



CAESURAE NEWSLETTER- 7

2025-2026

Contents

1.	Editorial	2
	<i>Tathagata Sagar Pal</i>	
2.	Rapporteurs' Report of the Virtual Sessions of the VI International Conference of the Caesurae Collective Society	4
	<i>Soutik Chakraborty, Oly Roy,</i> <i>Anup Sharma, Tathagata Sagar Pal</i>	
3.	Rapporteurs' Report of the Offline Sessions of the VI International Conference of the Caesurae Collective Society	8
	<i>Subhrajit Samanta, Deep Saha</i>	
4.	ARTSCAPE: The Goddess Vasundharā	13
	<i>Medha Sinha</i>	
5.	Echoes Beyond the Brahmaputra: Remembering Zubeen Garg (1972–2025)	14
	<i>Subrata Barman</i>	

Editorial

“Culture is the intersection of people and life itself.”

- Wendell Pierce

Culture beckons a dynamic framework of human expression and navigation through all aspects of existence. It is the essence of human civilization, preserving the ‘humanness’ of society, the entire race, its customs, traditions, beliefs, laws, habits, arts et cetera. Caesurae’s journey is aimed at encapsulating the multifarious cultural forms and their transcreations, transmutations and transcriptions from one strand to another. The annual international conferences that Caesurae has been organizing at different locations of India for past nine years, mirror this spirit. The lecture demonstrations; the music, storytelling and poetry workshops; the exhibitions have also been conducted to broaden the spectrum of cultural experience. The 2025 conference, themed “Paradigms of Consciousness and its Cultural and Aesthetic Expressions,” has sought to explore the close connection between consciousness, and the cultural and aesthetic worlds. Artistic, scientific and philosophical aspects of consciousness were discussed, debated and there were dance and musical performances too. The journal of the society, *Caesurae Collective Society*, engages with all markers of humanist cultural arena: literature, films, painting, music, photography and others. It invites the writers to pursue their creative musings, and embraces the confluence of theoretical and artistic trajectories.

2026 promises to be a fruitful chapter in Caesurae’s voyage. The online lecture series, focusing on a vast array of topics (Indian knowledge System, AI, research methodology), will commence from the month of January. The next conference, themed: “Culture in the Symbiocene: Sustainable Pathways in the North-Eastern Himalayas and Beyond,” is scheduled to be held in Assam University (Diphu Campus). It will be the VII International Conference of the Caesurae Collective Society. The conference attempts to make meaningful enquiries into the Symbiocene through the critical frameworks of literature and cultural studies. The rapid environmental degradation of the present epoch has alerted the humanity of the futility of anthropocentric cultural discourses. The United Nations General Assembly Resolution adopted on 25th September, 2015, focusing on sustainable development, is an important milestone in the goal of transforming the world on the brink of ruin. For this purpose, there is an urgent need to adopt the Symbiocene approach which points to humanity’s effort to forge an inclusive, mutually

beneficial relationship with the planet. The North-Eastern Himalayan region, rich in biodiversity, offers an ideal vantage point to identify how its diverse forms of creative expressions reflect the communities' symbiotic connection with the earth. At the same time, the conference also looks towards the global eco-cultural traditions. It befits Caesurae's principle of delineating a planetary cultural consciousness.

-Tathagata Sagar Pal
Senior Research Scholar
Treasurer, Caesurae Collective Society

**Rapporteurs' Report of the Virtual Sessions of the VI International Conference of the
Caesurae Collective Society**

Mode: Zoom, along with YouTube Live

****Rapporteurs:** *Soutik Chakraborty* (Research Scholar, Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University), *Oly Roy* (Assistant Professor, St. Xavier's College, Burdwan), *Anup Sharma* (Learning Instructor at an MNC) and *Tathagata Sagar Pal* (Research Scholar, Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University).

