

Noblest Man

By Belal Chowdhury

They may appear in thousand years, a handful one or two
Their fame spreads all around for good deeds, they themselves
Sanctify their lives – the noble ones, they fill the fallow lands
By cultivating golden crops.

He came in this way by illuminating all ten sides, in the family of Sheikhs
Lying on the lap of his parents at a remote and faraway village,
- We know people age, environments change, and the plant raises its head....

Does the river also grow old? I don't know. But she is always restless, resolute and rebellious
It doesn't take long to realize while listening to the reckless ripples of its waves
In perilous shape its current becomes unstoppable, flowing parallel to the meandering
Modhumati.....

Beautiful like its own name, Baigar came out of its own heart
Hazy rows of trees donned its dilapidated banks on both sides,
Amid diverse hazards were his confident movements;
There was hunger, poverty, want and a grey picture of nature all around
Observing keenly these pale miserable faces in his early hours
He could realize, 'these numb and dumb mouths shall have to given speech'.

Rosy smile in abundance shall have to be brought to the faces of the exploited

- And to dedicate himself in that onerous task he had to be

A daring sailor in a vast sea, a fully focused and combative boatman.

His was not the path of compromise; he was a voyager of inaccessible roads

Confronting obstacles at every step, he faced one struggle after another throughout his life

Oblivious of where his wife, children, parents, brothers, sisters and relatives lived.

He belonged to the whole country, the entire nation; he was the tallest man of the century

With virtues and failings he was a pure Bangali, generous and unbounded like the blue sky

He could not be moved by the thought of gains or losses, greed or partiality.

Crushing the mountain of barriers he was bent on moving ahead

Lean and thin, his head was forever held high, verily a simple and plain patriot.

Leaving behind an indebted nation, with his kith, kin and companions,

He left us smilingly by dropping his own blood from the heart

- Hoping even then that smiles would appear on the faces of teeming millions.

The people of Bangla are a distressed lot, though they seek very little,

Let them find a little happiness, and laugh to their heart's content

- Only this was his pure, sincere and simple desire.

Translation: Helal Uddin Ahmed

