

# **Sudhakontho Bhupen Hazarika Foundation**

*The Golden Voice of Assam*

## **Why I propose a brand new popular trust to safeguard and propagate**

### **Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's Legacy**

Dear Fans and Followers of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika,

End of December 2011 the following draft proposal for a new trust for my father's legacy was presented to the Govt. of Assam. Since my departure from Assam on November 26<sup>th</sup> I had been in touch with my family and associates drafting the same proposal, the gist of which I am now making public. While work in the field proceeds unabated, still absent is a universally accepted trust for Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. **This public statement is not a tool to pressurize anyone, including the Govt. of Assam, to accept my idea; I am releasing this due to the requests and demands of a number of people in Assam who are evidently concerned about the legacy of Bhupenda.**

Cremating my father was a profound blessing. Like his song, I find myself on a confluence of oceans. I feel accepted even as something is expected of me. I opt to honor the motherland through my service. After all I was born in India and for the knowledge of all who do not know, I have been working here through various foundations for many years now. So I regret any disturbance I may have caused people while they grieved. However when I made my views public, I was only reflecting the public's perception and concern about the representation. It surfaced questions and triggered a necessary forum for previously repressed feelings and positions. Honesty and transparency should be key elements supporting his legacy. I have my personal history with my father, my mother, his siblings, and his partner. I had no choice but to make known my deep reservations and to announce the formation of a new popular trust.

We project a transparent and democratic organization amenable to flexibility, longevity and success. It is to operate as a partnership between the Government of Assam, higher educational institutions, representatives of cultural and civic groups, leaders of ethnic minorities, the private sector and siblings of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. Outlined is a list of objectives to be fulfilled by working committees. Our structure can be a turning wheel or a galaxy, take your pick. Whatever the hard realities, the work must go on. We need your expertise to build this ship.

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The GOA should be an important partner and guardian of the trust. Our popularly grounded umbrella organization should represent, enhance and publicize the legacy with all parties working towards the same goal. If each of us puts our heart into making it happen, it can be a reality. I pledge my diligence, to help build a stable trust out of the willing and convinced members—advisors —specialists working harmoniously. Cultivating new alliances in Assam and the North East we will coordinate projects with communities in North America from New York.

Honorable elders, protectors, guardians, ministers, chairmen, secretaries, treasurers and record keepers of all denominations, this is a call to rally around a plan, not around me. I am proposing it on behalf of its core supporters. More information will flow in the days ahead. Please consider the pros and cons given the choices. I am soliciting your valuable advice and endorsement of what I believe to be our mutual cause, path and goal. It will require hard work, funding from the private sector as well as the government. But most of all your input and support is crucial for making it a reality. In anticipation of this foundation, some people have started pledging their monetary and other forms of support to jump start our operation. Your help in any specific capacity will be needed. Let us know how you can help. Meanwhile please share this plan with everyone.

Let us realize the Sudhakontho's vision for humanity together.

**This is the right time to forge a worthy vessel for Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's Legacy.**

Yours for Assam,

**Tej Hazarika**

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Following is the outline of the objectives of our proposed trust. Organized under topics near and dear to his heart, are our objectives to uphold and to propagate the legacy of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika.



*The Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika*

*1926-2011*

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**- Proposal for Discussion -**

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We request the Government of Assam (GOA) to –

1. Review and consider this proposal
2. Spearhead this foundation
3. Request GOA to offer a foundation office space in the department
4. Request GOA to appoint and fund a full-time liaison officer
5. Guide its overall functioning
6. Structure a Formation Team

[**Note:** We propose the name ‘Sudhakontho Bhupen Hazarika Foundation’, however the name can be discussed and revised if required by the Formation Team]

## **1. Objectives of the foundation:**

The overall objective of the foundation would be to ‘**preserve**’ and ‘**propagate**’ the work and philosophy of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika. We are all aware of the fact that he was a multi-faceted personality. He was a writer, composer, film-maker, performer, artist, social ambassador and much more. He was a monolithic creative institution in himself. There is a need to operate in tracks or focused work-groups in order to research, collate, document, archive and propagate his work. The foundation would thus have tracks and track-committees specializing on individual work streams.

