

লুবনা মৰিয়ম

বিশিষ্ট গবেষক, নৃত্যশিল্পী, লেখক, স্থপতিবিদ
সাধনা সাংস্কৃতিক গোষ্ঠী, ঢাকা, বাংলাদেশ

জন্ম

৮ জুলাই, ১৯৫৪ খ্রীষ্টাব্দ, ঢাকা, বাংলাদেশ

শিক্ষা

- ২০০৫ খ্রীষ্টাব্দত কেবেলাৰ কালিকট বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ৰ পৰা সংস্কৃতত স্নাতকোত্তৰ ডিগ্রী।
- ২০০৩ খ্রীষ্টাব্দত মধ্যপ্রদেশৰ হবিসিং গৌৰ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ৰ পৰা সংস্কৃতত স্নাতক ডিগ্রী।
- ২০০০ খ্রীষ্টাব্দত শান্তিনিকেতনৰ পৰা সংস্কৃতত দুবছৰীয়া চাৰ্টিফিকেট পাঠ্যক্রম।
- ১৯৭৭ খ্রীষ্টাব্দত ঢাকাৰ আভিযান্ত্ৰিক আৰু প্ৰযুক্তিবিদ্যা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ৰ পৰা আৰ্কিটেক্ছৰ বিষয়ত স্নাতক ডিগ্রী।

সাংস্কৃতিক কৃতিত্ব

১৯৭৭ খ্রীষ্টাব্দত বাংলাদেশ টেলিভিচনৰ দ্বাৰা ৰাষ্ট্ৰখনৰ 'শ্ৰেষ্ঠ নৃত্যশিল্পী'ৰ বঁটাবে সন্মানিত লুবনা মৰিয়মে ভবতনাতাম আৰু মণিপুৰী নৃত্যত দক্ষতা অৰ্জন কৰি কবিগুৰু ৰবীন্দ্ৰনাথ ৰচিত একাধিক নৃত্য-নাটিকাৰ বিশদ অধ্যয়ন, চৰ্চা আৰু গৱেষণাৰে 'ৰবীন্দ্ৰ নৃত্য'ক নতুন, অধিক সম্পদশীল মাত্ৰাৰে সজাই তোলে। এতিয়ালৈ মৰিয়মে বাংলাদেশ, ভাৰতবৰ্ষ আৰু বিশ্বৰ বিভিন্ন ৰাষ্ট্ৰত বিছখনতকৈও অধিক ৰবীন্দ্ৰনাথৰ নৃত্য-নাটিকা পৰ্য্যটন নৃত্যশৈলীৰে পৰিবেশন কৰি আন্তৰ্জাতিক খ্যাতি-শস্য অৰ্জন কৰিছে। তেওঁ নৃত্য পৰিবেশন তথা গৱেষণা-প্ৰসূত বহুতা প্ৰদান কৰা দেশসমূহ হ'ল— নেপাল, ইন্দোনেছিয়া, মালয়েছিয়া, থাইলেণ্ড, হংকং, চীন, ইংলেণ্ড, কানাডা, মৰিচাছ, ভাৰতবৰ্ষ ইত্যাদি। ১৯৭২ খ্রীষ্টাব্দৰ পৰা আজিলৈকে তেওঁ শান্তিনিকেতনৰ বাৰ্ষিক নৃত্য সমাৰোহত নিয়মিতভাৱে নৃত্য পৰিবেশন কৰি আহিছে। যোৱা দুই দশক ধৰি লুবনা মৰিয়মে নৃত্যৰ পৰিবেশন, অধ্যয়ন আৰু গৱেষণাৰ দিশত একনিষ্ঠভাৱে কাম কৰি বিৰল সমাদৰ অৰ্জন কৰিছে।

বিভিন্ন অনুষ্ঠানত গৱেষণা-পত্ৰ পাঠ

লুবনা মৰিয়মে এতিয়ালৈ প্ৰায় পঞ্চাছখনৰো অধিক আন্তৰ্জাতিক আলোচনা সত্ৰ, বৌদ্ধিক সন্মিলনত আমন্ত্ৰিত বক্তাকপে গৱেষণা-পত্ৰ পাঠ কৰিছে। এইবোৰৰ ভিতৰত উল্লেখযোগ্যঃ

