



Introduction

Archana Borthakur (www.archanaborthakur.com) is an Indian Social Activist and Entrepreneur from Assam. Since childhood, Archana was of emphatic nature that evoked the social worker in her, In November, 2015, Archana Borthakur founded Priyobondhu (www.priyobondhu.org) in pursuit of community development and social change, and *Priyobondhu Bohumukhi Bidyalay* - one of its unique kind for the Children, living in slums, streets and remote rural areas, who are deprived of education and health due to poverty or other social practices. It is my long cherished dream to establish a free of cost educational institution where underprivileged children will get the opportunity to develop themselves Socio-emotionally, Physically, Intellectually and enhance their Creativity. One of the prime objectives of the education program is to connect our strong literary traditional roots, its history and culture, folk dances and music of Assam.

Since inception, along with her tireless team, she has been working perpetually for the underprivileged and disadvantaged people throughout rural and urban areas of Assam.

Born- *23 October, 1983*

Nationality- *Indian*

Occupation- *Writer, Social Worker and Entrepreneur*

Early life Education and Career-

Born in a traditionalist family in October 23rd, 1983, Archana was very scholastic by nature from childhood. She did her HSLC from Dergaon Girls Higher Secondary School in the year 2000, HS from Kamal Deorah College,

Dergaon in the year 2002, BA in Assamese literature, Cotton College in 2005 and MA in Assamese Literature, Gauhati University in 2007.

From an early age she used to participate in multifarious competitions. She was profound in Debate and Recitation. Her lucid short stories published in almost all dailies, magazines, since her childhood, always lured readers. She has written a few novels also. She was felicitated as a short story writer by Sahitya Shabha Assam in 2010 and has innumerable awards and recognition to her credit.

She started her career as a journalist. She worked for 8 years with premier media houses like DY365, Pratidin Time and News Time Assam. Being an anchor and producer also, she has innumerable television serials to her credit. She is also engaged in different roles, as an announcer for All India Radio, Director of Value based education and Child development project for Assam Development Initiative and several institutional member.

Achana is also a very popular and sought after Motivational speaker and Life coach rendering her services professionally and She is also a quintessential businesswomen.

Social work-

Since childhood, she was of emphatic nature that evoked the social worker in her, which eventually led to the birth of social welfare society *Priyobondhu*. In November, 2015, Archana Borthakur founded Priyobondhu in pursuit of community development and social change. Since inception, along with her tireless team, she has been working perpetually for the underprivileged and disadvantaged people throughout rural and urban areas of Assam.

Initially in 2015, she contrived the idea of creating a '*Clothes, food and educational equipment bank*'. The purpose of the bank was to serve families, children, seniors and others at risk of hunger, collect usable second

hand, new clothes and distribute throughout the year to the less fortunate people who are short of adequate clothing and establish an educational items bank for Children and distribute it among the needy and less fortunate children throughout the year.

On May 1, 2016 she implemented a health awareness program to raise awareness and educate people about the disease Cancer and the need of proper and timely diagnosis and treatment.

Archana initiated several *Skill building* programs to promote employment oriented skill development program and to encourage self employment by providing necessary help to marginalized women. She conducted many vocational training programs and workshops which has enabled marginalized women and girls to learn and enhance their skills and confidence by making themselves self reliant.

Consequently, whilst travelling to several remote rural areas of Assam, She realized that, there is also a need to focus on the necessities of Women and Children. Moved by certain events, on May 13, 2017, 'Let us talk' a program on Menstrual Hygiene Management was implemented. The purpose of the program is to educate girls about menstruation prior to menarche and understanding the biological change, educate adolescent girls and women on safe menstrual practices and liberalization from social taboos and providing access to knowledge and information, safe menstrual absorbents, water, sanitation, hygiene and safe disposal of used menstrual absorbents.

Concurrently, Archana was carrying the thought of need for Children programs. She observed that Children who didn't have a good breakfast in the morning were less attentive in school and less inclined to do well and suffered from fatigue. She states- "*Breakfast is considered to be the most important meal of the day.*" She decided to provide breakfast every morning before school to the poor children. The survival program was named '*Breakfast for a Child*'.

