



Jyotiraditya Scindia confers Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhupen Hazarika National Awards celebrating cultural harmony in Bhupen Da's centenary year

A versatile range of cultural custodians from the Northeast conferred with the honour

Union Minister Scindia later addresses Nanhi Chhaan National Essay Contest, urging youth to shape a compassionate and inclusive India

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Union Minister for Communications and Development of the North Eastern Region, Jyotiraditya Scindia, today conferred the Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhupen Hazarika National Awards at a ceremony in Guwahati organised by Sarhad Pune, and later addressed the Nanhi Chhaan 12th National Essay Contest. Both events celebrated India's cultural diversity, the Northeast's heritage, and the pivotal role of women and youth in nation building.



Speaking at the award ceremony, Scindia paid tribute to Bhupen Hazarika as a poet, musician, and voice of the nation whose work wove together art and unity. He said that conferring awards in Bhupen Da's name honours not just an artist but an era of empathy and cultural synthesis. Six eminent personalities from the region were felicitated for their contributions to literature, music, film, scholarship, and cultural preservation — Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi (Arunachal Pradesh), Laishram Mema (Manipur), Rajni Basumatary (Assam), L. R. Sailo (Mizoram), Dr. Surjya Kanta Hazarika (Assam), and Prof. David R. Syiemlieh (Meghalaya).





Recalling his deep personal connection with the Northeast, Scindia reflected on how his association with the region and Bhupen Da's legacy is rooted as much in emotion as in history. He described Bhupen Da as a bridge between "my janmabhoomi Mumbai and his karmabhoomi Assam," whose melodies continue to breathe across India's cultural landscape.

The Minister spoke of his family's long-standing bond with the region — a relationship etched in compassion. After the devastating 1950 earthquake that shook Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, his grandfather, Maharaja Jivajirao Scindia, had established the Assam Relief Fund, extending timely aid and solidarity to the people. He noted how the same deluge that erased Sadiya, Bhupen Da's birthplace, also gave rise to his immortal songs that turned pain into poetry and loss into light.

“The resilience of Bhupen Da's music reminds us that even in sorrow, there is song; that the human spirit, like the Brahmaputra, always finds its course again,” Scindia remarked.

He also highlighted the Bhupen Hazarika Setu as a living testament to Bhupen Da's vision of connection and progress.

Scindia commended Sarhad Pune and its founder Sanjay Nahar for decades of work in promoting national integration, nurturing students from conflict-affected regions, establishing cultural platforms such as Sarhad Music and the Bhupen Hazarika Music Studio, and running a girls' hostel for students from the Northeast, all rooted in empathy and harmony.

Later, the Minister addressed the Nanhi Chhaan National Essay Contest, which saw participation from over 50,000 students across India. He interacted with the winners, commending their clarity of thought and patriotic spirit.





He praised the Nanhi Chhaan Foundation for its work in women's empowerment, environmental protection, and interfaith harmony. Reflecting on the theme "The Force of Viksit Bharat," Scindia said the essays were a reminder that India's future rests on the confidence, compassion, and curiosity of its youth.



Reiterating that the true strength of a Viksit Bharat will emerge when daughters see themselves not as bystanders but as architects of change, Scindia drew inspiration from Assam's freedom heroine Kanaklata Barua, noting that courage and conviction know no age or gender. He underscored that India's march towards Viksit Bharat will gain unstoppable momentum when women's empathy, resilience, and leadership combine with youthful innovation and energy.

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