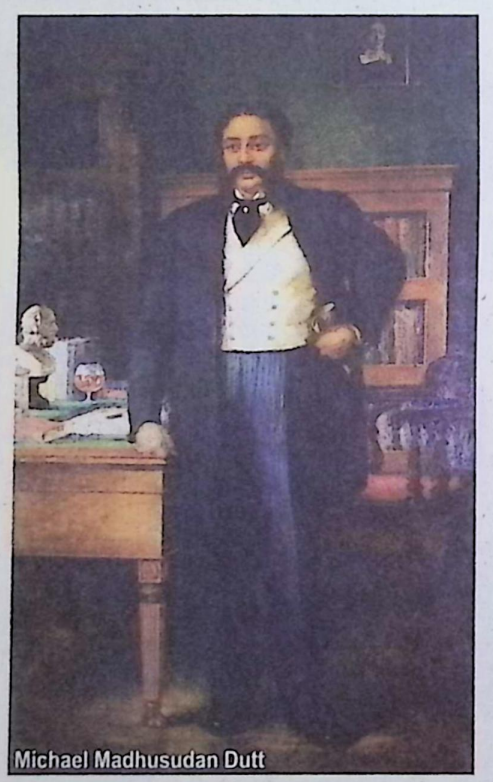
Michael Madhusudan Dutt

Michael Mudhusudan Dutta (1824-1873) is one of the most famous Bengali poets and dramatists of 19th century. His works in poetry and drama had created a new landmark in Bengali literature. His works are very exceptional, which sets him apart from other works of Bengali literature in terms of style and content. We remember this great soul of art and literature on his 190th birth anniversary.



Michael Madhusudan Dutt

Early Life

- Born in a feudal family of Sagardari, Jessore, Madhusudan lived a lavish life with a great passion for western culture
- He was an exceptionally brilliant student and was identified as a prodigy by his teachers
- He completed his study from the Hindu college and decided to embrace Christianity
- He was so fascinated by post-enlightenment west that he started to write poetry in English one of which was 'Captive Lady'
- He was also a gifted linguist and polyglot

Introducing the Sonnet

- Dutt was the first to introduce sonnet in Bengali literature
- He dedicated his first sonnet to his friend Rajnaryan Basu, a renowned Bengali writer and intellectual
- He authored a sonnet on Dante and translated it into French and Italian
- Reading the poem King of Italy Victor Immanuel II said, ""It will be a ring which will connect the Orient with the Occident."

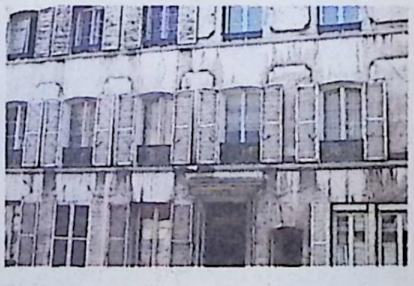
Inventing Blank Verse

- He invented blank verse *(Amitrakhsar Chhanda)* in Bengali poetry
- *Sharmistha* was Dutt's first attempt at blank verse in Bengali literature
- He authored one of the most celebrated Bengali epics *Meghnad Bodh Kabya* (The Saga of Meghnad's Killing)
- He authored many poems in blank verse and also penned many Bengali sonnets

Social Reforms

- Dutt used to write for the social reforms of the then Hindu community
- After converting to Christianity he later joined the Brahmo community which was a reformed version of Hinduism
- He was one of the founders of Brahmo community
- Many of his writings such as "Buro Shaliker Ghare Ro", "*Ekei ki Bole Shobbhota*" (Is it called Civilisation?) are critical of the then society





Later Life

- Dutt was very bohemian and romantic in nature and chose self exile in France
- But he had a deep sentiment for his motherland
- Finally he returned home and died in 1873
- His epitaph still bears a verse of his own:

"Stop a while, traveller!
Should Mother Bengal claim thee for her son.
As a child takes repose on his mother's elysian lap,
Even so here in the Long Home
On the bosom of the earth,
Enjoys the sweet eternal sleep"

— MSKC