

Al-Ameen Mission

OCTOBER 24-DECEMBER 2025

NEWS LETTER



“... Say: ‘Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are
endued with understanding that receive admonition.”

(Surah Az-Zumar, 9)



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Editorial

It is high time we reaffirm education as a public good, not merely a pathway to employment. Increased public investment, improved teacher training, inclusive policies, and a shift from rote learning to inquiry based education are essential.

Indeed, India's education system stands at a crucial juncture. While it has produced globally recognised professionals and boasts one of the largest networks of educational institutions in the world, it also suffers from deep-rooted structural weaknesses. The contrast between a few elite institutions and the poor quality of mass education reveals a system struggling to fulfil its role as an engine of social mobility and national development.

As an institution, in spite of many rough weathers, Al-Ameen Mission has been trying relentlessly to give quality education with top class infrastructure from the primary to the higher education sections. It has constantly tried to afford support to the poor and marginalised section of the society, which is manifested through its outstanding results every year. In 2025, we have splendid results in NEET. As many as 720 students will study Medicine. In the Higher Secondary exam, we have Arafat Hossain securing 492 marks, putting himself in the 6th rank of the state merit list, while Syed Mohammad Tamzid, scoring 491 marks, got himself in the 7th rank. Also in Madhyamik, Sk. Arif Mondal got himself in the 10th rank of the state merit list having scored 98% marks.

Internationally renowned educationist and physicist Professor Abul Khair Jalaluddin was an innovator in the field of education, especially in the field of child education. He was once the Education Advisor to India. He was also the Chief Education Advisor to the Al-Ameen Mission. A tribute is being paid to him on his death.

M Nurul Islam
Editor-in-Chief

Maintaining a success ledger is a big deal, but consistently surpassing it is even bigger. In this regard, the students of Al-Ameen Mission have broken all the records of past years. Success in Medicine has touched a new milestone. So are the successes in Higher Secondary and Secondary examinations, which, to put it mildly, are outstanding.



When Success tou

The NEET result has, as usual, been excellent once again this year. Last year, due to some mismanagement by the National Testing Agency, the organisation, which conducted this all India entrance exam, there was a big chaos. This year, examinees felt like the question sheet to be tough. But, putting that apprehension aside, the students of the Mission have done exceptionally well.

In 2024, the cut off mark was around 625. The students of Al-Ameen did pretty well. There were 431 students, who got the chance to study Medicine. That number might increase. This time around, 720 people have scored more than 480 marks and got a rank of close to 78,000. They will be able to get admission in various branches of medical courses.

Following are nutshells of some achievers of NEET (UG) 2025

There are 474 students out of 52,672 ranks who scored more than 500 marks in 2025 from the Al-Ameen Mission. Syed Md Tameed has come on the top, scoring 630 marks and ranking 240. It should be noted that among 22 lacs examinees in the country, he has ranked 240. The remarkable thing is that he has achieved it in the running year, i.e. he has appeared for the Higher Secondary Examination simultaneously. He has ranked seventh in the state merit list of the HS. Also in Madhyamik, he had ranked among the top 20 two years earlier.



ches Summit



Syed Md Tamjeed and Arafat Hossain. AIR 240, 330

Tamjeed has studied in the Mission from class IX. His ancestral home is in Bardhaman but he stays with his parents in Dakshin Kandarpapur in South 24 Parganas. His father, Syed Md. Tahir is a graduate. He does a clerical job in a government school. His mother Jahanara Begum is also a graduate but she is a homemaker. Tamjeed's elder brother Syed Md. Tamim was also a student in the Mission. He too was a brilliant student, having stood 7th rank in both Madhyamik and HS. He also cracked NEET in the running year 2022. Both the brothers have stood 7th in the state Merit list- Tamim did it in 2022 and Tamjeed in 2025. Tamjeed has himself admitted in AIIMS, Bhubaneswar.

Arafat Hossain, also from Khalatpur campus, has scored 625 marks. His all India rank is 330. He also got NEET in the running year. He has scored 98.40% and has ranked 6th in the state merit list. He is from Alinagar,



Sarif Hasan
AIR 1218 | Marks 602



Safiul Islam
AIR 2299 | Marks 589



Md Moinuddin Hassan
AIR 2381 | Marks 589



Jonaid Mohamod
AIR 2586 | Marks 587

a village under Gazol police station of Malda. He has got admission in the Calcutta Medical College to study Medicine. He has studied in the Mission from class V. His father, Mostafa Hossain, is a small farmer. His mother Rabina Khatun is a homemaker. Arafat's younger sister Nilufar Parvin is also studying in the Mission.

Sarif Hasan comes from Gudhia, a village in Murshidabad. Son of a small farmer, Masudal Shaikh and mother Sarika Bibi, he has dreamed a big dream. And with Al-Ameen Mission by his side, he was able to fulfill it. He has been studying in the Mission from class VIII with minimal fees. 'Without Al-Ameen, I could not have achieved this,' Sharif was candid. He has scored 602 marks, ranking 1218. He will study MBBS at AIIMS, Kalyani.

Samima Biswas ranked 2764 and has come first among the girls in the Mission. She is also from Murshidabad, and comes from Hukarhat under the Sagardighi

subdivision. Meritorious from her childhood, she scored 585 marks. Both of her parents have studied till HS. Samima has studied in the Dhuliyon branch of the Mission from class VIII. Samima is studying in the Medical College, Kolkata.

Two pieces of statistics before ending this report. In 2025, out of 720 students who would study Medicine, as many as 187 students have come from lower income groups. They have studied in the Mission with minimum tuition fees. Al-Ameen Mission has always played a vital role in nurturing poor but potential students.

Secondly, 474 students have got more than 500 marks. Among them 231 students who would study Medicine are from Murshidabad and Malda districts; both these districts are marked as backward in terms of socio-economic conditions. The Mission has been playing a vital role in bringing up meritorious students from these two districts every year.

Higher Secondary (12th std.) : Success Continues



In 2025, 1769 students of Al-Ameen Mission appeared for the Higher Secondary Examination. In Science stream there were 1720 students and in the Arts 49 students sat for the exam. 246 students got 90 percent or above marks. Among them 231 students were from the science stream and the remaining 15 students were from the Arts stream. 1340 students got 80 percent or above marks. 1309 students were from the Science stream and 31 students from the Arts stream. 1725 students got 70 percent marks. 1679 students were from the Science stream and 46 students were from the Arts stream.

Arafat Hossain stood sixth in the state merit list. He came first among minority students. He has scored 492 marks i.e. 98.4%. Arafat scored 97 in Bengali, 93 in English, 100 in Mathematics, 100 in Physics, 96 in Chemistry and 99 marks in Biology. He comes from Dakshin Alinagar of Malda. His family depends on agriculture. Arafat has been in Al-Ameen Mission from class V and studied in Mohammadpur branch. In 2023, he scored 94.6% marks in Madhyamik. After that he came to Khalatpur campus. Arafat has cracked NEET in the running year.

Syed Mohammad Tamjeed has stood 7th rank in the state merit list. He got 491 marks i.e. 98.2%. Tamjeed got 98 in Bengali, 96 in English, 100 in Biology, 98 in Chemistry, 99 in Physics and 93 in Mathematics. Tamjeed has been studying in the Mission from class IX. He passed the Madhyamik with 96% marks. He has cracked NEET in the running year. He will study Medicine in AIIMS Bhu-

STATE RANK 6



Arafat Hossain 492 (98.4%)

STATE RANK 7



Syed Md Tamjeed 491 (98.2%)

baneswar.

Irfan Habib and Rounak Hossain have ranked 14th. Both of them scored 484 marks. Hasibatun Nesa, Muhammad Mujahidur Rahaman, Suhana Molla and Farhan Tanveer Molla have stood 15th with 483 marks. Both the girls want to become doctors. Hasibatun Nesa comes from Murshidabad and she has studied in Bardhaman branch. She got admitted in class VII and was in Dhuliyon branch. In 2023, she scored 91.42% marks in Madhyamik exam.