The prime objective of the program is to eradicate child hunger and breakfast skipping by providing a healthy breakfast on a daily basis consisting of a variety of foods, especially high-fiber and nutrient-rich whole grains, fruits, and dairy products, and from 29th August 2017 the project was implemented at Kailashpur LP School, Kahilipara, Guwahati.

Every year unprecedented flood hits almost all parts of Assam. It creates a huge devastation and many lives are being lost. Villages get submerged. Properties, animals etc. all gets washed away. People lay stranded. People suffer from severe food and water shortages and other essentials. They are in desperate need of food primarily. When flood strikes, the immediate impact is food supply shortage resulting to hunger. Archana with her team is relentlessly serving the flood victims with relief materials all across Assam every year since inception.

Looking at the alarming rise of child sexual abuse, molesting, groping etc. cases, Archana launched an Awareness program on safe, unsafe, unwanted touch for girl child was commenced from February 13, 2018. The program is named "*Loudly no*". The objective of the program is teaching girls about limits to identify reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave towards them and how they will respond when someone passes those limits, empowering girls by respecting their choices and their right to say no and empowering girls by teaching self defense.

In 2018 she and her team worked on a project on *Mother and Child Health (MCH)* care to create awareness and educate the community and procurement of MCH schemes and services provided by the Government. It is a comprehensive community health program for mother and child to provide primary health care consciousness and services. The project has reached 87 villages.

The light of knowledge is more equally significant with health and livelihood in any rural society of India. Schools in rural areas are still struggling for infrastructures, facilities and proficient teachers. Such was

Pukarkata LP School (non-provincialised) of Lahorighat in Morigaon District which was established in 1982. But the 35 year infrastructure succumbed to unavailability of funds. There were no walls on all four sides. Only left was the bamboo poles, rusted roof, 4 pairs of desk and benches and one blackboard. The students cannot resist the winds, rains, the scorching sun and consequently school sessions became irregular. Archana, with the help of London based Non resident Indians reconstructed the school building providing all school supplies.

It all began on a chilly winter day in December 2015 when Archana stepped at Hanuman Nagar Basti (Slum), Narengi, Guwahati in a motive to distribute warm clothing to the disadvantaged Children, Women and Men. As you might imagine the unhealthy living conditions, ramshackle houses, impoverished people, using drain water, open defecation, Alcoholism, Substance abuse, amoral behaviors etc. Subsequently, She visited numerous times and conducted community awareness programs on WASH, MHM, Importance of Education etc. and organized several health camps. Gradually they came to know of their livelihood through household surveys and interactive sessions. Children living in the Slum were found with certain behavioral disorders and most of them were found to be School dropouts or never been to school. Most of the Children were engaged in Rag picking and household activities. Since then she began intervention for the development of the Women and Children in the Slum. She provided single meals and serve a single regular 'Full Course Meal' to satisfy them who desire to eat a Nutrient-rich and delicious meal. But the motive behind the program is an enticement to attract people to learn life skills for full involvement in their daily life. Her team often conducted open air school sessions and saw Children being attracted to education one after another.

Consequently, on July 1, 2019 Archana formally announced and launched an "*Integrated Program for Welfare of Women and Children* ", where a Non-formal Education Centre to assist Women and Children, with limited accessibility to improve their quality of life, was opened. The Program focused on Nutrition, Education, Women Empowerment, Women and

Children Health, Community Awareness and providing Basic essential supplies. A makeshift room for regular classes is constructed temporarily with 15 regular students whom daily breakfast and lunch is provided with regular educational supplies, clothes and uniforms, daily basic essentials etc. Being activity based learning and experiential learning the topmost priority, Education on Basic Assamese, Basic English, Basic Maths, Environmental Studies, GK and Current Affairs, Drawing, Performing Arts etc. are also imparted. Special care of their health are also being taken care of by regular care and checkups. Apart from regular amusements, Children were taken on a day out trip away from their regular environment, and the primary reason is to create social responsibility through communication and interpersonal relationship process among the Children. The major achievement in these 6 months came, when 4 of the Children of NFE Centre got selected in Government School at 2 no Mathgharia LP School on 3rd, Jan. '20. These are the once street Children (Sunil, Rekha, Sunita and Sita)who could never make their way to School due to poverty, ignorance of parents, other engagements such as rag picking to name a few, are now happy learners who enthusiastically waits for the School bell to ring.

