



LESSON IDEAS

Poems transcribed from

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Y_aOD4po48

Write down I am a Miya

-Hafeez Ahmed (translated by Shalim Hussain)

Write

Write down

I am a Miya

My serial number in the NRC is 200543

I have two children

Another is coming

Next summer.

Will you hate him

As you hate me?

Write

I am a Miya

I turn waste, marshy lands

To green paddy fields

To feed you.

I carry bricks

To build your buildings

Drive your car

For your comfort
I clean your drain
To keep you healthy.
I have always been
In your service
And yet
you are dissatisfied!
Write down
I am a Miya,
A citizen of a democratic, secular, Republic
Without any rights,
My mother a D voter,
Though her parents are Indian.
If you wish to kill me, drive me from my village,
Snatch my green fields
hire bulldozers
To roll over me,
Your bullets
Can shatter my breast,
for no crime.
Write
I am a Miyah
Of the Brahmaputra
Your torture
Has burnt my body black,
Reddened my eyes with fire.
Beware!
I have nothing but anger in stock.
Keep away!
Or
Turn to Ashes.

Nana, I have written

-Shalim Hussain

Nana I have written,
attested,
countersigned and
been verified
by a Public Notary that
I am a miyah.

Now see me rise
from flood waters,
Float
over land slides,
March
through sand and marsh and snakes
Break the earth's will, draw trenches with spades
Crawl
through fields of rice and diarrhoea and
Sugarcane and a ten percent literacy rate.

See me shrug my shoulders,
curl my hair, read two lines of poetry,
one formula of math
Rid confusion when the bullies call me bangladeshi
And tell my revolutionary heart
'But I am a miyah!'

See me hold by my side the Constitution,
point a finger to Delhi,
Walk to my Parliament, my Supreme Court, my Connaught Place
And tell the MPs, the esteemed judges
And the lady selling trinkets and her charm on Janpath

'Well, I am a miyah'

[...]See me catch a plane,

get a visa,

catch a bullet train,

catch a bullet,

catch your drift,

catch a rocket,

wear a lungi to space

And then where no one can hear you scream, thunder

'I AM A MIYAH. I AM PROUD.'

I beg to state that

-Kabir Ahmed (translated by Shalim Hussain)

I beg to state that

I am a settler, a hated Miya

Whatever be the case, my name is Ismail Sheikh, Ramzan Ali, or Majid Miya

Subject: I am an Assamese Asomiya.

I have many things to say, stories older than Assam's folk tales, stories older than the blood
flowing through your veins

After 40 years of independence, I have no space in the words of beloved writers,

The brush of your scriptwriters doesn't dip in my picture,

my name left unpronounced in assemblies and parliaments, on no martyr's memorial,
on no news report is my name printed even in tiny letters.

Besides you haven't yet decided what to call me

Ami I miyah, asomiya or neo-asomiya?

That land is mine, I am not of that land

-Ghazini (translated by Shalim Hussain)

That land that makes my father an alien

That kills my brother with bullets

My sister with gangrape

The land where my mother stokes in her heart

live burning coals

That land is mine,

I am not of that land.

The land where my claim over a lungi is suspect

Where there are no ears for cries

Where demanding rights throws you under

the plummeting fists of ghosts

The land that demands eternal servitude

That land is mine,

I am not of that land.

The land where a cap is radicalism,

A miyah sub-human

Every charua a Bangladeshi

Where earth is weighed and sold to Tatas, Birlas, Ambanis,

That land is mine,

I am not of that land.

That land where limb after limb is chopped

and sent afloat the river

Where in '83 executioners danced

a shameless grizzly dance of celebration,

That land is mine,

I am not of that land.

The land where my home and hearth is
uprooted
Where my heritage is
negated
Where they conspire to bind me
forever in darkness
Where they pour gravel,
not gruel, on my plate
That land is mine,
I am not of that land.

The land where my throat cracks
with appeals and no one hears
Where my blood flows
cheap and no one pays
Where they play politics
with my son's coffin,
cards with my daughter's honour
The land where I wander
crazy, confused as a beast
That land is mine,
I am not of that land.