# In February we remember a Language Movement veteran

## *Illustrious life of late Professor Mobasher Ali - An educationist and litterateur*



**Dr M Mosharraf Hossain**

IF individual popularity irrespective of one's professional involvement is taken as a dependable yardstick to measure his/her inner potentials then, by all means, Professor Mobasher Ali would be one who had been popular by his own merit. During Prof. Mobasher Ali's life time he used to traverse the field of language and literature ever glittering and majestic. His pride of performance as one of the most distinguished personages in the realm of Bangla literature used to have an additional fillip owing to his active participation in the historic language movement in 1952 and a few years preceding.

Basically an educationist, precisely a teacher by Profession Mobasher Ali excelled in many other branches of language and literature with enviable distinction. He was an academician, educationist on one hand and on the other a prolific writer, an introspective researcher besides being a multi-pronged litterateur of immense reputation. Prof. Kabir Chowdhury commented that his works added a new dimension in Bangla literature. Mobasher Ali's ancestral home was at Bagichagaon in Comilla town. Here he was born on January 01, 1931 in an aristocratic, educated and highly enlightened family. A law graduate of Aligarh Muslim College (later turned into Aligarh Muslim University) Mobasher Ali's father late Nawajesh Ali was the first B.L. of greater Comilla District. His grand father late Bazlul Haque was also the first graduate of the greater Comilla District from Presidency College. He held the position of a Deputy Magistrate during British Rule.

In the historic year of the Language Movement in 1952 Mobasher Ali obtained Master's degree in Bangla from Dhaka University. Having opted for teaching profession he took employment with Netrokona College, Mymensingh in 1953. He shifted himself to M M College, Jessore in 1954 where he stayed for four years. He joined Comilla Victoria College thereafter. Here he worked till 1979 when he was transferred to B.L. University College, Khulna as Acting Principal. He was with Haji Mohd. Mohsin College in 1980 as Principal and worked till his retirement in 1987.

Mobasher Ali's personal contribution to Bangla literature commenced in 1958 when his illuminating article on the Nobel Prize Winner Boris Pasternak of Russia was published in a Bangla newspaper - Samakal founded and edited by noted poet and litterateur Sikandar Abu Jafar. Professor Ali evinced keen interest in Greek, Latin and English literature parallel with Bengali. As a most conscientious and dedicated teacher he used to nurse within a missionary zeal and enthusiasm to build the educational career of his students on a right track away from the obtrusive student politics. Development of language with concurrent proficiency used to occupy his prime consideration at all times. Indeed he used to enjoy immense popularity among his students in particular and the selected people he used to associate with.

Parallel to his original works in Bangla and on our literature he had a fabulous number of publications on Greek, Roman and Russian literatures vis-à-vis great works of the authors belonging to European continent. On the home front his books on Michael Modhusudan, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Rabindranath Tagore had been best sellers for years. Some of these publications had sixth edition which would atone for the great interest evinced by myriads of readers at home. Likewise his translation works of collection of Greek stories. British poet P.B. Shelley's works and of Leonards Da' Vinci among others received tremendous attention of Bengali readers. Mobasher Ali traced glorious past of the nation in his book Bangladesher Sandhaney (In Quest of Bangladesh).The book started with the ancient history of Bangladesh(500 B.C.) and ended with 16th December,1971 when the country became independent.

And in the sphere of education Prof Ali was particularly careful about the ever deteriorating level of knowledge of the students in respect of Bangla grammar. He was consequently inspired to include in his publication a book on Bangla grammar and essay for the Intermediate students. Taken all together the total number of his published books stood at 45. Taken separately his research works have also been largely acclaimed both at home and abroad. This year two books were published one on Bankimchandra and another one is Famous People of Bengal. Prof Mobasher Ali had been a proud recipient of a good number of prizes and awards which included among others, Bangla Academy Prize (1974), Ekushey Padak (1992), Madhusudan Academy Prize (1993) ,Madusudhan Academy Prize(1993),Bangladesh Lakhika Shangha prize(1993),Jatiya National Samaj Padak(2001),Rapport Award for excellence in Human Resource development-2004.

(The writer is Managing Director, Rapport Bangladesh Ltd)