

“Bistirna Parore”: A Musical Voyage Across Brahmaputra to Celebrate Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s Birth Centenary

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The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), under the aegis of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), will launch “Bistirna Parore: A Musical Voyage from Sadiya to Dhubri” tomorrow at Guijan in Dibrugarh to mark the birth centenary of Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhupen Hazarika.

The unique cultural journey, named after one of Dr. Hazarika’s most iconic compositions, will span the length of the Brahmaputra River and bring together communities through music and celebration. The voyage will be flagged off tomorrow morning from Guijan.

The opening ceremony at Bogibeel, Dibrugarh, will feature a wide range of activities designed to honour Dr. Hazarika’s creative legacy and inspire young minds. These include an art competition, a quiz competition based on the life and works of Dr. Hazarika, and group dance performances showcasing the traditions of Moran, Motok, Tea Tribe, Sonowal Kachari, Deuri, and Gorkha communities. Together, these events will reflect the diversity of Assam’s cultural mosaic that Bhupen Da so vividly captured in his music.

Adding to the significance of the occasion, video tributes from some of India’s most prominent voices in music will be screened. Among those paying homage are violinist Sunita Bhuyan Khound, music directors Dhrubajyoti Phukan, Amrit Pritam, Lohit Gogoi, and Syed Sadulla, as well as noted artists Ramen Choudhury, Samar Hazarika, and devotional singer Anup Jalota. Their messages will celebrate Bhupen Da’s unparalleled contribution to Indian music and his ability to transcend borders with his art.

The centenary of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika is more than an anniversary—it is a collective remembrance of a cultural icon whose voice became the soul of the Brahmaputra. Known as the “Sudhakantha” (Bard of the Brahmaputra), Dr. Hazarika drew his deepest inspiration from the mighty river. His immortal song Bistirna Parore not only captured the physical expanse of the Brahmaputra but also echoed the struggles, aspirations, and unity of the people who live along its banks.

The Brahmaputra, flowing from Sadiya to Dhubri, has long been the lifeline of Assam, binding together its diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic communities. Dr. Hazarika transformed this river into a metaphor for humanity—its boundlessness mirroring his universal messages of equality, friendship, and justice. Through his music, the river became more than geography; it became a symbol of cultural solidarity and global harmony.

As IWAI conceptualised this river journey, the idea was not just to pay tribute but to retrace Dr. Hazarika’s footsteps across the Brahmaputra, connecting communities and carrying his message downstream, much like the river carries life itself. Bistirna Parore is thus both a homage and a living journey of remembrance.

The celebration will unfold through four major events across Assam:

- Bogibeel, Dibrugarh – 8 September
- Silghat, Tezpur – 11 September
- Pandu, Guwahati – 15 September (subject to further update)
- IWAI Jetty, Jogighopa – 18 September (subject to further update)

Hundreds of people and admirers of Dr. Hazarika are expected to gather at Bogibeel tomorrow, making this

historic cultural voyage a memorable beginning to the centenary celebrations.

Speaking on the initiative, Prabin Bora, Director, IWAI said the voyage embodies the timeless spirit of Dr. Hazarika's music. "Bhupen Da's creations were not just songs; they were voices of humanity, unity, and justice. His works captured the joys and sorrows of life along the Brahmaputra and brought Assam's cultural richness to the world," Shri Bora said.

The program will showcase live performances of Dr. Hazarika's immortal songs, folk presentations, and cultural narratives from the communities that inspired his art. The troupe will travel along the river, echoing the maestro's vision of harmony across boundaries.

"Much like the mighty Brahmaputra, Bhupen Da's music flowed across borders with a universal message of peace and brotherhood. On his centenary, we celebrate not only his legacy but also the collective cultural identity he helped shape," Shri Prabin Bora added.

Dr. Hazarika, honoured with India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna, in 2019, continues to inspire generations. With Bistirna Parore, the centenary celebrations will remind Assam, India, and the world of his unmatched role as both a cultural unifier and a voice of the river.

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