Archana converted the slum wasteland into a productive vegetation land. Archana's aim was to engage the womenfolk of the slum in the process of garden cultivation and management. The garden came as a boon to the people of the slum in times of food crisis during pandemic.

Another big issue of the slum was clean drinking water, open bathing, open defecation in nearby railway tracks, ditches, wasteland etc. To resolve these issues, she installed a water storage tank for clean and safe drinking water, semi concrete bathroom and semi concrete lavatory.

She has been organizing several *legal awareness camps* in remote village areas to aware several laws which have been enacted for the welfare

protection and security of the citizens such as, Legal provisions of self guarding the rights of women, their health rights, Child Marriage prohibition, Domestic violence and Legal provisions of Constitutional rights, Labour laws, Consumer rights, Property laws, Forest law, ST status, Right to information etc.

She has been organizing several *disaster awareness camps* in remote village areas to aware and train the rural community to deal with natural as well as man-made disasters minimizing and prevent loss of life, livelihood, property etc.

Archana led several public programs on developing *good environmental practices* like Hospital cleanliness, Tree plantations etc.

In the early stages *Archana* implemented a short term project at Navoday path basti situated at Hatigaon, Guwahati, Assam. Most of them are daily wage earners or petty peddlers. Maximum children are school dropouts and only few of them could make their way to school. Gambling, alcohol and easily available drug abuse is the environment of the basti. Parents and guardians are reluctant to send their students to school and instigate them to become a source of earning. The people of the basti dwell in a very unhygienic condition with no proper drinking water or sanitation facilities. An open air daily evening school was set up for the school dropout children. Organized motivational interactive sessions against gambling, alcohol and drug abuse. Sensitized parents and guardians for sending their children to school. Organized health awareness group discussions.

Archana never steps back in supporting *women victim of difficult circumstances*. She is now instrumental in settling many domestic violence issues personally or using referral services.

She has also set up few Libraries and provided sports equipment in village schools.

Archana has been a regular visitor of Old Age Homes with a holistic approach for Old aged people who either have been abandoned by families or who has no relatives to take care of. She says-

"It is often seen that the isolation of being away or deprived from the loved ones becomes a prime psychological issue for the old people. A few kind motivational words, a meal together, a little amusement together etc. can make a big difference. Gifting some good things, clothes etc. can feel them being cared."

Course of Life-

Acheivements and Awards-

1. Honoured as special guest (Nirdista Bokta) of Moina Parijat held in Jorhat, 1992 and Dhekial in 1993.
2. Passed 18th Annual All India pre-senior UNESCO information test 1995.
3. Passed 18th Annual All India pre-senior UNESCO information test 1996.
4. Passed 3rd Special All India general Knowledge test organized by United schools -Organisation of India (VEC FOR THE UNITED NATIONS), 1996.
5. Winner of All Assam Inter school Quiz competition held in Golaghat Govt. High School, 1997.
6. Winner of Prafulla Chandra Shrutikar Award in Sanskrit recitation Competition held in Dergaon, 1998.
7. Second in Essay and speech competition organized by Assam Science Society for the topic on The near extinct forest resources of Assam 2000.
8. Best Recitee Award in Sanskrit, Hindi, English and Assamese held in Dergaon, DKD college in 2001.

9. Topper in Essay and speech competition organized by Assam Science Society for the topic on Artificial satellite launching programme of india 2001.
10. Honoured by All Assam Students Union for being the topper in HS 2002 from DKD college Dergaon and got national merit scholarship.
11. Topper in all Assam Sanskrit debate competition held in Sivsagar, 2002.
12. Winner of Rupkola Kesari Award for recitation organized by Rupkola Kesari Sanskritik Senani, Guwahati in 2003
13. Best short story writer organized by Cotton College Nabin Lekhok Lekhika Samitee, Guwahati, 2004.
14. Felicitated for short story presentation in 2nd International writer's festival at Kurukshetra University, Haryana in 2006.
15. Invitee of 3rd International writer's festival held in Agra, 2007.
16. Attended International conference on Bhakti Movement and Shrimanta Shankardeva held in Kalashetra, Guwahati in 2007 for the presentation of Satriya dance –the most significant legacy of Shankari culture.
17. Attended Sahitya Academy workshop on 'Oriya to Assamese translation' held in Dibrugarh University, 2007.
18. Felicitated by Sahitya Shabha Assam as Short Story Writer in 2010.
19. Conferred as Social Worker, 2017 by Maya media awards in presence of His Excellency Governor of Assam Shri. Banwarilal Purohit.
20. Naari Shakti Award 2017-18 by Lions club international, Nagaon