The online sessions of the VI International Conference of the Caesurae Collective Society, titled "Paradigms of Consciousness and Its Cultural & Aesthetic Expressions," were organized on 29th and 30th March, 2025. It started with the session on Buddhist philosophy, graced by two practitioners who elucidated their discussions from the lived experience. Sonam Phuntsho Khenpola, the Mahāyānī monk from Bhutan, initiated a wonderful talk on the concepts of “*Anicca*, *Dukkha* and *Anata* in Buddhism.” He referred to the three principles: that all compounded things are impermanent, that things are devoid of true inherent self and that *nirvāṇa* is beyond self. Equipped with examples from daily lives, Khenpola made the listeners aware of the dependent origination, that everything is governed by cause and effect. His views on *samsāra* where appearance is believed as reality were very insightful. To navigate through the treacherous path, he emphasized upon meditation to cultivate one's mindfulness.

The second speaker was Shri Ishwor Shreshtha who illuminated the listeners' perspective regarding “Five Stages of the Path in Buddhism.” His presentation made it very clear about how these five different milestones prepare one for his / her awakening within body and mind; and the cessation of suffering. He provided an in-depth view of the five paths: path of accumulation, path of preparation, path of seeing, path of meditation, path of no more learning, and related these with ten stages of Bodhisattvayāna. Next, an enriching conversation commenced between the two Buddhist speakers. It touched upon the all-pervasive suffering, the suffering that the Buddha mentioned. To come out of this subtle suffering, there is need for intense practice. For Khenpola, the preliminary of any such practice starts with the genuine interest in the Buddha's words.

In the evening of the 29th March, there were academic sessions. At first, the Keynote Address was delivered by Professor Sthaneswar Timalisina on “Diversifying Indian Philosophy.” While Indian philosophy continues to influence the western perspective, the drawback of western thinkers trying to categorize and strictly define it is its reduction to mere contextualization. Even when recent Indian thinkers have brought in rationality by selectively reading some branch of Indian philosophy, it has just mirrored western thinkers’ strategy. Added to it are the problems of translation and Eurocentric insistence on historicization. Professor Timalisina, therefore, proposed a three-pronged strategy. The first is the *gurukula* system of philosophic study. The second is to understand the differences. By referring to the dialogues between Hindu and Buddhist philosophers, he highlighted how it brought about assimilation between ideas and redefinition of categories while maintaining the distinctiveness of the core ideas. The third necessity is the delimitation of philosophies. Even within a single branch of philosophy, there can be different models. So, there is an ardent need to explore the marginalized schools, many of them on the verge of being lost to history.

It was followed by Professor Daniel Raveh’s session on “Music as Thinking / Thinking as Music: A Dialogue with Mukund Lath.” The first segment of his presentation introduced the audience to Mukund Lath’s works. He highlighted the influence of the *Gītā* and the *Mahābhārata* on this Indian philosopher. Lath’s essays on Aristotle reflected his concern with the relation between the western rationality and colonialism. He was also engaged in foregrounding contemporary Indian philosophies along with classical strands. In the second and the third segments of the presentation, Professor Raveh ruminated on music and thinking as delineated in Lath’s works. He brought in Lath’s discussion on *abidhā* and *vyañjanā*, the denotative and connotative elements of language respectively. For him, the significance of *vyañjanā* lies in its address to one’s felt consciousness. However, Lath also exemplified the practical use of *vyañjanā* and how it can be a source of knowledge. It becomes apparent that music and thinking look for different ends, with music seeking plurality whereas thinking seeks singularity. Yet there is the possibility of thinking in the mirror of music, opening up more diversified horizons.

