would be required. He was a multi-faceted talented artist. It is not easy to find a personality like him. He was not a simple individual, but a massive institution in himself. As an individual also, he possessed many unique traits which could easily win anybody over in a moment. His death has cast a pall of gloom over Assam. He was successful in contributing to the changing society in Assam and in India." Prafulla Mahanta, Former Chief Minister, Assam.\textsuperscript{41}

"Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was a special person. That the vacuum created by his demise will be filled up, is not an easy thing to say." Badruddin Ajmal, President, AIUDF.\textsuperscript{42}

"Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was a great artist of Assam. He had also made sterling contributions to the advancement of Bodo language, literature and culture." Thampa Borgoyari, Deputy CEM, BTC.\textsuperscript{43}

"Bhupen Hazarika is a cultural activist, who drew the global attention to establish Assam and the North East. He will remain immortal for ever for his everlasting creations. He is a world citizen whose lifelong struggle became a symbol of creation." Adity Baruah, Gauhati University.
“Dr. Bhupen Hazarika is a giver and creator. In all his creations and outlook one can find attempt to infuse something new with positive attitude in the society. His romantic songs are not merely love songs but an endeavour to give a new shape to the society by breaking the convention prevalent in the society.” Pranjal Sonowal, Dhillagaon, Chaikhowaghat, Tinsukia.

“At the age of ten, as a child he sang patriotic songs in the film Indramalati. Since then I heard the name of Bhupenda, my father told me about him. He had a melodious voice. Some people Bhupenda was misunderstood. He expressed his sadness. But he never disliked any one. On various occasions in different moments he made me sit beside him and ultimately talked about me. His words were so sweet, it was like a poetry.” Ujjal Saikia, Rupai Chaiding, Doomdooma. Tinsukia.

DR. HAZARIKA’S VIEW ON THE COMMON PEOPLE:

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika knew how to view people as people. He did not base his decision on what caste, what religion an individual belonged to. His vision is clearly seen in his address to the people as the president of the Asam Sahitya Sabha. “Have we lost our Basumotaries, Rongpis, Pegus-tribal community due to some reason? I have seen history destroying every sign of the feelings generated out of mere fear, temper, anger, narrow mindedness etc. Have we committed a mistake somewhere? See - we have sometimes been over overjoyed, sometimes suffered from inferiority complexes, sometimes criticized others -- sometime became the servants of unscientific emotional outbursts – sometimes becoming the plaything of powerful rulers, gave a massive blow to the ties which were generated following a scientific thought process, embraced the militant nationalistic thought or someone has tried to make someone wear the mask of narrow political ends.”

44
Dr. Bhupen Hazarika realized that if we were to lead lives based on equality forgetting the differences of caste, religion, colour etc. then we will have to leave narrow mindedness behind. Otherwise, we won’t be able to call ourselves a society based on fraternal culture. In the same address, he also said, “If the bridge of unity that exists between the Barak and Brahmputra Valleys, if that bridge is getting shattered due to political machinations, we will have to reconstruct it. Both the Barak and the Brahmaputra should flow along equally. Nobody should feel that there has been aggression on the language and cultural fronts from either side.”

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika felt that common people irrespective of caste or community should live together, nowhere should divisive factors take seed. Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was very close to the whole Assamese society. He loved the people naturally. He accepted the people of Assam with the bottom of his heart. He has written somewhere – “The people of Assam have never misunderstood me. The land and its people love me immensely. In Era Bator Sur, the character of Jayanta Barua says, the land of Assam will never misunderstand me.” The character was myself, I had said with pride – ‘Never misunderstood’. That may be linked to a son taking pride over his mother. Not with a feeling of derision. That is why there has been no misunderstanding.”

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika always dreamt of working for the people. It was if the people comprising his senses had entered his blood stream. He had promised glitter on both sides of the Brahmaputra.

“Both banks of the Brahmaputra have started shining. As I wished the beginning of the process of the shining of both the sides was a university. People have taken the Gauhati University as the beginning of that process. The attempt of the new generation
The thoughts of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika regarding the people, what he thought of the new generation, how could he take his people forward becomes crystal clear if one analyses the above paragraphs. He also got involved with politics. He had only one target in his political life and that was the welfare of the common people of Assam.

“There is violence in India’s Punjab and the Bodos of Assam have taken up an armed struggle. Then it has emerged that some Brahma or Basumatary of the PTCA has been killed by some Brahma or Basumatary of the ABSU. There is no distinction of guilty-innocent, caste-sub caste, religion etc. The dead or injured are nearly always the common downtrodden people. The leaders in Delhi, Dispur and Kokrajhar are ‘resting’ in air-conditioned rooms or nursing homes. I think of these things when I am outside. One angry Assamese asks, what happened dada! to songs of harmony, respecting the Bordoi chila, Kalaguru Bishnu Rabha and yourself have sung so many songs, but what happened. These small problems could not be solved. Then I also replied angrily, there has never been any problem between the Bodos and the non-Bodos. The problem has turned totally political—and I am not a person capable of doing politics.”

