

In Remembrance of Dr Syeda Sakira Sahin

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'Life need not be long, it ought to be worthwhile.'

This is how one might provide a concise yet appropriate description of how Dr Syeda Sakira Sahin, lived. Though she lived only a few months short of her 41st birthday, the number of lives that she touched was so majestic that her memory will live far beyond her chronological age.

Dr Syeda Sakira Sahin was born to Mr Haroonar Rahman and Mr. Wahida Rahman as their second child. She completed her school education from Assam, after a short span of

educational attainment in Cotton College she moved to the University of Delhi for her undergraduate studies in Political Science. After that, she joined the Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University to pursue her post-graduation. She was awarded the Doctor of Philosophy by the University of Gauhati in 2013 for her thesis— *Construction of Women within the Property Rights Discourse: The Dichotomy of the Public and the Private*. She joined Gauhati University as a Research Assistant in 2005 under the Rosa Luxembourg Stiflung Project on 'Women and Media' which was being conducted by the Women's Studies Research Centre. Eventually, in 2008, she joined as an Assistant Professor and was working as an Associate Professor in the Department of Women's Studies, Gauhati University till her untimely demise on 13th December 2019. Dr Sahin braved against one of the fatal forms of brain cancer.

She was an extremely methodical young academic and was nominated as Fellow for the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) on *Fight Against Gender-Based Violence* by the Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, USA in the year 2015. Subsequently, she won a grant competition organised by the US Consulate under the Alumni Engagement Activity for a project entitled *Building Community Response to Counter Violence against Women in Greater Guwahati Area of Kamrup District in Assam State of North East India 2014-15*. Under the project, she was instrumental in developing a network of women volunteers who would act as agents of countering violence. She was also the Co-Director of a project on Effects of Violent Displacement on Women in Bodoland Territorial

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Area District (BTAD) Areas of Assam which was sponsored by Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR), Delhi. Unfortunately, these works have suffered a body blow due to her physical departure.

As an astute observer of her social surroundings, she had published papers on contextually relevant themes such as: *Women and Gated Communities*; *Assisted Reproductive Technologies*; *Women and Customary Laws of North East India*; *Media and Women in North East India* amongst others. Dr Sahin was an executive member of the Indian Association for Women's Studies (2015-2018) and under its auspices reached out to fellow women's rights activists, organisations and academicians of the North-Eastern region of India.

She donned several hats: of a daughter, sister, friend, wife, researcher, colleague, mother,

activist and most significantly an extremely loved teacher. Extremely eloquent since her childhood, Dr Sahin fitted the persona of a teacher who inspired young minds to engage with social issues and also explore their creative genius.

The University of Gauhati, as well as the Department of Women's Studies, has lost a gem and the void cannot be filled. We can only wish and hope that the strength of the exemplary woman is passed on as a legacy to her two young daughters and students.

In grief,

Poonam Kakoti Borah

Polly Vauquiline

Colleagues of the deceased, Department of Women's Studies, Gauhati University.