The foundation would like to propose the following tracks:

**1 Education**

**2 Translations**

**3 Publishing:**

**4 Global Initiative**

**5 Writings & Art**

**6 Commonality Initiatives**

**7 Cultural Awareness Initiatives**

**8 Music**

**9 Lyrics**

**10 Films and video archive**

**11 Life of Dr Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika**

**12 Website/Online Repository**

**13 Fund Raising**

## **2. Tracks & Objectives:**

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**Track 1. Education:** To develop speakers to bring new ideas to schools, as catalysts, to provide leadership perspective **in keeping with Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika's role in life as advisor, patron and advisor to institutions of learning**, he was able to inspire young and old to do better. The Foundation will cultivate and send specialists and personalities to address affiliate schools' student, parent and teacher bodies. To equip people with key information required to make advancements or transformations. To assist affiliate independent educational institutions in long term associations **including the attraction of assistance from overseas educational philanthropic organizations** while inculcating the **ethic of giving back to the society**.

**Track 2. Translations:** To facilitate, manage and regulate the quality of **translation projects** to completion of all the written works including song lyrics of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika into major sub continental (Hindi, Urdu, South Indian groups) and other language groups of the world (English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, etc).

**Track 3. Publishing:** To oversee **publishing initiatives of original and translated writings of Dr Bhupen Hazarika for production and distribution world-wide**. To creatively publicize the works and develop markets nationally and internationally. To introduce his works to reading curriculums through all levels of education in Assam and

eventually India and overseas and to establish avenues to introduce his books into schools, colleges, universities and libraries. Under this initiative our trust will be able to collaborate with new and worthy projects that keep emerging from innovators inspired by his legacy and example.

**Track 4. Global Initiative:** To associate Dr Bhupen Hazarika's name with **excellence in the fields of poetry, modern urban and folk musical traditions, songs with messages, and music used for social change and education**. To cultivate proponents for chairs, fellowships or awards in his name or to honor him with names of buildings or classrooms. Liaise with NE and Indian communities globally to expose and popularize his work through events and creative collaborations abroad. Seek ways to present his lyrics as a window into the culture of Assam while using them as a bridge for the seven sister states to rest of India and the world.

**Track 5. Writings & Art:** To research and archive, catalogue and publish his contributions to **literary prose, poetry, essays as well as his painting/drawings/art designs including his calligraphy**. His contributions and impact on society in Assam, North East, West Bengal, Bangladesh and nationally to be

fully explored and documented. Research, archive and publish accounts of his work as a peacemaker and jewel of India.

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**Track 6. Commonality Initiatives:** To address issues of **fair representation of minorities**, to provide venues and forums for personalities from different groups (including but not limited to Muslims, Christians and Buddhists) to participate and be heard by interested citizens live and through television and for them to meet each other under the **umbrella of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika's central message of peace, celebration of commonality and peaceful resolution of conflicts**. The broad distribution of participating members over a term participation in executive committees will ensure fair representation of all groups on a decision making level. A culture of building long term relationships will be encouraged. These collaborations will seed other cooperation between groups, facilitated by the foundation. This initiative will also maintain a volunteer dedicated group of legal and social advisors to **protect the rights of the weak segments of society**.

**Track 7. Cultural Awareness Initiatives:** through the performing arts: In keeping with his vision of cultural syncretism and appreciation of all forms of art, to promote and co-produce special events and contests to promote reciprocal cultural exchange between Assam and other countries through performance and events.

**Track 8. Music:** To collect, archive, the musical songs, compositions and arrangements of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika. To liaise with other groups already archiving his works to contribute to the sum total of 'Bhupendra Sangeet'. To seek effective ways to brand and present his body of work in a context true to his philosophy, view of the creative process and transformation of society. To retrieve and publish his recorded but as yet unpublished musical works using appropriate media.

**Track 9. Lyrics:** To research, collect, archive, catalogue and publish the **lyrics** of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika. To facilitate intellectual discussion, analysis and interpretation of his lyrics. To conduct propagation via reading sessions and writing forums. To highlight the freshness and uniqueness of his central humanist message embedded in each of his lyrical masterpieces. To seek ways to present his lyrics as a window into the culture of Assam as well as the interlinked culture of the north eastern states.

**Track 10. Films and video footage:** To collect, archive and enhance with subtitles, for international consumption, all his film and video work with the objective to make them available to the public in the best form possible. Complimentary to that task will be the collection, research, archiving and publishing of articles, scripts for films, essays and books written on audio visual media and education by Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika. To collect and archive video footage of all his performances. To make available his films to the public and to film schools school and libraries.