Md. Izaz Ahmed Molla had been studying in Mission's Paschim Durgapur branch from class V. His father Md. Azizur Rahaman is a homeguard and mother Najima Bibi a homemaker. In the Madhyamik, he scored 96.14%. In the H.S, he has scored 95.8% marks from the Nayabaz branch. In the future, Izaz wants to be a doctor.

Excellent result in Madhyamik (10th std.)



Like previous years, the students of Al-Ameen Mission have done excellent results. There were 2291 students who appeared for the exam - 1466 boys and 825 girls. 60 students (42 boys and 18 girls) have scored 95% or more marks; 395 students (265 boys and 130 girls) have

scored 90% or more marks; 1112 students (794 boys and 318 girls) have scored 85% or more marks; 1606 students (1099 boys and 507 girls) have scored 80% or more marks and 1909 (1270 boys and 639 girls) have scored 75% or more marks.



M Nurul Islam is felicitating Sekh Arif Mondal
Marks 686 (98%), State Rank 10.

In the state merit list Sk. Arif Mondal has ranked 10th with a score of 686 marks. He comes from Kuitha village under Sadaipur police station of Birbhum district. His father Sk. Salim is a marginal farmer. He has three bigha agricultural land, which serves him to run his family. Arif's mother is a homemaker. Arif had studied in the Patharchapuri campus from class V. He obtained 97 in Bengali, 98 in English, 99 in Mathematics, 100 in Physical Science, 99 in Life Science, 95 in History and 98 in Geography. Unlike most of the students of the Mission, who have a penchant to study medicine, Arif wants to be an Astrophysicist, dreaming to research space science deeply. With that aim, he has got himself admitted to the Khalatpur campus now. He said that right from the beginning, the Mission had waived much of the tuition fees, which ultimately helped him a lot to continue his study.



Suhana has scored 678 marks, ranking 18. Her father is daily labourer. She wants to be a doctor aiming to study in AIIMS, New Delhi. Suhana loves to watch cricket and recite the Qur'an.

Suhana Yasmin has become second among all the Mission's students and first among the girls. Her rank in the state merit list is 18th. Suhana has scored 678 marks. She obtained 92 in Bengali, 99 in Mathematics, 97 in English, 98 in Physical Science, 98 in Life Science, 96 in History and 98 in Geography. Suhana comes from Basantapur, which is under Penro police station of Howrah. Her father Md. Salim Molla is a daily labourer and her mother Laila Molla is a homemaker. Suhana has been studying in the Mission from class VIII at the Babnan branch. She also wants to be a doctor, aiming to study in AIIMS, New Delhi. She wants to practice Medicine, besides helping the needy. Her favourite subject is Physical Science. Suhana loves to watch Cricket and recite the Qur'an.

Azizul Haque of Papuri Branch has come third among students of Al-Ameen. His rank in the state is 20th. His total marks is 676. He comes from Mathpalsa village under Sainthia police station of Birbhum. His parents, Md. Ziaul Haque and Umme Marium Begum, are graduates. The family runs its chores through farming. Azizul got admitted to the Mission in Class VIII with half tuition fees. In the future, he wants to be a doctor or engineer.

Like Suhana, Sneha Mullick too studied in the Babnan branch. She had been studying there from class V. Her father is a daily labourer, so her tuition fees was minimal. Sneha has scored 675 marks. She obtained 95 in Bengali,

STATE RANK 18



Suhana Yasmin 678 (96.9%)

STATE RANK 20



Md Ajijul Haque 676 (96.6%)

92 in English, 100 in Mathematics, 98 in Physical Science, 99 in Life Science, 92 in History and 99 in Geography.

Another student, Atif Khan has done excellent results with 96% marks. His total marks is 672. He is a native of Nandigram, Purba Medinipur. He got 98 in Bengali, 94 in English, 95 in Mathematics, 96 in Physical Science, 99 in Life Science, 94 in History and 99 in Geography. In the future, he wants to be a doctor. He has studied in the Khalatpur campus.

Besides, there are numerous students who have done exceptionally well. Some of them are Md. Akram (675), Taioba Ahmad (674), Saiful Islam Molla (674), Aminul Islam (674), Sk. Md. Asif (674), Ayush Molla (674), Sara Alam (673), Rokeya Parvin (673), Atif Khan (672), Husna Tabassum (672), Ayan Rashid (671), Arif Sk. (670), Sahil Ahmad (670), Sk. Arif Mondal (670), Md. Aziz Hossain (670), Md. Reza (670) and many others.

Al-Ameen Utsav 2025



course of four decades in West Bengal. He said, we are proud of this Mission. Earlier, we used to think that geniuses are born, not made. But in Al-Ameen, contradictory to that idea, geniuses are being made with great care.

Sk. Maruf Azam, the supervisor of the Mission said, we are going to felicitate 21 students scoring 96 percent in Madhyamik and 26 students scoring 95 percent in Higher Secondary. Besides, 199 students who have scored more than 650 marks in NEET and have got the opportunity to study medicine would be felicitated. Jahangir Mullick, an alumnus and also a WBCS officer, at present

This year Al-Ameen Utsav was held on 25 and 26th January. It began with the hoisting of the Mission's flag by the Chairman of the West Bengal Wakf Board, Retired Judge Sahidullah Munshi. With the recitation from the Holy Quran and its translation by the students of the Mission, the main function started. In his welcoming speech, the General Secretary of the Mission, M Nurul Islam said, every year the Mission Parivar erupts in joy whenever any results come out. It's difficult to find any festive time amidst intense study. But, nonetheless, we need some leisure, gala occasions. That's why we organise Al-Ameen Utsav every year for at least a couple of days. The alumni as well as guests come and join this utsav. The whole campus becomes captivated with the roaring rupture of the students. The General Secretary became visibly emotional as he went on narrating the initial stage of the building of the Mission. He recalled the stellar role of the great numbers of people at that time. Each of us has a story. The alumni of this Mission had their foundation here. They all have different tales to tell. Some day in the future, their stories would surely enchant people. He also emphasized the importance of imparting education to orphans and explained the idea behind the construction of 'Shantineer'. Nurul Islam specifically mentioned 'Vision 2030', in which the Mission would like to work for the greater good of the whole society and thereby the nation. He said, many students cannot complete formal education for the financial reason, for adverse situations. We want to nurture these talents, which are mostly hidden. That is the singular important task ahead of us and 'Vision 2030' would work through to achieve this goal.

Retired judge of Kolkata High Court and Chairman of Board of Wakfs, West Bengal Sahidullah Munshi also praised the stellar role Al-Ameen Mission played in the

the General Manager of WBMDFC said, without steadfast principle, merit is valueless. Ethics, morality facilitates our heart greatly. Altamas Gazi, an officer of Indian Audit and Accounts Service said, motivation seldom works without discipline. So one should inculcate discipline on a regular basis. On the first day, the President of Al-Ameen Mission Abu Saleh Rezwanul Karim along with Kazi Abdul Basir and Dr Sk. Md. Hasan, both of them patrons of the Mission were present.

On day two, the programme started off with the hoisting of the national flag to mark the observance of the 76th Republic Day of India. M. Nurul Islam hoisted the national flag in the presence of Maruf Azam and others. The students held a march past. The General Secretary and the Supervisor gave a brief speech emphasising the duty of the people towards the nation. A blood donation camp was also organised on this occasion.

The main function began in the afternoon. The Chairman of West Bengal Minority Commission, Ahmad Hasan Imran graced the occasion as Chief Guest. He emphasized on the Mission's voluminous work and praised its vital role in professional courses. The National Coordinator of Pratichi Trust and Researcher Sabir Ahamed was the special guest and he discussed the role of education in enlightening a deprived society. Drawing data from various sources, he informed the audience about Al-Ameen's contribution in uplifting the society. Dr. M.M Shamim, renowned neurologist and an alumnus enthralled the audience with his touching reminiscence of the Mission. Another alumnus Dr. Hasanuzzaman also narrated his struggle. His ascent to become an Assistant Professor in Barasat Medical College from an almost vacuous existence was worth listening to. For two days the campus had truly turned into a mingling turf of the alumni and the current



Dr M M Shamim enthralled the audience with his touching reminiscence of the Mission while Dr Hasanuzzaman narrated his struggle. His ascension to Assistant Professor from vacuous existence was worth listening to.

students, where the former took the initiative to boost the morale of the latter. During these days, cultural function was also held in the evening.