On the morning of the 30th March, Professor Ramakant Angiras enlightened everyone with his talk on “Aesthetico-Spiritual Experience in the Philosophy of Abhinavagupta.” The chair of the session, Dr. Prakash Joshi, enraptured the audience with his recitation of Professor Angiras’ poem, “*Samādhi*,” providing a glimpse of the sublime vibrations pervading the universe. Angiras Guruji then drew attention to several key points in the Indian concept of ‘*Saundarya*’: a) the *swānubhava* of the artists, b) how they described such aesthetic experiences

and c) how the *rasa*, infused into the descriptions, are intensely transmitted to the readers. Here, Abhinavagupta's role becomes prominent as he talked about the sensibility within the readers. His *Dhvanyālokalocana* is an important work in this regard. The poet's creation is a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings and this creation is nothing short of extraordinary, enabling all to partake of the *rasa* in this harsh world. This *rasa* is not to be found in distant planes, but by paying close attention to *lokajīvana* and *prakṛti*, being compassionate and realizing *pūrṇatā*. It raises a communion between the artist and the enjoyer, his other self, just like the *sāmarasya* of Śiva and Śakti.

In the afternoon, there was the book release of the poetry anthology titled, *Prisms of Consciousness*, compiled, selected, edited and published by Shri Orbindu Ganga. The contributors, from home and abroad, read their works and opened up about the motivation behind their writings. Their observations opened up the impact of consciousness upon the artistic mindscape.

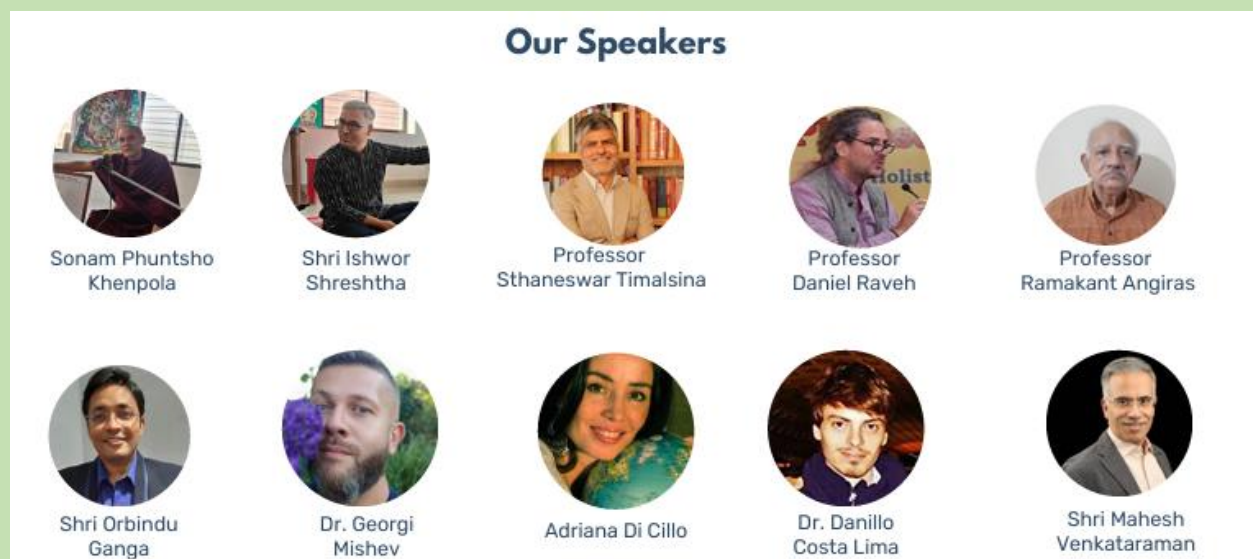
The evening sessions began with Dr. Georgi Mishev's presentation on "Plants in the Folk Beliefs of South Eastern Europe- Seeking the Spiritual Aid of Plants to achieve Luck, Love, Health and More." He shared insights on how plants are regarded as having magical powers, how they are collected and the rituals involved in such practices. He provided a list of plants and what they signify culturally. His description of old Romanian traditions conveyed that plants are regarded as companions of humans. Today, such an insight can guide humans on how to gain spiritual wisdom through the knowledge of these folk rituals.