- ২০১২ খ্রীষ্টাব্দত গান্ধীনগৰত অনুষ্ঠিত আন্তৰ্জাতিক সংস্কৃত সন্মিলনত 'সংস্কৃত শিক্ষা' বিষয়ত গৱেষণা-পত্ৰ পাঠ।
- ২০১১ খ্রীষ্টাব্দত ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ত 'চৰ্যাপদ সাহিত্য আৰু চৰ্য্য নৃত্য তথা বৌদ্ধিক তান্ত্ৰিক নৃত্য' বিষয়ত গৱেষণা-পত্ৰ পাঠ।
- ২০১১ খ্রীষ্টাব্দত ঢাকাৰ বাংলা অকাডেমীত ৰবীন্দ্ৰনাথৰ ডেৰশবছৰীয়া জন্মজয়ন্তী উদ্‌যাপন উপলক্ষে আয়োজিত আলোচনা সত্ৰত 'ৰবীন্দ্ৰনাথৰ নাটকত নৃত্য' বিষয়ত গৱেষণা-পত্ৰ পাঠ।

২০১০ খ্রীষ্টাব্দত নিউ ইয়ৰ্ক বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ত অনুষ্ঠিত বিশ্ব নৃত্য সন্মিলনত 'চৰ্য্য নৃত্য আৰু বৌদ্ধিক তান্ত্ৰিক নৃত্য' বিষয়ত গৱেষণা-পত্ৰ পাঠ।

২০০৯ খ্রীষ্টাব্দত দিল্লীৰ জৱাহৰলাল নেহৰু বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ত অনুষ্ঠিত 'নাটকৰ ভাষা আৰু নৃত্যশৈলী' শীৰ্ষক আলোচনা সত্ৰত গৱেষণা-পত্ৰ পাঠ।

২০০৮ খ্রীষ্টাব্দত নিউ ইয়ৰ্কৰ বিভিন্ন মঞ্চত 'বাংলাদেশৰ নৃত্যসমূহ' বিষয়ত গৱেষণা-পত্ৰ পাঠ।

২০০৮ খ্রীষ্টাব্দত জাৰ্মানিৰ মাৰ্কিন লুথাৰ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ত শাস্ত্ৰীয় নৃত্যৰ নন্দনতত্ত্ব সম্বন্ধে গৱেষণা-পত্ৰ পাঠ।

সম্প্ৰতি কাৰ্যনিৰ্বাহ কৰি থকা উল্লেখযোগ্য পদ

সভানেত্ৰী, বাংলাদেশ শাখা, দক্ষিণ-এছিয় নৃত্য সংস্থা। সংস্থাৰ কেন্দ্ৰীয় সমিতিৰ তেওঁ উপ-সভাপতি।

বাংলাদেশ নৃত্যশিল্পী সংস্থাৰ পৰামৰ্শদাতা সমিতিৰ এগৰাকী সন্মানীয় সদস্য।

আন্তৰ্জাতিক নৃত্য পৰিষদৰ সন্মানীয় সদস্য।

ভাৰত-বাংলাদেশ সাংস্কৃতিক পৰিক্ৰমাৰ এগৰাকী আগশাৰীৰ উদ্যোক্তা।

দক্ষিণ-পূব এছিয় ধৰ্ম আৰু সংস্কৃতি চৰ্চা সংস্থাৰ আজীৱন সদস্য।

দক্ষিণ-এছিয় মানৱ অধিকাৰ সংস্থাৰ সন্মানীয় সদস্য।

সাধনা সাংস্কৃতিক গোষ্ঠীৰ সাধাৰণ সম্পাদিকা (১৯৯৪ খ্রীষ্টাব্দৰ পৰা)।

ইয়াৰ উপৰি বহুতো ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয়, আন্তঃৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় পত্ৰিকা, আলোচনী,

গৱেষণা গ্ৰন্থত লুবনা মৰিয়ম প্ৰণীত অসংখ্য গৱেষণামূলক প্ৰবন্ধ প্ৰকাশিত হৈছে।

Award acceptance speech by Lubna Marium

Honourable Chief Minister Sri Tarun Gagoi, respected President of Asam Sahitya Sabha Sri Imran Shah and the members of the Asam Sahitya Sabha, all dignitaries present in the audience, and friends from all over Assam. I bring, to you all, love and greetings from Bangladesh.