**Track 11. Life of Dr Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika:** Document his life and the achievements/awards of Xudhakontho. Collect, catalogue and archive video footage of his performances. Record personal first-hand accounts of people. Stories from musicians who travelled and performed with him are a great source of information. Contacts will be pooled by word of mouth, to establish direct links with all individuals with information to share about Bhupenda. To

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gather information, interviews, letters and articles related to him in order to create a more complete documentation of his life for the public and posterity.

**Track 12.** Website/Online Repository: Maintain a dynamic official website and media page with live updates and interactivity with public to facilitate greater traffic and flow of information. Website can be a learning resource for the works of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika.

**Track 13.** Fund Raising: To cultivate sponsors and raise funds from the private sector to accomplish the objectives of the trust. To maintain transparent records for all financial activities of the foundation in conjunction with the Govt of Assam.

## **2. THE FOUNDATION Structure:**

### **2A. Board of Advisors (BOA): The Guiding Force**

The Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika was a humanist. He wrote and performed for the people, with the people and about the people. His work and creations involve people from different walks of life. Also different individuals and groups have contributed to his creative pursuits during his life time- as an inspiration, associate, critique or a fan. The foundation believes that it would be extremely important to include such a consortium of select advisors to guide its activities focused at preservation and propagation of his philosophy and work. This **board of advisors** would form a powerful consortium which would play a vital role in the way foundation would function.

#### **Highlights:**

- The BOA would comprise of personalities from Assam/North-East/India/International, creative artistes, intellectuals, ethnic representatives, socio-cultural associations, non-resident Assamese, youth personalities, close associates, friends, family and the government.
- The advisors would be selected based on suggestions and inclusive discussions within the Formation Team.
- The BOA would comprise of permanent members as well as term-members (selected for the term)
- The BOA would form a multi-dimensional consortium from which the working core-committee, committees for the tracks and the executive committee would evolve.

#### **High-level Responsibilities:**

- The board of advisors would be the **GUIDING FORCE** of the foundation.
- The board members would be requested for suggestions, active participation in the activities of the foundation and the tracks, attend scheduled board meetings and contribute to the overall purpose of the foundation.

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[**Note:** The set of responsibilities or expectations from the BOA would be discussed and defined by the Formation Team]

## **2B. Executive Committee (EC): The Working Force**

While the Tracks would have their focused working groups (mostly) from the BOA- there would be a need for an Executive Committee (EC) with voting rights to enable certain decision-making related to the overall functioning of the foundation. At the same time it would be of utmost importance that the EC comprises of members nominated from the BOA and the Government maybe on rotation basis.

### **Highlights:**

- The EC would comprise of the permanent members as well as a substantial percentage of elected members from the BOA.
- The EC structure and the voting rights would be finalized based on suggestions and inclusive discussions within the Formation Team.
- The EC would spearhead the foundation and would operate in a transparent, collaborative and democratic fashion.

### **High-level Responsibilities:**

- The Executive Committee would be the **WORKING FORCE** of the Foundation.
- The EC would be responsible to garner the collective views of the BOA in the foundations operation
- The EC members would have scheduled meetings and would take decisions regarding the functioning and progress of the overall as well as the track level activities.

[**Note:** The set of responsibilities or expectations from the BOA would be discussed and defined by the formation team]

## **2C. Track Committee (TC): The Focused Force**

All the individual tracks- **Music, Lyrics, Writings & Art, Translations, Publishing, Films, Awareness Initiatives, Commonality Initiatives, Education, Internationalize, Life of Dr Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika, Website/Online Repository, Fund Raising** would have structured committees focusing on the specific area of the foundation.

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## Highlights:

- The TC would comprise of most relevant Chief Advisor, 1 elected member from BOA, the liaison officer as well as specialized members (from or outside the BOA) as deemed fit by the TC and the EC.
- The TC would spearhead the activities of the focus area and would operate in a transparent, collaborative and democratic fashion.

## High-level Responsibilities:

- The TC Track Committee would be the **FOCUSED FORCE** of the Foundation.
- The TC would formulate their own track plan and set up their working structure
- The TC members would have scheduled meetings and would take decisions regarding the functioning and progress of the track level activities.
- The TC would garner suggestions from the BOA and would also present plans and progress to the EC

[**Note:** The set of responsibilities or expectations from the TC would be discussed and defined by the Formation Team]

## 2C. THE FOUNDATION Office

The Formation Team would identify and publish the office bearers of the foundation. The BOA, EC and the TC's would entrust enormous responsibility to the office bearers for smooth and non-controversial functioning of the foundation.

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