◆ Get together at Nayabaz Campus

On 2nd February, a re-union was held at the Al-Ameen Mission Academy Nayabaz campus in Santragachi, Howrah. Students successfully completing Madhyamik, HS and NEET in 2024 were felicitated. Domjur MLA Kalyan Ghosh, Special Secretary to Health and Family Welfare Department Unice Rishin Ismail (IAS), ADM of Howrah Azar Zia (IAS), General Manager of WBMDFC Jahangir Mallik (WBCS) were present among other distinguished guests. Unice Ismail too commended the Mission for bringing up children from the lower rung of society. He also emphasized on increasing knowledge as the contemporary world is embracing newer innovations and thoughts every moment. Azar Zia also inspired the students narrating his life story. He advised the students to come to the administrative service as it is lucrative these days. Jahangir Mallik too pointed out that students should come forward to solve critical problems of the country.

In his welcome address, the founder General Secretary of the Mission M Nurul Islam narrated the history of this campus. The Superintendent of the campus Khanda-

kar Mahiul Haque emphasized upon the importance of responsible citizens and the role of a student as a part of it.

◆ Baruipur Reunion

On 3rd February, the reunion ceremony was held in the Suryapur branch of the Al-Ameen Mission. In his welcoming speech the founder General Secretary M Nurul Islam explained the purpose for which

the institution came into being four decades back. On the logo of the Mission, he said, there are three words inscribed - Education, Equality, Peace. The purpose is to build a principled person by giving value based education, which would turn him into an asset for the whole society. He also said, wherever we live, we should always try to serve people around, so that we all can live a better life.

Ahmad Hasan Imran, the Chairman of the West Bengal Minority Commission as well as Editor of Puber Kalam pointed out the glorious role of the Mission in the minority education system. Prof. Mehdi Kalam of Aliah University, the General Secretary of Suryapur Md. Ali Welfare Society and ex- Police Officer Md. Mahiuddin Sarkar, DSP of Baruipur Police Dr. Mohit Molla attended the programme.

◆ Uluberia Girls and Boys Reunion

The reunion was held on 8th and 9th February. On the first day, the programme began at the Gangarampur Girls campus. The founder General Secretary M Nurul Islam welcomed the guests. He said, Allah has sent us with some kind of ingenuity for a specific purpose. We should use it with sagacity, without wasting time. Out of the 200 students, 55 girls have got the chance to study Medicine, which is a great achievement, opined PWD

minister and local MLA Pulak Roy. He said, Al-Ameen's effort has been changing the lives of so many rural students, who are meritorious but needy. The District Magistrate of Howrah, Dr. P. Deepap Priya, (IAS) congratulated the girls who are going to study Medi-





cine. Herself a doctor, she said that anyone could pursue administrative service afterwards. In this context she said, dreams should be limitless. One must not curtail it.

The next day, the reunion ceremony for the boys began at Jagadishpur campus. The successful students were felicitated. The wall magazine of the boys 'Swapper Proyas' was inaugurated. The function was moderated by Dildar Hossain, the Director of Al-Ameen Mission Study Circle. The Superintendent of Uluberia campus Senarul Shaikh offered a vote of thanks.

❖ Khalisani Branch Reunion

On 16th February, a reunion was held in the Khalisani branch of the Mission. In his welcoming speech the founder General Secretary M Nurul Islam, in short, narrated the history of the institution. Reminiscing the contribution of Late Akbar Hossain, he said without the effort of this great person, this branch could not have shown the light of the day. The BDO of Uluberia 2 Block, Priyansha Garg (IAS) congratulated the students. She said, failures often open up many other locked doors. Therefore, no failure is permanent. She also advised the students to respect elders like parents, teachers and mentors. Md. Sabur Khan (IAS), Special Secretary to the Panchayet and Rural Development Department also said, failure for once or twice should not hinder one's career. Diligence as well as intention would bring success soon. His word, "Success is an exception, failure is the norm"- made a substantial impact on the students. Prof. Dipesh Mazumdar of Jadavpur University



said, in the contemporary world, acquiring skill and knowledge are necessary. One should strive for that. The Director of Al-Ameen Mission Study Circle Dildar Hossain informed that for the first time as many as thirteen students have got admission in AIIMS, one of the topmost medical colleges of the country. Sk Arif Hossain, son of late Akbar Hossain, in a video message congratulated the students from London. Offering the vote of thanks, the Assistant General Secretary of the Mission, Sk Hafizur Rahman said, through connecting hearts with people, we can help dispel the darkness of the world.

❖ XI Science Admission Test



On 23 February, an admission test for class XI (Science) for the Bengali medium was conducted and it drew a lot of attention. For the 2025-26 academic year, as many as 7350 students (4242 boys and 3108 girls) sat for the test in 42 centres. Thirty campuses in different districts would admit more than two thousand five hundred students. The general secretary of the Mission M Nurul Islam congratulated the admission test section for conducting this test efficiently. He also extended his gratitude to parents and expressed good wishes to the students.

❖ Annual function in Taldi campus

In the Taldi campus the annual function was held for three days from 26th to 28th February. On the last day, Parveen Sultana, a native of Taldi, who also came first in the All India ITI exam in Mechanic Diesel Trade, was felicitated. She is now a student of Tangrakhali Government ITI Canning-1 College. Parveen thanked Al-Ameen Mission and said it is playing an important role in bringing up poor but meritorious students from the villages of the state.

❖ Al-Ameen Brilliant Academy

On 12th April, a new boys campus was inaugurated in Gabberia under Panchla Police Station, Howrah. On this occasion M Nurul Islam said, although parents and guardians are keen to admit their children in the Mission, but unfortunately we are unable to do so as seats are limited. For instance, this year as many as 7 thousand students appeared for the XI std. admission test but we could admit only around 15 percent of them. Because of the lack of accommodation, this happens, he pointed out. He expressed his satisfaction that here in this new campus 170 students can be accommodated.

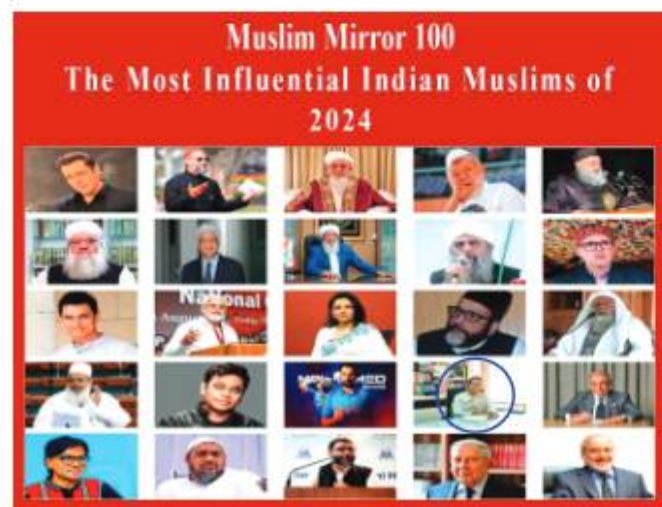
❖ Most Influential Indian Muslims

The name of M Nurul Islam, the founder General Secretary of Al-Ameen Mission has figured in the list of 100 most influential Indian Muslim for 2024, presented by News portal 'Muslim Mirror' with collaboration from Minority Media Foundation. The list includes names of many personalities who have significant contributions in different sectors. Under the photo of Nurul Islam it is cited,

"M Nurul Islam is the visionary founder of Al Ameen Mission, a pioneering educational movement dedicated to uplifting underprivileged Muslim students in West Bengal and other parts of India. Born in 1959, in the small village of Khalatpur in Howrah district, West Bengal, Nurul Islam came from a modest background, but his passion for education and community service shaped his life's mission."