The next presenter, Adriana Di Cillo shared her life stories and recollected how dance and recording of dance captured her thoughts from childhood. She brought together ancient rock arts of dances from India and Spain and showed how dance chronicles the society through ages. She also moved to modern times and raised philosophical inquiries on how dance is recorded and represented. The relationship between the camera eye and the dancer came up in her discussion. Her opinions regarding this mediated expression and the impact on social memory, consciousness, and representation were path-breaking.

The penultimate session of the day was on "The Logico-Epistemological Role of Self-Awareness in Classical Sanskrit Philosophy" by Dr. Danilo Costa Lima of Sao Paolo University. The session involved an engaging discussion between Dr. Lima and Dr. Godabarisha Mishra, the Chair of the session, on a nuanced understanding of the nature of self-consciousness. Dr. Lima addressed the epistemic interdependence between self-knowledge and knowledge of the world as explored through the classical Indian philosophical debate represented by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika tradition. The intentional model of self-consciousness

(*anuvyavasāya*) and the reflexive model of self-consciousness (*svasaṁvedana*) were contrasted, and their synthesis in the School of Recognition or Pratyabhijñā was analysed. Dr. Lima also put forth his ideas on how the Pratyabhijñā school anticipates the phenomenological thought of post-Kantians such as Fichte, Hegel, Peirce, and Husserl.

The Valedictory Session for the Online Segment of the conference was delivered by Mahesh Venkataraman, the Managing Director, Accenture. The title of his talk was “Mind and Meaning: Rethinking Consciousness Beyond Empiricism.” As a technology leader and interdisciplinary thinker whose work bridges artificial intelligence and philosophical inquiry, Mahesh Venkataraman spoke on how consciousness, instead of being a passive observer of reality, constructs reality. He also discussed the possibility of adopting Heterophenomenology as a methodological framework that can expand our understanding of consciousness by bringing together empirical thought, experiential learning and scientific rigour.



Rapporteurs' Report of the Offline Sessions of the VI International Conference of the Caesurae Collective Society

Venue: Cooch Behar College, West Bengal, India

****Rapporteurs:** *Subhrajit Samanta* (Research Scholar, Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University) and *Deep Saha* (Independent Scholar)



The offline sessions of the VI International Conference of the Caesurae Collective Society were held at Cooch Behar College from 9th to 11th April, 2025. It was jointly organized by the Centre for Indian Arts and Cultural Studies (CIACS), Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University: Department of English, Cooch Behar College (affiliated to the university) and Caesurae Collective Society, in collaboration with Sri Vishnu Mohan Foundation, Chennai.

The first day of the conference began with the Keynote Address by the former Principal of Bethune College and Former President of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society, Professor Pushpa Mishra, who explored Arne Naess' Deep Ecology theory, focusing on self-realization as an expansion of the individual self into an ecological self through identification with all living beings. She also discussed Gandhi's influence on Naess and compared it with Bookchin's social ecology. The next speaker was the Vice Chancellor of Alipurduar University, Professor Sarit Chaudhury, who examined the transition of Adibasi art forms in Arunachal Pradesh due

to postcolonial changes, analyzing their link to collective consciousness and emerging cultural realities. It was followed by a book discussion on Dr Shashank Shekhar Sinha's *Casting the Buddha* (2024), with Professor Jayita Sengupta and Dr. Dipsikha Acharya. The session explored the thematic concerns of the book, including cultural politics and identity formation in Buddhist narratives. The next speaker, Professor Banibrata Mahanta from Banaras Hindu University, explored ageing, death, and salvation in Varanasi's spiritual context, using gerontological and cinematic perspectives (e.g., Mukti Bhavan). His talk focused on *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa* stages and salvation homes (*mokṣa bhavanas*). After lunch, a lecture demonstration relating spiritual consciousness and cognitive connection between Indian Classical and Folk Music was taken up by Shri Nishaant Singh.

