



## NIRUPAMA PHUKAN

### Crossing the Barriers Through Translation

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Nirupama Phukan has earned an important position in the literary field of Assam, mainly for her translation works. She was born on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1928 at Badulipar in Golaghat district, which is presently part of Radhabari Tea Estate. Her father Sarat Kumar Sarma was a tea planter and her mother Mukta Lata Devi was a lady of great artistic and literary bent of mind. She was married at a very tender age to Dr Dharaninath Phukan who was one of the founding professors of Assam Medical College and had risen to become the Director of Health Services, Assam, Professor, Regional Medical College, Imphal and founder professor of Basra Medical College, Iraq.

Though practically self taught, Nirupama Phukan completed her graduation in Hindi and also worked for a short stint as translator at All India Radio Guwahati. She was encouraged in her literary pursuits by her father-in-law and noted philosopher Vedanta Bachaspati Radhanath Phukan. She has to her credit 27 books, many of them translated works besides numerous articles published in newspapers, magazines

etc. Immortal books such as *Chandragupta*, *Jeewan Leela*, *Jhootha Sach* and *Godan* have been translated for Sahitya Akademi by her and she has rendered books such as Quaretainin Hyder's *Aag ki Dariya* into Assamese for the National Book Trust of India.

Her primer for young children 'Moinar Moukoh' has been reprinted for the 10<sup>th</sup> time and the children's book Anubhav Bhagavat has earned popularity. Mrs. Phukan's book for neo literates *Surujpurar Suryakanta* received the national award from the Ministry of Human Resources, Govt. of India in 1987. In the year 2000, she was honoured with the very prestigious Sahitya Akademi award for the translation of Munshi Premchand's great work *Godan* into Assamese. Nirupama Phukan also served Dibrugarh Municipal Board as nominated Ward Commissioner for a period of five years. She was also a past president of Dibrugarh Ladies Club. The Sadou Asom Lekhika Samoroh Samiti was launched at Dibrugarh under her Presidentship. Mrs. Phukan is also a life member of Gitarthi Samaj, Jorhat and Asom Sahitya Sabha. The honours she has received include the Joymoti Award of Dibrugarh Ladies Club in 1997. The titles of 'Bhangoni Kunwari' and 'Pragyashree' have been conferred on her by Sadou Asom Lekhika Samaroh Samiti and 'Anubadshri' by Sabda Bharati of Guwahati. In 2004, she was conferred the title 'Assam Ratna' by Gemini Akademi of Haryana. The International Brotherhood Mission, Dibrugarh Chapter conferred 'World Peace Honour' on her.

Widely travelled in 38 countries, Nirupama Phukan is a philanthropist and has made contributions to Shankar Netralaya, Guwahati and Dristidan, Guwahati, an institute for visually handicapped children. She has also set up a trust in memory of her illustrious grandfather and pioneer tea planter Someswar Sarma. Since a few years, she has offered awards to students securing highest marks in Assamese in the state of Assam in HSLC examination. The trust has also organized lecture programmes during the award ceremony. Her dedication and sincerity have shown the very best in the indomitable human spirit. □□