Further it goes on to say,

"Under Nurul Islam's leadership, Al Ameen Mission became known for its emphasis on holistic education, blending modern academics with ethical and moral values rooted in Islam. The Mission has been particularly successful in preparing students for competitive exams like NEET and JEE, enabling many of its alumni to secure admission to top medical, engineering, and other professional institutions in India."



It concluded with the following words,

"Nurul Islam's work has been widely lauded for transforming the educational landscape for Muslim students in Bengal. His mission has not only raised the standard of education but also instilled a sense of hope and empowerment among Muslim youth. His dedication to social upliftment through education has made him a respected figure, not only in the Muslim community but across India. Nurul Islam continues to inspire future generations with his unwavering commitment to education and community service."

Besides Mr. Islam, the Editor of Puber Kalom and Chairman of the State Minority Commission Ahamad Hasan Imran and the founder of Umeed Global School Wali Rahmani also figured in the list from West Bengal.

❖ Re-Union of WBCS achievers

On 13 October, at New Town campus, felicitation of WBCS achievers as well as alumni reunion took place. As many as hundred WBCS examinees and successful alumni gathered for a stimulating session all through the day. There were intensive discussions on preparation for the examination, sharing experiences and future plans as well.

In his inaugural speech, Nurul Islam emphasised on the importance of administrative power and felt that the youth should take it up as a lucrative career. Shakil Ahmed, Special Commissioner, Minority Affairs and Madrasah Education Dept. Govt of West Bengal, pointed out the importance of the WBCS and emphasised on thorough preparation. In the second session, the chief guest was Unice Rishin Ismail (IAS), the Additional District Magistrate of Howrah. He also shared his experience and urged that one should remain honest and diligent as an administrator. He said that as an administrative officer, one should take various government schemes to the public in a proper way. That is the way one should serve the society. Md. Samsur Rahaman, Additional District Magistrate, Murshidabad, pointed out various obstacles and remedy in his speech.

Those who were felicitated were – Atia Rahaman (DSP), Saharoz Reza (DSP), Md. Azizur Rahaman Laskar (Assistant Commissioner- Revenue), Razibul Sk. (Joint BDO), Sk. Masud Zaman (Assistant Commercial Tax Officer), Jamila Hannan (Assistant Commercial Tax Officer), Sk. Mijanur Islam (Assistant Commercial Tax Officer), Abu Taher Sk. (Revenue Officer), Sk. Setabul (Dist. Coordinator, Mid Day Meal), Sahinur Khatun (ICDS Supervisor) among others.

❖ W.B.C.S 2022 (Executive)

In the WBCS (Executive) Main Examination 2022, as many as three students have qualified to face Personality test. One of them is a girl. Jamila Hannan is an orphan. She lives in Biswanathpur village under Lalgola Block,

Murshidabad. Her father Abdul Hannan is no more. Her mother Nasima Banu is very happy hearing this news of her daughter. This widow earns her living through private tuition. Al-Ameen Mission has helped Jamila by all means. She paid nominal fees as a resident student. Presently, she is an ICDS supervisor having passed the PSC 2019.

Beside Jamila, Sk. Manzur Ahmad of Solageria village under Ghatal police station of Paschim Medinipur has qualified. He comes from a peasant family. Naturally his father Sk. Lutfar Rahman and mother Taslima Bibi are glad. Earlier, Manzur has succeeded in passing W.B.P.S.I., M.T.S and in Assistant Tax Commissioner Post. Another candidate from a peasant family has qualified. Rajkumar Sheikh had dreamt of working in the administrative wing of the government. His dream is coming true now. He comes from Kanthalberia village under Nakashipara, Nadia. His parents are Tajjil Sk. and Sona Bibi. Earlier, Rajkumar has succeeded in K.P.S post.

Nurul Islam has congratulated the successful candidates. All these candidates have taken their coaching from Baruipur resident campus.

◆ Admission Test—Record Candidates



To build up a bright career, nowadays parents are eager to admit their children in Al-Ameen Mission. One of the parents succinctly puts it, because of the Mission's endeavour many students from rural areas are getting chance to enter into higher education. Many of them are becoming doctors, engineers and professionals. Also, lot of the students can pursue studies in science streams now. There is no doubt, meritorious students among the minority community has increased phenomenally because of the pioneering role the Mission played in residential education. Hence, parents are flocking to admit their children in the Mission.

Due to the devastating flood this year, the Khalatpur campus was inundated. So the admission test had to be postponed. Instead of 22 September, it was held on 6 October. The numbers of candidates were 30181. But 29188 students (16863 boys & 12325 girls) sat for the test. All total 72 examination centres were there through-

out the state. As a token of appreciation, the candidates were given Al-Ameen Barta, the Bengali magazine of the Mission. The General Secretary of the Mission, M. Nurul Islam congratulated the entire team of the Admission section for managing such a huge event. He was also grateful to the parents and also congratulated the candidates. He said that the Mission has nurtured meritorious students from the very beginning of its journey. There is no compromise in that issue. But for financial reasons, the Mission always shows flexibility. The Mission also shows flexibility for orphans and children of Imams. For that reason, the orphans are being admitted in class III. The result of the admission test came out on 31 October.

◆ Reunion at Patharchapuri

On 9 and 10 November, the annual function and Reunion was held at the Patharchapuri campus, Birbhum. It started with recitation from Quran. It was presided by the Chairperson of Al-Ameen Mission Trust, Dr. Sk. Mohammad Hasan. The General Secretary of Al-Ameen Mission, M. Nurul Islam, dignitaries as well as many alumni of that campus grace the occasion. On the first day, the Sabhadhipati of Birbhum Zilla Parishad Faezul Shaikh, Additional S.P of Birbhum Rana Mukherjee, Deputy Police Super of Traffic Department Kunal Mukherjee, Agricultural and Rural Development Officer Naimur Rahman, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Ranaghat (Nadia) and alumni of this campus Sk. Shamsuddin, Head Master of Tantipara High School Subir Ghosh along with Kazi Abdul Bashir, Hasib Alam, Md. Alamgir Biswas of Al-Ameen Parivar were present.

In the second day of the function, the programme was presided over by Hasib Alam. In the morning, warm clothes were distributed to the needy people by the alumni. Later, in the programme, the Law Officer of Murshidabad University Sk Taj Mohammad urged the students to take up legal profession. The Sabhadhipati of Murshidabad and alumni of Al-Ameen Mission Khalatpur campus Rubia Sultana gave an inspiring speech and urged the students to gain self confidence to achieve their goals. Besides, the Assistant Professor of Pandaveswar College Nasiruddin Mollah and Head Master of Sangra School Subhankar Dutta spoke on the occasion. The students performed their cultural activities through recitation, song, dance, drama etc. Also wall magazine 'Icche- 5' was inaugurated by the General Secretary. Rural folk dance was also performed by the local Adivasis. An art gallery with rejected materials of the students was also displayed. The thanksgiving speech was delivered by the Superintendent of the campus Md. Mustafa Biswas.

Brightest Star



In the glorious annals of Al-Ameen Mission, there are numerous students who have done extraordinary results over the years. But there are some students, a minuscule tribe of sorts, who have become crème de la crème of the Mission. We would keep on cherishing their achievements for many years to come. They have indeed made their way into the hall of fame.

One such student in 2024 is Md. Sahid. His achievements are stunning to say the least. He has cracked NEET, JEE-Mains and JEE-Advanced as well. But that is not all.

That Sahid is a genius is manifested in his tell-tale results. In Madhyamik exam, he had ranked 10th in the state merit list. Amazingly, he repeated the same feat in the Higher Secondary exam too ranking 7th this time. Another spectacular fact is this; he has cracked NEET ranking 1639 and scoring 700 out of 720 marks, JEE Advance rank is 2372 and State JEE rank is 140- all in the running year. Without doubt, this kind of outstanding achievement is a rarity.

Let us look through Sahid's background albeit briefly. His father Mohammad Khairul Anam is a veterinary doctor. His mother Salema Khatun, a graduate, had been a teacher in a Mission. Sahid's elder sister, Sahila Parveen was also a student of Al-Ameen Mission and is currently studying Medicine.