The parallel session for this day then proceeded with the first speaker being Sagnik Chakraborty, a research scholar from Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University. He analyzed *Khamosh Paani* to explore partition trauma's impact on consciousness, focusing on memory, identity, and the intersection of gender and religion in the post-1947 Pakistan. The second speaker, Dr. Sharmistha De Dutta, analyzed *Autobiography of a Yogi* as a mystical journey toward self-realization, blending Hindu philosophy and yogic discipline, and its global spiritual resonance. Finally, Asmita Som investigated the concept of return in *The Assassin's Song*, exploring how diaspora reconfigures identity, home, and belonging in a globalized context. The second parallel session had two speakers. Subhrajit Samanta analyzed AI's responses to spiritual queries from 19th-century Bengal texts, using Goffman's framing to assess its reshaping of spiritual discourse. Shankhapradip Ghosh discussed how subconscious processes were fundamental in developing fluency and communicative competence. It suggests that providing a rich, meaningful and low-anxiety learning environment can enhance subconscious acquisition. The first day ended with Dr. Sanchita Choudhury, the Indian Classical Vocalist, discussing sound's therapeutic role across cultures (e.g., Indian *rāgas*) and emphasizing its impact on well-being and consciousness.

The second day of the conference began with Dr Dipsikha Acharya's presentation on *mudrās* in Mahayana Buddhism. Her lecture examined *mudrās* as spiritual gestures in Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna Buddhism, symbolizing elemental synthesis and divine presence, with a demonstration to connect audiences to their symbolic meanings. The second speaker of the day, Tathagata Sagar Pal, analyzed Yamāntaka, the wrathful form of Mañjuśrī, and explored how his "compassionate wrath" in Vajrayāna Buddhism reflects *mahākaruṇā* and aids the bodhisattva path to salvation. Finally, Medha Sinha from Jadavpur University compared

Caryāpadas and *Vaiṣṇava Padāvalī*, highlighting their use of sexuality as a metaphor for divine union and tracing a continuity of esoteric traditions in Bengal's spiritual landscape.

The plenary session of Dr. Shashank Shekhar Sinha investigated how the monuments shape historical consciousness and the collective memories influence their interpretation, advocating for a nuanced study beyond art and architecture to understand connected histories. In the following session, Dr. Bhaskar Sengupta examined how sacred architecture uses geometry and nature to evoke spiritual vibrations, connecting human consciousness with ecological reverence. It ultimately emphasizes the importance of environmental consciousness. The panel on "Concepts, Texts and Contexts" included Dr. Arghya Dipta Kar's analysis of *kāma* in the Śrīvidyā Tantra. He traced its evolution from the *Nityākaula* rituals to Tripurasundarī's divine desire, integrating Pratyabhijñā's non-dualistic concepts into its metaphysical framework. Swastik Banerjee from Calcutta University then explored self-realization in Anuttara Trika Kaula Tantra, emphasizing experiential consciousness over intellectual abstraction, dissolving distinctions between self and cosmos through spiritual practice.

After lunch, Nishaant Singh conducted a workshop on rhythm that explored the shared legacy of Mridang/ Pakhawaj and Shreemaadal, connecting rhythmic structures to divine consciousness. In the parallel session III, Soutik Chakraborty deliberated on Majilpur's clay dolls as a surviving Bengal craft, discussing their cultural significance and the need for preservation amidst modernization. Deep Saha analyzed the Gamira masked dance as a spiritual art form, using Abhinavagupta's *rasa* theory and Jungian psychology to explore its role in transcendence. The last speaker, Prajnajyoti Dutta, highlighted Rāsamelā's role in fostering communal harmony between Hindus and Muslims, emphasizing its sociocultural significance. The parallel session IV was held with Oly Roy exploring consciousness shifts in *Orbital*, where astronauts' experiences in space foster an "Overview Effect." She reflected on humanity's connection to Earth and shared responsibilities. The next speaker, Sebonti Roy Chowdhury, spoke about *The Overstory*'s eco-spiritual perspective, linking plant consciousness and human-nature relationships to ethical responsibilities while referencing animism and scientific studies. Finally, Pallab Kumar Sarker's presentation studied the Toto community's rituals, examining their cultural identity and adaptation to modernity through ethnographic analysis.

