Dr. Bhupen Hazarika is not a name only. He kept the audience in Assam, India and the world over spellbound with his soul-stirring songs. His songs were imbued with various hues of life—love for the fellow human being, strong optimism, indomitable will power, inspiration for work, the appeal to bring about a transformation in the society and humanistic feelings. Dr. Hazarika devoted himself to the field of music for his whole life with those objectives in his heart. And with this recognition, he got transformed into an institution by himself.

Even as a child, Bhupen Hazarika was able to express himself as a genius of indomitable personality. This was partly due to the musical atmosphere prevailing within the four walls of his home and also due to the attention he received from the three pillars of the cultural world of Assam Bishnu Prasad Rabha, Jyoti Prasad Agarwalla and Phani Sarma. So, he was able to receive accolades from both the common people as well as the knowledgeable circles when he displayed his uncommon talent by participating in various programme from the time he stepped into school till he did his higher studies from the Columbia University in the USA.

During his studies in the USA, Dr. Hazarika also came into contact with various stalwarts like Paul Robeson, Howard Fasht, Lawson, Palwark, Charlie Chaplin, Roosevelt etc. Contacts with the above-mentioned persons inspired him in great measure to further develop his talent. Especially, the celebrated Black activist and singer Paul Robeson had influenced his artist mind to a great extent. During this time, he also got the opportunity to appear on television in New York, which was a very rare thing in those days.

It may be inferred that Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s whole life was an exhibition of a multifarious talent which began from his childhood days and ranged from songs to poetry, lyrical literature to prose, demonstrated art to background music, stagecraft to cinema, radio to TV, university to the legislature, from editing periodicals to literary critic, history to translated literature. This journey began from Assam and spread to almost all the countries of the world and depicted the movement of a free soul. Dr. Bhupen Hazarika is now established as a living legend among the common People.
Dr. Hazarika was honoured with various awards in his lifetime by the Government of India, state governments and various countries of the world. From the Government of India, he received the highest civilian awards viz the Padma Shree, the Padma Bhushan and the Padma Vibhushan respectively as also the Dada Saheb Phalke Award for his contribution to the film industry. Dr. Hazarika wrote songs and gave the music to thousand of songs, 50 movies in different Indian languages and directed several movies.

Much has been written about this colossal figure of the world music industry. He was a lyricist, music director, actor, director, journalist, social reformer, a political personality all rolled into one. This study attempts to cover these aspects of his life. From his childhood, he got the opportunity or the atmosphere to display his undeniable talent and ability. One can feel his thinking and see his viewpoint clearly behind each one of his immortal songs. Dr. Hazarika had taken up service to music as service to life. An attempt has been made here to focus on the films he directed and the songs he wrote, sang and set the tunes. The man who was also involved in politics has also been discussed here. His work, his ideology which he displayed through the highs and lows of his political career should be known to the young generation. His spirit of public service can also be gleaned through the speeches he made in the Assam Assembly. Dr. Hazarika’s name got embroiled in various controversies after and even before his death. The Kalpana Lajmi, Lata Mangeshkar controversies made him the topic of discussion for the public. The thesis also mentions some of his social and political contributions. The thesis also includes the impact of Dr. Hazarika’s life and achievement on society and politics in Assam. It is not possible to discuss all facets of his life in a single thesis. This is a vast topic. However major aspects have been included here. Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s image will remain imprinted on the hearts and minds of the Assamese people for ages to come due to his amazing rare contributions and his extraordinary talent.

The thesis focuses on Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s life, Dr. Hazarika as a musician, his contributions to the Assamese society and political arena, as a film and music director, impact of Dr. Hazarika’s life and achievement on society and politics in Assam. Dr. Hazarika in the midst controversies and at the end conclusion.

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