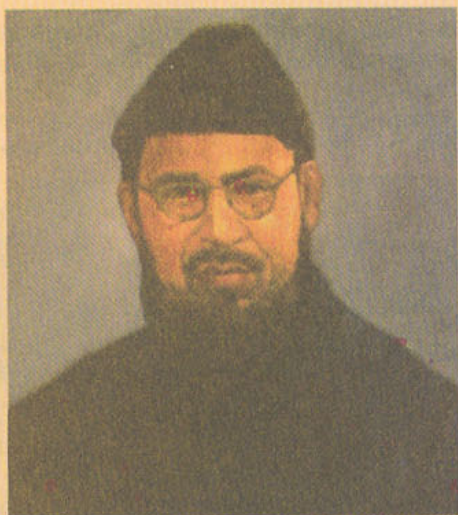


Memoirs of a Patriot

AT a time when role models in the political arena have become virtually extinct, the best way to fill such a vacuum would perhaps be to look for them further back in history. For it is by delving into the past that we may find figures who have undauntedly stood for all that we consider noble--truth, justice, democracy. Maulvi Tamizuddin Khan, a name hardly recalled nowadays, was such a character in history whose steadfast adherence to his principles, political acumen combined with personal integrity, makes him a perfect candidate for role 'modelship'. He is also an antithesis of the present brand of self-aggrandising, unscrupulous and power-crazed politician. The launching of the second edition of 'A Test of Time' *My Life and Days*, a book primarily based on Khan's memoirs, on July 21, is therefore good news for those who crave for information on political heroes.

Khan's political accomplishments alone are enough to warrant widespread knowledge of him amongst the young generation that is so disillusioned by the unsavoury politics of their times. Tamizuddin Khan was twice in the Bengal Cabinet as Education, Food and Health Minister. He gave up a lucrative legal practice to join the non-cooperation movement led by Deshbandhu C. R. Das for which Khan had to endure incarceration. After Partition, Khan was elected Deputy President of Pakistan's Constituent assembly when Mohammed Ali Jinnah was the President. Later, when Jinnah died in 1948, Khan was unanimously elected President of the Constituent Assembly. The assembly however, was unconstitutionally dissolved in 1954 by Governor General Ghulam Mohammad. Tamizuddin Khan, a lawyer by profession, challenged this illegal dissolution in the Sind Court in the famous *Tamizuddin Khan versus Federation of Pakistan* case and won. But the case was appealed and Pakistan's Federal Court set aside the judgement on the basis of a controversial doctrine. This decision was a blow to Pakistan's democracy and a preamble to the decades of dictatorship and military rule that were to follow.

These significant political events are described in detail in *A Test of*



Maulvi Tamizuddin Khan

Time, along with Khan's farsighted analysis of their socio-political context. This includes the growing divide among the Hindus and Muslims and the continued repression faced by the latter group, that would later lead to nationalistic movements. The first four chapters are Khan's own writing and covers a period from 1889 when he was born, to 1926 as he could not finish his memoirs before his demise in 1963. The rest of the book is a continuation of Khan's life based on extensive notes left by him which have been reconstructed by the book's editor Mirza Nurul Huda, Khan's son-in-law with the help of other family members.

The book's launching took place at the Bar Association's auditorium of the Supreme Court. It was here that well known personalities, including Dr. Kamal Hossain, the main speaker, talked about the book and about the man who made history by standing up to injustice no matter what the consequences. The other discussants were economist Dr. Wahiduddin Mahmud, Dr. Razia Khan, writer and former university teacher, and the author's youngest daughter, Professor Begzadi Mahmuda Nasir, founder of Women's University, Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed, Professor Ahmed Kamal, historian and history professor of DU, and former Chief Justice Mostafa Kamal who chaired the session. The speakers spoke about Khan's political accomplish-



Dr. Kamal Hossain at the launching of 'A Test of Time'.