The last plenary session of the day proceeded with Professor Gautam Ghosal delivering a talk on the spiritual and aesthetic depth of Rabindra Sangeet, focusing on its fusion of poetry and music. He highlighted female singers like Suchitra Mitra and Sahana Devi who embodied

its soul and incantatory essence. The day came to an end with a beautiful performance from Nandita Banerjee, a senior Bharatanatyam dancer and choreographer. She explored Bhāratanāṭyam's spiritual essence through *Nāṭya Śāstra* and *rasa* theory, demonstrating its role in fostering self-realization.

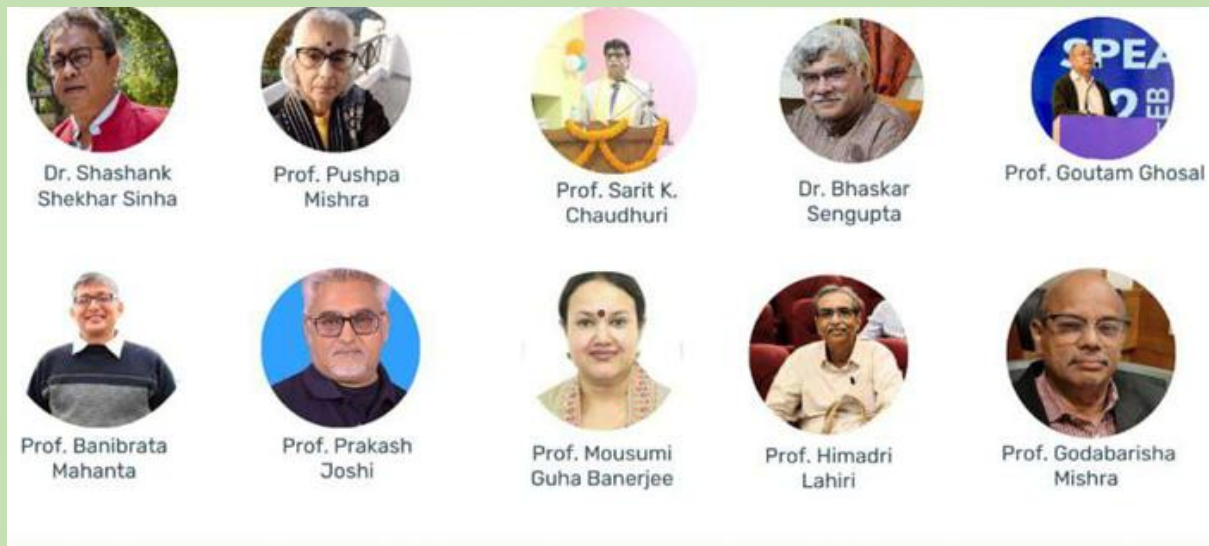
The last day of the conference started with the plenary session of Professor Prakash Joshi from Allahabad University. In his presentation, Professor Joshi encouraged all to see consciousness not merely as a psychological construct dissected by modern analytics, but as a unifying force—an *esemplastic* principle—evident in early Upaniṣadic wisdom. He proposed a dual approach: one that surgically analyzes consciousness in its layers, and another, more inward and intuitive, that experiences consciousness as the thread binding all existence. Professor Mousumi Guha Banerjee continued this by juxtaposing “form” and “formlessness” through the lens of Advaita Vedānta. Her inquiry into aesthetic experience extended to how the divine inhabits all creation as the formless within the form.