In the beginning, Sahid was not a studious student although he used to come first or second. His favourite pastime was playing with boys from neighbouring local-

ity. But gradually, when he went to high school, he became serious in his study.

Under the guidance of his mother, Sahid led a disciplined life. He was not an early riser, but could study late at night. So he used to get up around 7 in the morning. After breakfast, he began studying from 7.30 am to 9 am. After that he used to take bath and at 9.30 am sharp, take food. His mother routinely took him to the school by scooter.

The environment in home was ideal. They didn't get cell phones. The TV set usually remained off. But apart



Sahid's tips for those aspiring to crack NEET is to prepare themselves with small targets. If the target is within reach, it is more likely to be achieved than long targets, which tend to fail quite often. There should be a consistent effort in preparing for NEET.

from studying text books, Sahid read wide range of stories particularly detective novels. Also Bengali magazines like Anandamela was available in home. He used to read stories of Feluda, Byomkesh, Sherlock Holmes, all famous detective characters. But he liked Feluda more than any character. Beside studying, Sahid had also engaged himself in some extracurricular activities like learning tabla and guitar as well. His elder sister learned singing. Although, they were culturally active, they also had religious teaching in home. Sahid learned to recite the Quran.

In the Madhyamik exam, Sahid ranked 10th. He got full marks in three subjects- Mathematics, Life Science and Geography. In English, History and Physical Science he scored 98 marks. In comparison, in Bengali his score was not up to the mark. He got 90 marks. As Sahid explained, "out of nervousness, I left out the translation, which had 4 marks."

Sahid followed his sister's footsteps and came to Al-Ameen Mission. He was admitted to the Nayabaz campus. As Sahid said, "The atmosphere for study was excellent. There was always a healthy competition. In any given point of time, somebody was studying, which used to prompt me to study a bit more."

Sahid began preparing for NEET from class XI. There is a misunderstanding that NEET and Board examinations are different. But it is not true. Question paper for NEET is prepared from the XI and XII standard syllabus. If studied deeply, one can crack NEET in the running year with ease.

Sahid's tips for those aspiring to crack NEET is to prepare themselves with small targets. If the target is within reach, it is more likely to be achieved than long targets, which tend to fail quite often. There should be a consistent effort in preparing for NEET. He also emphasised on Mock test. He had started giving mock test from class XI. Practice is needed but not without knowledge. Question papers from Akash, Allen, Physicswala should also be practiced. The more you take the pressure, the more likelihood is your success- opines Sahid.

Concept clearing is also important. Sahid's suggestion is to read NCERT books for Biology. But for Physics, books from MTG Publications is good. But he preferred



book from Cengage Publications, which was a bit tough but it covered NEET as well as JEE (Advance).

Strategically, one should read Biology thoroughly. Biology is the scoring subject as far as NEET is concerned. If one gets 510 marks through Chemistry and Biology, Physics would be a scoring subject to get admitted into good college. He says that one should give mock test as many as possible. Time management is very important. After giving at least 100 mock tests, the time management could be brought under control to a great extent. Also one should be cautious about not making silly and repeated mistakes again and again.

In Higher Secondary, Sahid stood 7th in the state merit list. He scored 490 i.e. 98 percent marks. His marks are as follows: Bengali 97, English 96, Mathematics 99, Physics 94, Chemistry 99 and Biology 99 marks. In NEET, his scores are as follows: Physics- 180, Chemistry- 180 and Biology- 340 marks. In total 700 marks. Sahid's target was to score well in JEE Advance and WBEE along with H.S examination, which he did.

Sahid is all praise for Al-Ameen Mission. The friendly competition as well as environment the Mission gave was outstanding.

Right now, Sahid is pursuing MBBS from AIIMS, Kalyani. In future, his aim is to do research on Neuro Science. ■



Eminent educationist and physicist Prof A K Jalaluddin was born in Bhola, a sub-division in the erstwhile East Bengal. He recently passed away in Gurugram, near Delhi. He was an internationalist to the core and was revered by many. He was also an education advisor to Al-Ameen Mission. A homage to a great personality.

The Intellectual Legacy of Professor A K Jalaluddin



Arpan Mitra

When Professor A K Jalaluddin, one of the most renowned educationists of our time, passed away last year, it marked the end of an era. I risk this clichéd expression to make a point which is otherwise difficult to drive home.

Of late, for reasons I may know or I may not, I am haunted by that famous Shakespearean turn of phrase "the time is out of joint." Lacking the audacity—and it doesn't matter how deeply I feel about the world around me—I cannot think of muttering the words Hamlet uttered to complete the chain of thought, even in the twilight silence of my most surreal dreams. But I have the greatest respect for those who strive to set right their out-of-joint time.

We are all, in a sense, products of the time and the

place we inhabit. Some of the footprints which we leave in the sands of time become etched in collective human memory and take predictable, or occasionally unpredictable, shapes; most of them, however, drop off like loose sands in the course of time and disappear. This way of looking at ourselves and our work involves a dialectical process that allows us to anticipate the legacies that might linger after their proponents are gone.

Professor A K Jalaluddin's life, his career as an educator and his core thoughts are symbolic of an era which is now apparently fragile. Many will argue that a new order is surfacing out of a great churn. Perhaps that argument is justified. On the other hand, some people still bemoan the passing of the good old days. Situating Jalaluddin, this cusp will provide us with a perspective, but it won't solve the problem our education system is still grappling with, just as it did in earlier times. In fact, Jalaluddin's intellectual and humanistic legacy, primarily in the form of questions he raised, is becoming more and

more pertinent in a dialectical manner as the new ways of the world are unfolding before us.

By Way of Biography

A K Jalaluddin's life and career are more or less coextensive with the first eight decades of the history of independent India. He was born in undivided Bengal at a time when India was under British Rule. In his memoirs (yet to be published) he writes: "I was born in 1933, on 17 September (according to Bengali Calendar, 2 Ashwin, 1340) in Bhola, a small semi-urban administrative unit of what was then known as East Bengal. The first fourteen years of my life were spent under the British rule in undivided India. Then came our independence. India had to pay a heavy price for her independence: it was a deal that broke apart the country into two different nations. As a consequence, the next decade of my life was spent in the then East Pakistan. I became a citizen of India in 1957."

Jalaluddin's childhood and adolescent years were peripatetic. First, it was because of his father's transferable government job. Then, after he lost his father in his boyhood, the family fell on hard times. Off and on, young Jalaluddin had to live with his relatives, away from his immediate family in different places from Kumilla to Chittagong, attending different schools as he grew up. As he mentioned later, those years were formative in making him the person he became. According to him, the experiences of his younger days had not only made him sensitive to his social surroundings, but had also ignited his lasting curiosity about how a society functions. During those years he came across a few people, including his eldest brother, who were to have a profound impact on his intellectual growth.

Jalaluddin's father Abdul Latif died from a sudden illness in 1946, when the boy was barely in his teens. The family had just arrived in Calcutta (as it was known then) for his treatment. Abdul Latif passed away in Calcutta Medical College Hospital on 26th March. At that time the political environment in Bengal was deeply tense, following the recent provincial elections. The escalating friction between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League led to the tragic communal violence of the Direct Action Day, on 16th August the same year. In those days, when the city was battling with a palpable atmospheric dread that had swiftly turned friendly neighbourhoods into hostile and fear-ridden territories, Jalaluddin's eldest brother Salahuddin, who was then barely nineteen and an undergraduate student at Presidency College in Calcutta decided to send the family— his mother and seven siblings— to their ancestral house in Brahmanbaria. The incident left an indelible mark on young Jalaluddin's mind and must have contributed to his lifelong distaste for any approach towards life and thought that seemed dogmatic or fanatical. I remember, in the early days of our acquaintance, when on one occasion he heard me gush-



ing about Bertrand Russell, he asked me if I had read J B S Haldane's seminal but now out-of-print (predictably, alas!) essay titled 'The Duty of Doubt'. I procured a copy soon, combed through the author's argument and, the essay has stayed with me ever since.

