



Sahitya Akademi

18 January 2015

meet the author

Durga Prasad Upadhyaya





Durga Prasad Upadhyaya (Ghimire) was born on 19 January, 1937 at a village named Burhachhapadi which falls in the district of Sonitpur (formerly undivided Darrang), Assam. His parents, Pramananda Upadhyaya Ghimire and Radhika Devi, belonged to a middle-class Brahmin family. Their ancestors migrated to Burhachhapari about a hundred years ago, and lived there, rearing cattle as their main profession. Pramananda's father, Gopilal, was a scholar of Sanskrit and had composed a series of lyrical verses popularly known as *Kavitt*. Young Durga Prasad was greatly inspired by his grand-father and later, he, too, started writing lyrical verses in the tune of his grand-father. It is important to note that Durga Prasad's first poem is a song with the title 'Geet' which was published in the magazine Prabhat in 1956.

Durga Prasad Upadhyaya was admitted to Jheuwani LP school in 1943, and in 1947, he was admitted to the Government High School at Tezpur. He stayed at a boarding house during his study in Tezpur Govt. High School. He passed the matriculation examination in 1954, from the said institution. After passing HSLC examination, he went to Shillong for higher studies and took admission at Saint Anthony's College, from where he

graduated with English, Nepali, Political Science and History as his subjects of study. At Shillong, Durga Prasad encountered a favourable atmosphere of art and music, and composed some of his songs which were broadcast by All India Radio under 'Sagarmatha' Programme.

Durga Prasad wanted to continue his studies but he was called to join as a teacher at Teliagaon High School, due to a dearth of graduate teachers. He could not deny the offer and served in the school for one year. After that, he served at Singri High School for two years. His desire for acquiring a master's degree compelled him to resign from the teacher's job and went to Guwahati to study MA in Political Science. From Gauhati University he passed MA in 1966. This decade was crucial in the life of Durga Prasad Upadhyaya because two very important events took place in his life, which turned him to another direction. During this period his wedding ceremony took place and he was offered a scholarship by the government for studying MA in Nepali at Tribhuvan University. Hence, he left for Kathmandu, leaving his newly wed wife at home. He studied at Tribhuvan University for two years and passed MA in Nepali in 1968.

After passing MA in Nepali he was appointed as lecturer in Darrang College, Tezpur, and served in the same institution for twenty nine years.

Durga Prasad Upadhyaya's career as a social worker is often remembered for his dedication and an unblemished track-record. He, in the capacity of Working President, led Nepali Sahitya Parisad, Asom, at a very crucial time of its expansion, covering all corners of Assam when its President became inactive due to his ill



With wife and family

health. He was elected as president of Harihar Dham Sanskritik Unnayan Samity for three consecutive terms from 2003 to 2013 due to his spotless image and undisputable leadership.

Durga Prasad Upadhyaya is a leading writer of Nepali in India, particularly in the North-East region. He has authored eight books on different genres of literature. Besides these, he has written short-stories and plays which remain unpublished in book form. He is unique in use of lucid language. Durga Prasad Upadhyaya is a poet, essayist and a critic.

The first literary work of Durga Prasad Upadhyaya, *Mero Dristiko Seropheroma Burhachhapadi* (The Periphery of Burhachhapadi in my view), published in 1983, is based on the birth-place of the author, a beautiful river-island of the Brahmaputra called Burhachhapadi.

The author has aptly depicted the life-struggles of the villagers who are often badly affected by devastating floods followed by epidemics. Despite all these calamities, the river island has produced a good number of social workers, educationists and high

class literature. The author is proud of his heritage as son of Burhachhapadi village.

His first collection of poetry *Dhukdhuki* (The Heart-Beat) contains fifty-five lyrical poems with heterogenous themes. In some poems the theme is nature and these are replete with youthful tender love while some other poems deal with progressive themes.

In his other collection of poetry, *Satabhisha*, the poems are replete with imagery and symbolism. Nature, pathos of the downtrodden, prevailing social anomalies, corruption, killing of innocent people by the miscreants are the main theme of his poems. He has used powerful words against anti-social elements. His vision of peace and harmony among different communities, and a prosperous India as a whole, is well reflected in his poetry. The humanitarian aspect is, above all, reflected in his poetical works.

Sadhana may be treated as the masterpiece of the author's career as he has laboured very hard on this volume, which has been widely known and often treated as a reference book. Fifteen scholarly articles have been incorporated in this collection of essays.

Bibliography

- *Mero Dristiko Seropheroma Burhachhapadi*, 1983 (Memoirs)
- *Dhukdhuki*, 1983 (Poetry Collection)
- *Samidha*, 1986 (Essays)
- *Satabhisha*, 1993 (Poetry Collection)
- *Puspatal Upadhyaya: Life and Works*, 2001 (Criticism)
- *Sadhana*, 2003 (Essays)
- *Shantiko Khojima*, 2008 (Poetry Collection)
- *Sarada*, 2012 (Criticism)

Chronology

- 1937 Born in Burhachhapadi, a river-island of the Brahmaputra
- 1943 Ritual of acquiring sacred thread (Upanayan)
- 1954 Passed H S L C Examination
- 1958 Passed B.A Examination from St. Anthony's College
- 1961-62 Teaching in Teliagaon High School
- 1962-65 Teaching in Singri High School
- 1965 Marriage with Bidya Devi: 21 June
Passed MA in Political Science from G.U.

- 1966 Birth of the eldest daughter.
- 1967 Passed MA in Nepali from Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.
- 1968 Birth of the eldest son.
Appointment as Lecturer of Nepali in Darrang College, Tezpur.
- 1972 Birth of the youngest son
- 1983 Publication of the first book
- 1994 Working President of Nepali Sahitya Parisad, Asom (1994-1997)
- 1996 Visited ancestral village in Nepal
- 1997 Retired as Head of the Deptt. (Nepali) from Darrang College
- 2000 Received Literary Pension from the Govt. of Assam
- 2003 President of Harihar Dham Sanskritik Unnayan Samity (2003-13)
- 2005 Received Haribhakta Katuwal Memorial Award
- 2011 Visit to U.S.A.
- 2012 Received Aid from Asom Gorkha Development Council
- 2013 Nagarik Samman at Chandmari, Tezpur



Being felicitated by Nagarik Manch, Tezpur