

Sibsagar Bar Association

Sibsagar Bar's hallowed history goes back to more than a century. Sibsagar Bar's history is linked with the justice delivery system in Assam which started, as long back as, 1837. We find from the Gazettier of India Assam State, Sibsagar District that Civil and Criminal Courts were functioning in the State from 1837 which was supplemented by the Civil and Criminal Rules in 1939. In the year 1861 the Civil and Criminal Procedure Code which were in force in Bengal were extended to Assam as a result the Assam Code of 1837 was replaced. Subsequently from 1st July, 1887 the Bengal, Agra and Assam Civil Code Act (Act No.12 of 1887) came into operation in the whole of including the present Sibsagar District. We find from the District Gazettier that Sadar (Dewani) Courts were introduced in lower Assam in 1835 and the said courts were extended to the undivided Sibsagar District comprising the present day Sibsagar, Jorhat and Golaghat District in 1839.

With this back ground we find that legal education and functioning of courts at Sibsagar started from 1839 but before that lawyers were not legally trained. We find reference in Sahityarathi Lakshminath Bezboruah autobiography (Moor Jivan Souauran) that his father late Dinanath Bezboruah and many lawyers was admitted in the courts with no formal legal education. We find that late Akshay Kr. Ghosh was the first Govt. pleader of Assam with his head office at Sibsagar. It was around the year 1880 and that time can be fixed as becoming of the Sibsagar Bar. There is no official record when the present Sibsagar Bar Association was formed. It is learnt from the erstwhile members as well as from Shri Lalit Ch. Barborua, the only living lawyer of the bygone days who is nearing 100 years of age, that the present Bar Association was formed around first two decades of the last century.

Sibsagar Bar Association had immense contribution in the Freedom struggle. Many of its members had undergone imprisonment, detention and police torture. The members of the Bar had the privilege of serving the people both in legal and public field. The giants of the Sibsagar Bar were not only the leaders of the Bar but they were also the leaders of the society. As many as seven members of the Bar were Chairman of the Sibsagar Municipal Board. those were Ram Kumar Barua, Bhaba Nath Hazarika, Bhupendra Nath Ghosh, Ananda Ch. Bezbaroa, Budhannath Hazarika, Ram Chandra Bora and Tarini Charan Sharma. Two other leading members viz. Durgaprasad Borthakur and Girindra Nath Gogoi adored the Chairmanship of the Sibsagar Local Board (present Mahkuma Parishad), yet another leading member Jogendra Nath Gohain was a member of the now abolished Legislation Council of Assam.

Besides them Sibsagar Bar was famous for its other giants like Gunjaman Barua, Rajani Kanta Barua, Lakhi Kanta Barua, Khagendra Nath Sarma, Kaliprasad Chaliha, Padmadhar Chaliha, Pares Nath Chanda, Pitambar Hazarika, Hem Kanta Borpujari, Kaliprasad Chanda, Amritlal Gohain, Sailyadhar Dutta, Jalauddin Ahmed, Samsud Jaman, Tosheswar Dutta, Baidyanath Barpujari, Nagendra Nath Phukon, Jibon Ch. Gogoi, Sarat Ch. Dutta, Trailokya Nath Sarma, just to name a few, who had left for the heavenly abode. Among them Sri Lalit Ch. Barborua is the only surviving member keeping the link of the past and the present generation of lawyers of the Bar. Late Keshob Ch. Gogoi was also a member of Sibsagar, who shifted his practice to Dibrugarh and became the Chief Minister of Assam.

In the post independence period also the contribution of the Sibsagar Bar in political field was no less. Over and above Late Keshob Ch. Gogoi, the chief, Late Girindra Nath Gogoi was a Cabinet Minister and Late Tankeswar Dehingia and Sri Prodip Kr. Gogoi were the Minister of state, Besides, it had members in Legislative Assembly in the persons of Late Anandra Ch. Bezboruah and Shri Pranab Kr. Gogoi, the present M.L.A. Shri Bhadreswar Gohain was another member of the Bar who was the Deputy Speaker of the State Assembly and member of the Rajya Sabha.

In literary field also the members of the Sibsagar Bar had immense contribution. Its members Late Padmadhar Chaliha was the president of Asom Sahitya Sabha and a literacy giant. Another member Late Gunjanan Baruah was one of the four student who translated speaker's famous drama "Comedy of Errors" into Assamese in the name of "Bhramaranga" with Assamese background which was so successful that practically Sixteenth Century England. Another member Indranath Kakoti was a leading journalist besides being one the Sub-Editors of Sarat Bose's leading journal 'Forward'.

In establishment of educational institutions, the contribution of Sibsagar Bar is epoch marketing. The Sibsagar Girls' college was the effort of the Sibsagar bar. In establishment of the two colleges in Sibsagar the members of the Sibsagar bar played active role. Some of the member also helped in functioning of these institutions being member of the governing bodies. In establishment of the Gauhati University also the member of the bar played active roles in collecting fund from the public. The founder principals of the Sibsagar College, Sibsagar Girls' College and Sibsagar Law College, Late Padmadhar Chaliha, Late Tosheswar Dutta and Late Amritlal Gohain respectively were all members of Sibsagar Bar.

The members of the Sibsagar bar were not the vanguards of the Independence Movement but they were also in the forefront of all subsequent movements such as the Refinery Movement, State Language Movements, Medium of Instruction even undergone imprisonment, detention and arrest for these movements. They also played active in rendering relief works during natural calamities such as earthquakes, floods and cyclones.

Contribution of Sibsagar Bar to State Judiciary is also significant. Such was the high reputation of the Bar that its members were recruited in the State Judicial Service even without formal interviews. Justice P.K. Goswami, the then Chief Justice, did not even now to put questions to the members of the Sibsagar Bar when they appeared before the interview board. Such high was his regard for the Sibsagar Bar. Shri Bhupendra Nath Sarma, Shri Satya Nath Hazarika, Shri Sankar Prasad More, Shri Nakul Ch. Dutta, Shri Aditya Kanta Baruah and Syed Nurur Rahman were elevated to the District and Sessions Judge and Shri Munin Chutia was elevated to the post of Additional District and Sessions Judge from amongst host of other member of the Sibsagar bar appointed in the judicial service. Among othe members of the Sibsagar bar who became a part of history are, Late Narayan Ch. Sarma, a prolific writer Late Ahsanuddin Bora, a very energetic, social and sport-loving person, Late Harendra Nath Bhagawati, an actor of repute Late Amrit Kumar Bhuyan, Late Ahsanuddin Bora was designated as senior advocate by the Hon'ble High Court along with shri Amulya Kumar Baruah, the president and Shri Prafulla Ch. Bezborua, the present vice president and shri Gonaram Konwar the Secretary of the Sivsagar bar association after a gap of many years . It has more than 300 members in active practice. Prior to them the Hon'ble made the Sibsagar bar proud by designating Late Amritlal Gohain, Late Kaliprashad Chandra and Late Tosheswar Dutta a senior advocate. Such designations were made for the first time from the lower judiciary in the history the Gauhati High Court. With this hallowed history and glorious past the present Sibsagar bar association is striving hard to keep the past tradition and the rich heritage of the bar and is endeavoring to contribute to all spheres of life. In doing so it has been able to create a niche in the society of the Sibsagar bar.ric "outside the box" thinking. Completely pursue scalable customer service through sustainable potentialities.