21. International Women's Day '18 felicitation by State Bank of India, NE Circle

22. Felicitation for excellence in services rendered to the society as a Motivational Speaker by National Human Rights and Grievance Commission in 2019.

As a Writer-

- Published three novels Poridhi, Aparajita and Cottonian "Ekhon rodor khiriki".

- Written short stories for various Assamese Magazines and Newspapers viz. Dainik Janambhumi, Amar Axom, Janasadharan, Khobor, Niyamiya Barta, Satsori, Goriokhi, Sadin, Prokakh, Bismoi, Amar Xomoi etc.

- Many of my short stories has been translated into regional languages like Punjabi, Hindi, etc. and English as well.

As a Producer and Anchor-

- DY365, Television channel, Guwahati, 2008-2010

- Produced and hosted daily devotional show entitled Prarthana (159 episodes).

- Produced and hosted weekly show Pathikrit (76 episodes).

- Produced daily show Arunudoi (240 episodes).

- Produced weekly show Ekanta Byaktigata (23 episodes).

- Produced international news bulletin Bidesh 365.

- News Time Assam, Television channel, Guwahati, 2010-2014

- Produced and hosted women based show Anganar Akash (100 episodes)

- Produced and hosted morning show Xuprobhat Axom (730 episodes)

- Produced and hosted weekly show Shreemoyee (12 episodes) -NEBCUS award winner for best youth based television serial Shreemoyee in 2014.

- Produced news bulletin Desh-bidesh.

As a Sub-editor-

- Worked for Saparibar a monthly magazine from 2007 to 2008.

As an Assistant-editor-

- Worked for MAHEKIYA ANUBHUTI, a monthly magazine from 2014 till 2016.

- Worked for Jeevan, a monthly magazine

Resource Faculty-

- Assam school of Journalism, Anchoring and Production

As an Announcer-

- Working as an announcer since 2015 in ALL INDIA RADIO, Guwahati, Assam till present

As a social worker-

- Founder of Social welfare society [Priyobondhu](#)

- Founder and Managing Trustee of [Archana Borthakur Educational Trust](#)

- *Founder of Priyobondhu Bohumukhi Bidyalay* - one of its unique kind for the the Children, living in slums, streets and remote rural areas, who are deprived of education and health due to poverty or other social practices. It is my long cherished dream to establish a free of cost educational institution where underprivileged children will get the opportunity to develop themselves Socio-emotionally, Physically, Intellectually and enhance their Creativity. One of the prime objectives of the education

program is to connect our strong literary traditional roots, its history and culture, folk dances and music of Assam.

No. of Schools- 4

Locations- 1. Narengi, Guwahati

2. 2 no. Robingaon, Khetri

3. Dharbam, Khetri

4. Paschim Killing, Khetri

As a Motivational speaker and Life Coach-

- Professionally engaged as a motivational speaker and Life Coach on Life skills which focus on the following basic areas of Life skills as identified by WHO viz. Decision-making and problem-solving, Creative thinking and critical thinking, Communication and interpersonal skills, Self-awareness and empathy, Coping with emotions and coping with stress.

As an entrepreneur-

- Self employed as Social and Cultural Event Organizer and Management Services provider.

- Self employed in trading of Ceramic pots and Exotic plants.

- Proprietor of A.B. Prajna Trading Co. (Supplier of Gift products)

- Promoter and founder of B2C E-Commerce website www.putola.com

Other social engagements-

- Project Director of Value based Education and Child Development, [Assam Development Initiative \(ADI\) Trust.](#)
- Anti-ragging committee member of Gauhati University.
- Ethical Board member of B. Barooah Cancer Institute, Guwahati.
- QPR Gatekeeper