I would like to begin with a note of gratitude and thanks to the Asam Sahitya Sabha. I feel honoured and humbled by this extraordinary award conferred on me by the Asam Sahitya Sabha, primarily because it is in the name of Dr Bhupen Hazarika, a creative genius and an internationally recognised humanitarian. I certainly feel that my work, on stage for the last 50 years and now as a grass-root cultural activist, is undeserving of such an honour. However, I assure you that this will inspire me to continue my work with more commitment and perseverance.

I am also overwhelmed that a towering organisation like the Asam Sahitya Sabha, with almost a century of activism in the field of literature and cultural preservation, has chosen to confer on me its first International Solidarity Award. Having acquainted myself with the Sabha's work within Assam and abroad, I feel that the institution of an award such as this will not just help to build bridges between Assam and other countries, like Bangladesh; it will also further the Sabha's work in the international arena. The Asam Sahitya Sabha certainly deserves to be recognised not just as a regional platform for literature and research, but also as an international institute that furthers peace and solidarity through cultural intervention.

I would like to assure the people of Assam that as a mark of my gratitude for this unique honour, through my personal efforts, and the effort of our humble organisation, Shadhona - A Center for Advancement of South-Asian Culture, it will be my priority to promote understanding and friendship between the people of Assam and Bangladesh. I hope to be able to do this through various initiatives that will bring together young people, litterateurs, and cultural activists. There is certainly a crying need for more people-to-people interaction.

I hope also to bring the unique culture of Assam, with its exquisite Ojaapali, Sattriya, Bihu and other performances, within the sphere of my own research work. In fact, in Bangladesh I have been researching the performance of the 'Myth of Manasa, Behula and Lokhindor', which continues to be a popular ritual performance in Muslim majority Bangladesh. Assam's 'Ojaapali' is of the same genre. This is just one example of the many cultural idioms shared by us. My own work in this area will be incomplete till our shared practices can be seen as a unified cultural exercise.

During my short visit to various parts of Assam, I have met with much curiosity about Bangladesh and its people. My response has been an open invitation to one and all to visit my beautiful country. We share so much history and culture, which unfortunately, has become fractured due to historical and political reasons. But, it is never too late to start building bridges.

It will be my greatest pleasure to introduce the people of Assam to Bangladesh's own exceptional cultural practices. To mention a few - we have the practice of 'Kobi-Gaan' that are musical debates on issues of religion and identity; the songs of the very radical Bauls and Fakirs who practice a unique blend of tantra and Sufism; our exciting martial art called 'lathikhela'; and also our urban culture which includes a vibrant practice of theatre, music and dance. This vibrancy is a result of the few decades of dynamic language and cultural movement, which culminated in our independence.

We have a growing tourism industry that can take you to the longest beach in the world, the mangrove forest of Sunderban and all the way to the ocean to watch dolphins, and whales. Please do come and visit us during our Pohela Boishakh or new-year celebrations, during our Pohela Falgun or spring celebrations, or during our Ekushe February celebration of the 'mother-language'.

In Bangladesh, overwhelmingly, it is our culture that defines us. This too is the reason why Bangladesh has never been overtaken by strident religionist movements, in spite of various efforts to do so. But, one needs to see this to believe it. So, once again I invite you all.

On a more sober note, I have given much thought to 'international solidarity' ever since I have been notified of this honour conferred on me by the Asam Sahitya Sabha.

In my heart I believe that human civilization is progressing towards 'solidarity' and 'unity'. But, it has been and is a path that has many ups and downs. Humans have constructed systems of governance and beliefs with all good intentions. Some have worked, some haven't.

These are tumultuous times.

Notions of 'democracy' and the 'nation state' are being overtaken by 'trans-national capital' that is a 'virtual nation' on its own. As political economist Saskia Sassen writes, *'the members are denationalised and connect across the old traditional borders with enormous ease. But this geography has its own borders, and they are not very permeable. It is easier for a poor worker to cross the border into a rich country than to cross into this new geography of power.'* Trans-national capital is the new 'empire' and controls us through the 'market' that is sweeping aside age-old values and replacing them with the new 'mantra' of 'consumerism'.