Professor Jayita Sengupta then shifted the narrative from metaphysical abstraction to mythic geography. Her exploration of Gyānganj, a mystical Himalayan utopia, revealed how such liminal spaces are accessed not just through physical expeditions but through intuitive and meditative consciousness. The next speaker, Professor Himadri Lahiri, offered a poignant reflection by connecting consciousness with memory, particularly in the narratives of partition. Through an experiential approach, he traced how memory of both the conscious and subconscious, becomes the medium through which trauma is processed and negotiated.

In the panel on “Art, Architecture and Consciousness,” Shreshtha Chakraborty grounded the metaphysical and aesthetic discourse in built environments. She argued for architecture as a medium of transcendence, a space where time, memory, and the sacred intersect. The next speaker of the panel, Maria Jose Lopez Aldana, brought the members of the audience into the digital present, examining immersive art exhibitions as portals to self-awareness. Her study of the U-108 SPACE exhibition illuminated how technology can deepen emotional resonance and catalyze personal interpretation.

The Valedictory Address by Professor Godabarisha Mishra from Nalanda University concluded the symphony of thought shared over the past three days. In his talk, he distinguished between *Classificatory Being*, which categorizes entities; and *Ontological Being*, which affirms existence through the statement “I am.” This affirmation is not merely linguistic but a deep existential truth, pointing to the self as pure. Emphasizing the Upaniṣadic insights, he drew attention to declarations like “*Aham Brahmāsmi*,” which point to the self as identical with the ultimate reality, *Brahman*.

Across all these presentations, what emerged is a spectrum of thought where consciousness- divine, aesthetic, embodied, and historical, is never singular but always in dialogue. This conference, thus, was not merely an academic gathering, but a collective meditation on the many faces of the self and the many paths to the real.



ARTSCAPE

The Goddess Vasundharā

***Medha Sinha*



****Medha Sinha** is a student of B.Ed. at Jadavpur University.

Echoes Beyond the Brahmaputra: Remembering Zubeen Garg

(1972–2025)

***Subrata Barman*

Zubeen Garg (1972–2025), the iconic Assam-born singer and composer, left the world on September 19, 2025, at age 52. His unexpected demise in Singapore has cast a deep pall over Assam and beyond. A tribute by Rahul Gandhi captured the nation’s sentiment: “His voice defined a generation, and his talent was truly unmatched.” Known for the sultry Bollywood hit “Ya Ali,” Garg had become much more than a popular musician. He was a cultural force and a beloved icon across India.



(Image downloaded from Pinterest)

Zubeen Garg was born on November 18, 1972, in a musical Assamese Brahmin family. His given name was even a tribute to maestro Zubin Mehta, reflecting his family’s aspirations. Both parents encouraged his talent. His mother, Ily Borthakur, was herself a singer. Garg began singing as a child, recording his first Assamese album, *Anamika*, in 1992. This debut blends traditional Assamese folk with fresh arrangements. It became an instant hit and signalled a new era in Northeastern music. By the mid-1990s, he had moved to Mumbai to pursue a broader

career. He recorded dozens of Hindi pop and remix albums and lent his voice to many Bollywood films. In 2006, his song “Ya Ali” from the movie *Gangster* became a nationwide sensation, which earned him the Best Playback Singer award at the Global Indian Film Awards. It carried him from Assam to India’s mainstream, even as he continued to cherish and enrich his Assamese roots.

Zubeen Garg’s artistry was marked by astonishing breadth. He was a true multi-instrumentalist and multilingual vocalist, recording more than forty thousand songs across Assamese, Hindi, Bengali, and many tribal languages. He played guitar, *tablā*, *dotāra*, and more, and was regarded as one of Assam’s most influential musicians. Beyond singing, he wrote music and lyrics and even directed films in Assam. His debut film *Tumi Mor Matho Mor* (2000) saw him as actor and director, and he went on to star in numerous Assamese movies such as *Mon Jaai* (2008) and *Priyaar Priyo* (2017). Throughout, his style fused folk, sufi, rock, and classical influences—a democratising, boundary-crossing art that resonated with common people. He wrote heartfelt poems and protested injustices in song, famously chanting “Don’t do politics, my friend” during anti-corruption rallies.