In his growing-up years, Jalaluddin, primarily under his older brother's influence, found himself engaged in various local cultural activities. Those activities helped him discover his innate skill for organizing large events. Besides hosting cultural activities (with the aim of upholding secular Bengali culture), he developed a taste for reading and discussing books that went far beyond the confines of the prescribed school texts. A love of reading along with his capability for organizing people led to an obvious consequence: Jalaluddin started building small lending libraries with the help of his friends and local communities wherever his itinerant life took him in those days. The libraries they established lacked formal infrastructure, such as permanent buildings or dedicated reading rooms. Nor did the young organizers have much money to buy books; instead a well wishing neighbour would spare a corner in a room in their house, a few large boxes had to be arranged to keep the books, and gathering a collection of books proved just as easy. People in the community willingly gave away the books they didn't want to keep— and a library sprang up! This perhaps requires a bit of explanation. In the early decades of the last century in Bengal almost every educated Bengali household, rich or poor, possessed its own collection of books. Some were bought; some came as presents gifted on social occasions. In an age without television and social media, reading was an essential pastime even for people with limited education, and small lending libraries were much in vogue even in the remotest parts of the province.

Because of his brother and his expanding set of acquaintances, Jalaluddin was drawn toward active politics from an early age. As was common among the bright



minds of the time, Jalaluddin too leaned toward left-wing student politics. From high school till his university days, he was an active member of the then-banned Students' Federation, the student wing of the undivided Communist Party. Post Independence, as the country was divided with Pakistan having two wings separated by the massive expanse of India in-between, Jalaluddin became a citizen of Pakistan. In his student days he was arrested by the police more than once because of his political activities and was even put in prison for supporting the Bengali language movement in the early 1950s. In politics too, Jalaluddin proved himself an efficient organizer, a capability he utilized highly effectively in his later career as an educator, education policy planner and high-ranking education administrator.

After completing his MSc in Applied Physics with a first class first from Dhaka University, he left East Pakistan, came to Calcutta, and obtained Indian citizenship in 1957. He earned two PhDs in Physics from Calcutta University and Moscow State University and later served as a professor at the Aligarh Muslim University before moving to the University of Delhi. Following the formation of Bangladesh, the Government of India appointed Jalaluddin as a special officer at the newly established High Commission in Dhaka to oversee cultural ties between the two countries. After spending nearly five years in the diplomatic service, Jalaluddin returned to Delhi in the late 1970s and was appointed Director of the Directorate of Adult Education. This marked a definitive turning point in his career. During his tenure at the Directorate of Adult Education, he became actively and passionately involved in literacy and mass education which actually foreshadowed his career as an eminent educationist.

In the early 1980s, Jalaluddin left the Directorate of Adult Education to join the NCERT. While serving as the Joint Director of the NCERT and reorganizing its academic departments, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) entrusted him with preparing the

background note for the National Education Policy (NEP) of 1986. Based on a detailed survey of contemporary Indian education, this note explored why earlier policies had failed to achieve their expected targets and outlined the rationale for a new policy framework. Jalaluddin was also instrumental in drafting the Plan of Action for the NEP of 1986. As the National Convenor for Computer Literacy and Studies in Schools (CLASS)—a central government initiative between 1984 and 1989—Jalaluddin played a pivotal role in introducing computers into Indian school education. He retired voluntarily as the Director of the NCERT as its Director in 1989. Post retirement, Jalaluddin worked with several state governments in India and with various countries in Asia and Africa as a special and technical advisor in im-

plementing early literacy programmes. He also worked with the World Bank, UNESCO, UNDP and UNICEF as a senior advisor and team leader in implementing school-based early education reform projects. As a professional consultant with several universities and NGOs in India and Bangladesh, he assisted in designing early childhood learning programmes and training educators and education professionals. As a firm proponent of the idea that schools must change from within to elevate their educational quality, Jalaluddin, through his own organization, NEEV, collaborated professionally with several school chains in India, such as the Al-Ameen Mission and Bodh Shiksha Samiti. Under his guidance they developed co-operative classrooms, research-based instructional designs, diversified teaching learning materials, multiple assessment procedures and, most importantly, effective models of school leadership and management.

The 'Master' as I Knew him

If the short biography inserted above reads like a cata-



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logue of information about the man, it is deliberately so. Professor A K Jalaluddin certainly belongs to that privileged class of exceptional people whose lives deserve well-rounded and extensive biographies. I have neither the time nor the means to undertake such an elaborate exercise; moreover, that would seem an impossible undertaking within the span of a short essay. Instead, I shall offer an impressionistic idea of the man with whom I became close. Our relationship lasted only for a few years, yet it revealed the story of an old man with a young heart— a man whose mind was always deeply analytical, who could exude authoritative gravitas with childlike wide eyed curiosity about almost everything that went on around him with enviable simultaneity. It is the story of a man who felt and acted upon the belief that human relationships essentially thrive on kindness and deep compassion. I am those who knew him for years can recall a multitude of anecdotes about his gentle, kind and modest nature— modest being a word he used so frequently— and how often he would go out of his way to help others. Though he mentored many people throughout his long life, his style of mentorship was never ostentatious.

As I write the word 'master' in this section, I feel tempted to enclose it in quotation marks. For I am sure the Professor would have winced at it. Though he was not averse to using the words 'teachers' and 'masters' as official designations, he preferred 'facilitators', and more expansively, 'collaborators', to identify people in teaching profession.

While I consider myself his student, our conversations were mostly argumentative and, therefore, intellectually stimulating. Occasionally they even took on the appearance of high-stakes disagreements! This approach was a refreshing departure from the traditional student-teacher interaction. Instead of treating me as a subordinate student —and I'm sure many others experienced the same— he gave the impression that we are all co-passengers on the cognitive expressway.

Professor A K Jalaluddin in his appearance, bearing and attitude exemplified a breed that is now a rarity, if not entirely vanished: the quintessential intellectually inclined Bengali Bhadrak of the twentieth century.

While I am keenly aware of the postcolonial ire towards the term 'intellectually inclined bhadrak', I find it necessary to use it— though I do so with caution. Despite its inherent contradictions, the socio-cultural reformation formerly termed as the Bengal Renaissance that took place in nineteenth-century Bengal was a peculiar clash and assimilation of cultures. It created generations of intellectuals who tried to forge an identity heavily dependent on the premises of Enlightenment rationality— a

framework that began by questioning all local traditional precepts and forms of knowledge. Broadly speaking, it was a quest for selfhood among a people. Although that quest had established a somewhat coherent structure by the twentieth century, the rising intelligentsia began addressing contemporary challenges by interrogating the realities of their time.

Jalaluddin was a true product of this intellectual lineage. Though many of his questions were frightfully unnerving, his positions fiercely uncompromising, and his argumentative admonitions capable of destroying oppos-



Professor A K Jalaluddin in his appearance, bearing and attitude exemplified the quintessential intellectually inclined Bengali Bhadrak of the twentieth century. He was a true product of that intellectual lineage.

ing opinions, there never was a trace of malice, nor did he argue for argument's sake. His allegiance was always to the cause he thought right and he remained open to new ideas as long as they were grounded in logic and empirically testable.

That openness of mind could be felt in his long, and, as it appeared to many, digressive conversations. Often, he would use specific educational issues as points of departure to allow his thoughts to embrace different accomplishments of the human mind. To say that his interests spanned a vast spectrum of subjects would be an understatement. Though he was formally trained as a physicist, and spent much of his career as an educationist, the person I knew was, to use an old-fashioned phrase, a "Renaissance Man." Learning wasn't merely a bookish exercise for him; it was an extension of an intensely lived life.

It seems that Professor Jalaluddin understood perfectly that human knowledge isn't just discrete quanta of information; what the human mind has been searching for all along is a way to make sense of the world around it. Our intellect and intelligence compel us to discover our function, both as individuals and as a collective, in the grand scheme of the universe. The world around inspires awe and wonder; our innocent, child-like curiosity helps us unravel some of nature's mysteries and discover the root of that awe and wonder. All our inventions, discoveries and other creative endeavours stem from this fundamental desire to understand the world and our relationship with it.