Unfortunately, the tastes and life-styles promoted by the 'market' are not proportionate with society's ability to afford them. As noted historian K. N. Panikkar states, *'the material modernity they (middle-class) have embraced through consumerism creates a cultural crisis, which they fail to resolve within the ambit of a borrowed lifestyle. They are, therefore, forced to seek their roots, which they seem to locate in a cultural past defined in religious terms. The politicisation of this cultural crisis has led to their uncritical support to communalism.'*

The need of the day, therefore, is cultural intervention to bring about a transformation of social consciousness that aims to bring the alienated individual consciousness back to the path of 'solidarity'. As Dr Bhupen Hazarika so aptly appeals to us, *'manush manusher jonno jibon jiboner jonno ektu shohanubhuti ki manush pete parena, o bondhu'*.

So, what does it take to grow sympathy for fellow humans, and for this world that we inhabit? Without, in any way, being a revivalist, there is a need to look within our own heritage.

I am reminded of the Bauls of Bengal singing: *'Je thake shawmaj bondhone chalte hawy taake pawrer*

jnane'. Translated it means, 'Whoever remains within the confines of society has to proceed according to the judgment of others'. The song goes on to say, 'You will not be liberated by others' knowledge; rather your own knowledge will be eroded, Raaj says, cast off the bonds of society, (and) the bonds of the world will (also) be severed."

The agency of each individual needs to be reaffirmed. We need to realise that we can empower ourselves to reach a greater realisation of our potentials.

Sufism maintains that there is only one Truth, but no two Revelations are outwardly the same. As Martin Lings explains, '*Each wave has its own characteristics according to its destination, that is, the particular needs of time and place towards which and in response to which it has providentially been made to flow. These needs, which include all kinds of ethnic receptivity and aptitudes such as vary from people to people, may be likened to the cavities and hollows which lie in the path of the wave. The vast majority of believers are exclusively concerned with the water which the wave deposits in these receptacles and which constitutes the formal aspect of the religion.*'

Thus we have built barriers of caste and creed, which need to be broken down.

We need to exclude the subjective ethos in each other's beliefs to try and reach the wisdom within the conceptual structure of thoughts. It is about identifying the Truth inherent in all. Most of all, it is about making a sincere effort to break barriers and build bridges. In a fine sentence, Tagore says, "Man is defeated when the authority inside him is curbed;" curbed by the externals of religion, by tradition and custom, by scripture and ritual. The onus today is on each one of us to take this one crucial step across an imagined 'lakshmanrekha', and participate in the exciting macrocosmic advance of human civilisation.

*Isavasyam idam sarvam yat kim ca jagatyam jagat
Tena tyaktena bhunjitha, ma grdhah kasyasvid
dhanam*

Isa Upanisad 1.1

(Know that) all this, sentient and insentient, whatever moves in this moving world is enveloped by God. Therefore find your enjoyment in renunciation; do not covet what belongs to others.

If what is in you is also in me, in the countless little street-children shivering in the cold, and in the sky and the ocean, and yet again in a wisp of grass or in the bird flying into the sunset, aren't we all then an equal part of the whole? Equals enjoined. Can we consciously ignore the shivering poverty of the child in the street? When we deface the Narmada or the Bamiyan Buddhas, do we not then deface a part of ourselves too?

The next line of the *shloka*, however, has one of the most pragmatic pieces of advice. A beautiful commentary by Tagore reads as follows:

When our egos concentrate on the insignificant, it serves only to destroy unity. The part revolts thence against the whole. Thus has renunciation been advocated. However, this renunciation far from taking us towards an emptiness, is assuredly for the purpose of fulfillment. Renounce then the part to gain the whole, renounce the ephemeral for the eternal, ego for love, renounce worldly happiness for eternal bliss.

I would like to end by affirming the fact that I am an optimist and believe in man's capacity to reinvent the world again and again. In the words of the renowned intellectual, Noam Chomsky, 'nothing's ever gone too far. Anything can be reversed; these are human decisions.'

Thank you.