Garg’s commitment extended offstage as well. He was a passionate advocate for Assam’s environment and social causes. When heritage trees in Guwahati faced removal for a highway, he joined local protests to save them. He often lent his voice to wildlife campaigns, especially for Kaziranga National Park. After his death, the park honoured his memory by planting 52 fruit trees (one for each year of his life) on World Rhino Day, linking him forever to Assam’s green legacy. The Times of India noted that Zubeen “gifted the world more than 38,000 songs” and left a legacy “rooted in green,” as colleagues and fans took to planting saplings and ‘Bakul’ trees in his honour. NGOs such as PETA India had even recognised him for speaking out against animal cruelty. In Assam, he was known as a generous and outspoken spirit—funding students’ education, helping the needy, and never shying from bold political or cultural views.

On September 19, Zubeen Garg travelled to Singapore to perform at the “North East India Festival.” That afternoon, during a yacht outing near Lazarus Island, he went for a swim. According to reports, he lost consciousness in the water and was rushed to Singapore General Hospital. Medics performed CPR and managed his breathing, but Garg was declared dead at about 2:30 PM (IST) that day. The Singapore authorities’ death certificate listed “drowning” as the cause. In Assam, the shock was profound. Foul-play rumours swirled on social media, prompting the state government to order a second post-mortem to quell public doubt. Several festival organisers and associates were questioned under charges of negligence, though

officially, no evidence of crime was confirmed. The Chief Minister clarified that Garg had shown signs of a seizure while swimming (he had a history of minor seizures), but ultimately, the documents pointed to an accident in the water.

News of his passing sent Assam into deep mourning. A state funeral was announced for September 23; thousands gathered to bid farewell. His body was brought home and kept at Guwahati's Bhogeswar Baruah Sports Complex, where citizens streamed by to pay respects. Government offices shut down, and schools were closed for the day, as Assam collectively grieved one of its own. The final rites were held in his ancestral village of Kamarkuchi, with the Chief Minister leading the tributes. Across the state, people lit candles, played his songs, and wept openly. In the words of a local editorial, Zubeen's death left "an irreparable void in the cultural, emotional, and spiritual fabric" of Assam. In the days that followed, tributes poured in from all over India. Bollywood stars and politicians alike expressed shock and sorrow. Assam's Governor and Chief Minister both praised his contributions as "monumental" for the region's culture. Ordinary fans shared countless personal stories on social media: how his songs soothed heartbreak, stirred patriotism, and fuelled celebrations like Bohag Bihu. As one Assamese fan noted, it felt as if a beloved friend had been lost. Many recalled a quip Garg once made—that if he ever died in Assam, the state would close for seven days—which now seemed eerily prescient.



(Image downloaded from Wikipedia)

In an unusual digital tribute, fans even renamed a distant landmark for him. St. John's Island (near Lazarus Island) was labelled "Zubeen Garg Island" on Google Maps. Although the change was not an official government act, the gesture went viral online. On social media, Assam's diaspora shared screenshots and photos from the site, seeing it as a permanent, global

honour to their favourite son. “Zubeen Garg Island” became a symbol that his music had truly crossed borders—a way for admirers to keep his memory alive on the map. As we remember Zubeen Garg, we honour a man of many talents and a boundless heart. He was not only a singer and songwriter but a filmmaker, a poet, a crusader for justice, and an environmentalist. His voice, whether on a romantic ballad or a protest anthem, carried the soul of Assam to the world. Assam and the wider world will long feel the loss of Zubeen “Da,” whose melodies and messages touched so many. His music lives on in every street festival, radio station, and heart.

****Subrata Barman** is a Ph.D. Scholar of Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University, West Bengal, India.