An Attempt at Evaluation

Having known him rather closely in his last years, I came to see Professor A K Jalaluddin as a man whose thoughts and works transcended the polarities which, perhaps, involuntarily, entrap some of our best education theorists and practitioners. Instead of taking positions unquestioningly, he always offered a counsel of prudence. Jalaluddin, as I have mentioned already, was open to new theoretical and technical developments in education and took a deep interest in them. As one of the pioneering architects who introduced computers into Indian school education, he did not merely possess a lifelong fascination with emergent digital technologies; he also researched how such technologies could be used effectively in teaching-learning process.

During pandemic and its aftermath, when most of our schools joined the bandwagon of online classes – not out of a planned strategy, but out of desperate necessity– Jalaluddin clearly pointed out why this ‘accidental marriage’ would fail to yield the desired outcomes, particularly in primary and upper primary classes. He viewed the exercise as a matter of contingency: a mere transition of the physical classroom into a virtual space that would keep the run-of-the-mill style of functioning intact – essentially a shapeshifting that would leave the core unchanged. He believed that without proper planning, neither the teachers nor the students will be able to mine the wealth this AI-driven digital technology has to offer. When it came to another debate-ridden topic under reading comprehension, commonly called the Reading War, he found the purported battle between “phonics” and “whole language” rather inane and dull. He chose a middle path, showing how a well chalked out plan that integrated the two could yield tangible results.

In his younger days, like the budding intellectuals of his time he naturally gravitated towards left politics, but was never chained by any dogmatic ideology. However, it did provide him with the intellectual tools to understand the dynamics of class inequality of this country and the structural shortcomings of our democratic polity which essentially functions within a top-down framework. In his lectures and writings, time and again, he spoke out against the centrally-driven command-and-control style of Indian education system. Time and again he raised his voice against the ad hoc measures adopted by the government to make the system effective. In his research he demonstrated clearly why centrally constructed Big Policies never meet the Little Policies, which actually operate the daily functioning of classrooms. They fail to intersect simply because they are not designed to do so. Many of these issues have become so commonplace



in today's debates and discussions that it is indeed difficult to imagine the intense controversies they generated in earlier times.

Jalaluddin wanted to see our teachers function as co-learners and collaborates with their pupils, with the aim of making each student– to quote his words– “self-organized, self-regulated life-long learner who would be sensitive and empathetic to their surroundings.” The question of a learner's own agency in the learning process was absolutely non-negotiable for him. In India, most of our teaching learning activities are still constructed around the teacher

as the central figurehead, a practice that leads only to a servile dependency on the part of the student. To wean ourselves out of this culture of intellectual dependency– this culture of mindless obedience to authority, which resonates deeply with Hannah Arendt's formulation of the banality of evil– we have to navigate a difficult path. Unless teachers and educational authorities feel the urge and commitment to do things differently, the idea of creating self-regulated lifelong seekers and creators of new knowledge will remain an elusive dream.

The present context of education in India is fraught with conflicting social, political, cultural, technological and economic interests (as is typical of any complex social system) and deep-rooted structural impairments which are distressing, yet understandable, given the behemoth it has become). Considering the kind of malaise our education system now carries, I wonder if any prescription or regimented protocol will heal it to our liking. As I write this, I am becoming aware of the blind-spot in the argument. Though individual players do wield considerable influence upon the course of history, the changes



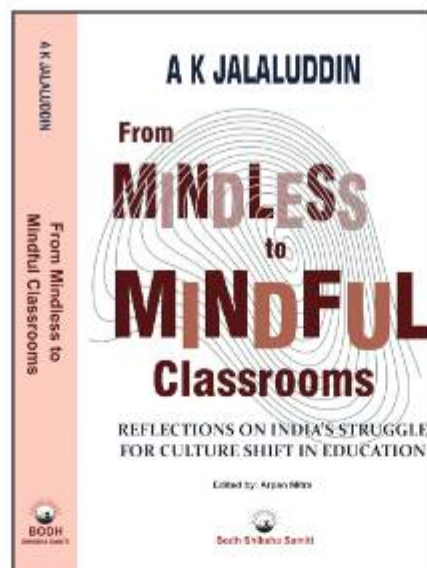
Jalaluddin wanted to see teachers function as co-learners and collaborates with their pupils, with the aim of making each student “self-organized, self-regulated life-long learner who would be sensitive and empathetic to their surroundings.”

they bring about are invariably correlational than causal, and, more often than not, unintentional. The sweeping forces of history do require individual agents to break the time-worn inertia; yet, in totality, those forces work like the blind and faceless force of nature and the upheavals thus caused are gradually tempered and flattened into a kind of accepted evolutionary process over time.

Why We Ought to Remember Professor A K Jalaluddin (and People Like Him)

"Modern" times, especially, have always brought a sense of unease to many. In the flow of time, to be in the cusp of enormous changes is rarely easy. The present era— the flow that we are living through— is distinct from earlier ones because its accelerated pace is entirely unique in the course of human history. To match this pace while navigating an almost impossible information overload is bound to faze our critical faculties. Thinking on the fly has become an emergent norm as never before. Within the frenzied configuration of unexpected events, a lot of random scattering and re-grouping can happen in momentary spasms. At one crucially important level, today's global population is functioning as a digital crowd that uses rapid, collective cognitive processes to solve its problems. While it may look chaotic from the outside, it is actually an extremely high-speed social negotiation.

Such a mode of social functioning inevitably touches upon the core vulnerability of collective behaviour: the absolute fraying of critical faculty and personal moral accountability when individuals merge into a virtual mass. People may argue that this absolute collapse is not entirely a new phenomenon. It is true that scholars and intellectuals have pointed this out before. Max Horkheimer, for instance, in his *Eclipse of Reason* (1947) had argued how the European Enlightenment paved the way for the rise of Totalitarianism by differentiating between objective and subjective ideas of rationality. He concluded that "by reducing reality to raw data and mechanical procedures, reason created its own myth of unyielding conformity." The argument perhaps is stronger now than when it first appeared. The world today is both driven by and dependent on algorithmic dynamic; these algorithms aggressively and frightfully and aggressively guess what a person wants, based on what the average mass desires, thereby completely flattening out the individual's



A love of reading along with his capability for organizing people led to an obvious consequence: Jalaluddin started building small lending libraries with the help of his friends and local communities wherever his itinerant life took him in those days.

specific intent.

To give an example: in the sphere of education expressions like "critical thinking", "reflective teaching", and "teaching learning" have become deafeningly noisy buzzwords; they have gained wide currency while being stripped of their meaning! Those expressions have reduced to mere conversational fluff. Our contemporary world — the world we inhabit right now— is traversing a chilling geopolitical trajectory: it is a world where institutional stability is collapsing fast, critical thinking is being fully erased by state-sponsored pageantry, and the unthinking mass simply consumes whatever that comes easily and cheaply.

Here I shall touch upon a concrete and common example to highlight the dominance of algorithm in our daily lives: the ubiquitous smart-phone features of "auto-correct" and "word prediction". While these features are universally supposed to be viewed as liberating, nothing could be more frustrating and ludicrous. Acquisition of vocabulary and the capacity to use it in varied forms is the cornerstone of education. Instead, these digital features standardize— and consequently stifle— the 'language of the herd' so thoroughly and so efficiently that one is forced to wonder about the future of human communication.

As our algorithmic society is flattening out fast; heterogeneous plurality is succumbing mercilessly to the pressures of enforced homogenization; under such circumstances, the greatest price that has to be paid is perhaps the gradual disintegration of the individual and the unique human voice. It is in such times that we must turn to thinkers like Professor A K Jalaluddin: to re-engage actively with their views and their arguments for sane rationality and an empathetic worldview. That venture is not about seeking a simple alternative pathway for schools, but to expand our own worldview so that we may educate ourselves in a deeper, better and more humane way. ■

For the last 39 years Al-Ameen Mission has produced large numbers of outstanding students. After successfully completing their studies they have settled in India and abroad. They are presented in this section. In this issue we present **Dr Masuda Khatun**

Masuda Khatun

A Rural Girl's Exhilarating Journey

Najib Anwar

IN 2011, MASUDA RANKED 34 in JEE (Medical) in the state. NEET happened much later. Like most of the students of Al-Ameen Mission, the story of Masuda too is no less fascinating.