It is not that Dr. Bhupen Hazarika started thinking for the people of Assam after he got established as an artiste. It was his dream for a long long time since his childhood days to be able to live in a world where there were no differences. This becomes evident when he recalls his childhood memories.

“I had studied in Dhubri when I was in classes III, IV and V. I had two very close friends in school. One was Kironmoy Lahiri and the other Hena Ganguly (RCPI
Leader). We had no differences at all. We together watched Assamese and Bengali theatres. I sang Assamese songs for them, Kironmoy and Hema recited Bengal poems for me. We dreamt to build a world devoid of differences, to live in a new world.49

“I am today calling for a thousand young men and women, litterateurs, cultural people – to build an army. These thousand volunteers must be from all communities, linguistic groups and must be involved with the Sahitya Sabha of those communities like Bodo Sahitya Sabha, Mising Sahitya Sabha, Karbi Sahitya Sabha, Nepali Sahitya Sabha, Manipur Sahitya Sabha, Barak Sahitya Sabha etc. One year from now wherever the workshop of harmony is marked out to be held on Assam’s map, at that place, the camp will be held and the language harmony platform will complete the work through the creation of literature. Projects relating to socio-economic development like agricultural farms, cottage industries, small irrigation projects – if they are situated, meaning the workshop should be organized near those places and plans can be made to hold poetry workshops, folk literature workshop there. This army will try to stitch together the string of unity, harmony whenever it tries to break down. Every volunteer should remember that to strengthen the string of liberal harmony, he should work, leaving all party based political and communal thoughts and motives. This army will keep on working even in life threatening situations like political explosions or bandhs or in places where curfew has been imposed and keep working to provide milk to the children like the Red Cross.”50

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika thought of Assam’s development in this manner. Its people had established themselves in his life. The viewpoint of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika towards the common people of Assam becomes clear from the above instances. Each one of his immortal songs gives a glimpse of his dream to take the people ahead. Like
Dr. Hazarika who sang of a deep trust worked all his life for the people’s progress. He spoke for the people who have been left to fend for themselves by the society, for the exploited. He was sympathetic to the woes of the downtrodden people.

He will pierce the hearts of Harijan, Pahaari, Hindu, Muslim, Bodo, Koch, Chutiya, Kochari, Ahom everyone and sail on- said Bhupen Hazarika. For him everyone irrespective of caste, community, religion was close to his heart. And the progress of these people close to his heart was his life’s only aim. In this manner Dr. Bhupen Hazarika kept on working for the people. Through these people and for these people he lived his dreams.

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s impact on Assamese society for his message on various problems and solutions by honesty has made him acceptable to all- it is out of imagination. Due to his incomparable popularity and influence his birth and death anniversaries are observed in a befitting manner by the government, institutions, organisations in cities and villages and even abroad.
DISCUSSIONS:

After analysis of different collected data from the respondents on Dr. Bhupen Hazarika it is noticed that many people from all over Assam have openly expressed their opinion on Dr. Hazarika, the musician and the world artiste in the following way—

1. A majority of people have said that the patriotic, social, love songs, songs of sorrow and despair written by Dr. Hazarika are a class apart and that they love those songs.

2. Majority of the people do concern with the fact that he was one of the greatest singers of India.

3. All of the people agree that his songs paint a picture of Assam’s unity and the harmony between its people.

4. It is witnessed that nearly 80 percent of the people have been bewitched by his songs.

5. In regard to the controversies surrounding Dr. Hazarika, majority of the people term the family centric controversies as normal.

6. All the elderly people recognize Dr. Bhupen Hazarika as a musician, litterateur, filmmaker and intellectual,

7. The people feel that Dr. Hazarika’s songs carry almost all viewpoints possible.

8. Majority of the elderly people admit to being present in Dr. Hazarika’s functions and concerts.

9. Majority of the people present in Dr. Hazarika’s programmes freely admit that his songs are special.
10. Majority of the people also feel that Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was closely associated with Pudmashree Suryya Kumar Hazarika and artist Ratna Ojah.

11. Majority of the people say that they admired Dr. Hazarika's sense of dressing and clothes.

12. Majority of the people also feel that in the success of Dr. Hazarika, the following people—his Parents, brother/sister, Priyam Hazarika, Kalpana Lajmi etc. had a role to play.

13. Majority of the people credit Kalpana Lajmi and to a lesser extent Priyam Hazarika with the unprecedented success that Dr. Hazarika achieved as a musician and cinema director.

14. All the people also expressed the opinion that Tez Hazarika had no role to play in his father’s success.

15. Majority of the elderly people don’t want to accept Dr. Hazarika as a successful politician as they would term him a successful film maker and a singer with a lot of humanism, urge for social harmony in him.

16. Majority of the people agree that the creations and activities of Dr. Hazarika have immense impact on social and political fields of Assamese Society.
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