Masuda Khatun comes from Kumirmora village under Chanditala police station of Hooghly. Most of the villagers are agricultural workers but many of them also earn their living as goldsmiths. The village is close to Kolkata – hardly 25 kilometres or so. People grow paddy here mostly. Some vegetables are also grown here. Because of the proximity to the metropolitan city, this rural belt is fast turning into suburban area, with plenty of roadside shops and bazaars. The literacy rate is more than 80%. The percentage of Muslims is 60% but the literacy rate compared to Hindus is a bit low, particularly in higher studies. The Muslim boys and girls study till Madhya-



mik and they drop out from school. After that, most of the young boys go for menial jobs.

Masuda has a brother and a sister. She comes from a lower middle class family. After passing the primary school, her father Sk. Saidul Haque, like every one of the area, went to learn craft of making golden jewelry. This work took him to Madhya Pradesh. After some time, he returned and opened a road side tea shop in the Kumirmora Bazar. Masuda's mother, who has read till class X, along with Masuda and her sister used to help her husband to run the tea shop. Her mother also taught some children in their home. Masuda too helped her mother here. But her elder brother Mokadderul had to help his father a lot. Saidul Haque, in the meantime, began suffering from spondylolysis. Mokadderul who was a student in Higher Secondary had to take the burden of running the family. He also went to Mumbai to become a goldsmith. At present, he has flourished in running his own business in Bankra, Howrah. Masuda's younger sister Nafisa too has graduated in Philosophy from Bethune College.

A house with only two rooms beside paddy field, that's where the family stayed. If there were paddy on the field, the house looked green carpeted from a distance. There was financial crisis, a constant struggle to make both ends meet; but there was peace, which was necessary for the family to survive and thrive as well. Masuda and her sister wanted to go for higher studies but their elder brother could not have that dream as he had the burden to run family smoothly. None of the siblings had any type of luxury – thriftiness was the way to lead their lives.

Masuda completed her primary schooling in the local government school, which was a ramshackle hall room. There was no class room as such. The windows and doors were broken. There was no toilet room. During monsoon, water used to come near the school door as a pond nearby got inundated. That is how Masuda's education journey begun. After finishing primary schooling, she was admitted to Ramanathpur Kumirmora Ashutosh Nanilal High School, which was not far from her home. The school was, in a way, good. But most of the students were average in nature. They were reluctant to take advantage of the facilities provided there. All through her school life, Masuda was a diligent student. She used to come first in the primary school. But in the



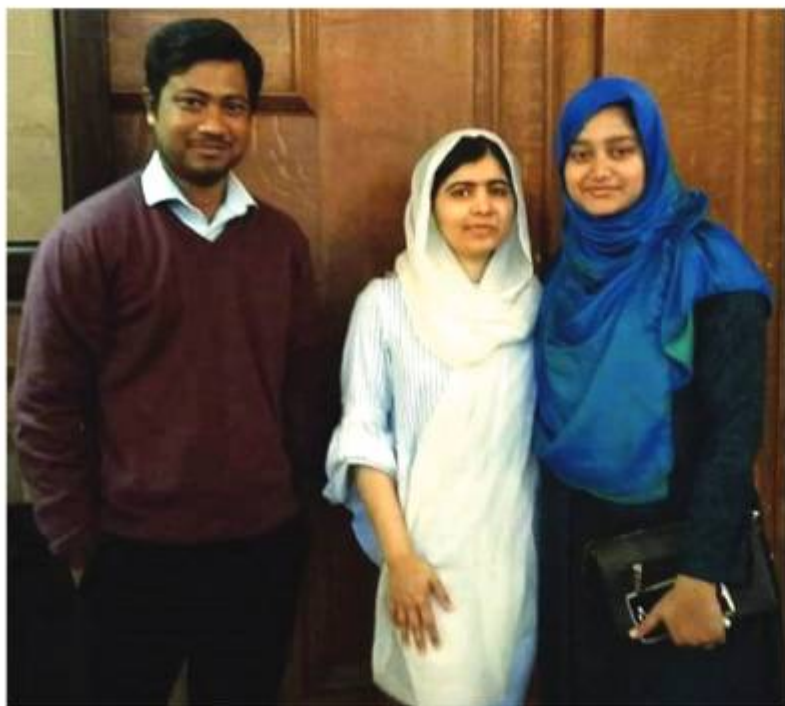
At the Convocation.

admission test to class V, she was unable to do so. In the final exam too, she got third rank. Her mark in Mathematics was 39. Her mother, who taught her at home, realised that she should be given private tuition. At last, she got a private tutor in class VI. Rahmat Sir, her private tutor, gave her free tuition. He was also the teacher of her elder brother. He only took fees for Mokadderul's tuition. Masuda took private tuition from Rahmat Sir till class VIII. She used come first but her friend Hasinur always got highest marks in Mathematics. Hasinur had a good private tutor, who was also a teacher in a High Madarasa. He lived in Ramanathpur, a nearby village. His name was Tapas Kumar. She began taking tuition from him. Masuda said, "He was the first person who inspired me to dream big."

Masuda's friend circle was quite helpful to her. One



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With Malala Yousafzai Nobel Peace Prize Winner 2014. Shahnawaz Ali Raihan Masuda's husband is in the left.

of her friend, Firoza used to put Masuda on the carrier of her cycle to take her to the tuition class. Another friend Salma has a huge collection of Islamic books in her home. Masuda was the regular reader, borrowing books from there. Many of her friends lent books and magazines. She has been an avid reader throughout her life. There was an ashram in the locality, where she used to go for tuition. There was a library in the compound. The librarian lent her many books of Bengali literature – classic and contemporary. In the way, Masuda was introduced to Rabindranath, Sarat Chandra and many others. Even she liked detective novels of Agatha Christie and Satyajit Ray. She read literary works of Michael Madhusudan, Dinabondhu Mitra, Saradindu Bandhopadhyay and host of writers. The books that she read had broaden her outlook and amid her busy schedule in England now, she still could find time to read bedtime stories for her baby girl.

Her teachers were enthusiastic about her studies too. They used to encourage her constantly, providing specimen copy of books etc. The Headmaster said, "You have to get more than 700 marks in the Madhyamik", which she did. She scored 720 marks. At that time, the highest marks one had achieved in that school.

The turning point in Masuda's life came when she got admitted to Al-Ameen Mission. She came to know about the Mission through newspaper reports, when Arif Sk. came first in the Madhyamik. There were some hesitation, but after enquiring about the Mission a good deal, her parents decided to admit Masuda in the Mission. She passed the admission test and faced the interview. The General Secretary told her two sentences:

"one, don't think about expenses. If needed, the Mission will provide all the daily requirements. You have to study intensely, nothing else. Two, you must become a doctor." Those words helped her to clarify his goal to a great extent. Until then, there was no aim as such. But now, after those inspiring words, she was determined to become a doctor. Gradually, she became inured to the hardship of living in the hostel.

Masuda passed the Higher Secondary examination in 2010 with 85% marks. In the running year, she sat for the JEE (Medical), but did not qualify. She took coaching from the Khalatpur campus for a year and again sat for the entrance examination in 2011 and ranked 34. She studied medicine in the Medical College, Kolkata. As she had IDB scholarship, Masuda had no difficulty in carrying on her studies. In the second year of her studies, another important event happened in her life. She entered into marital life. She got married to Shahnawaz Ali Raihan, a well known figure in the field of journalism and politics. After passing MBBS, with the initiative of her husband Masuda went

to England. She is studying Internal Medicine and has passed M.R.C.P (The Membership of the Royal Colleges of Physicians). Although, a post graduate diploma, in India it is treated as similar to M.D and is prestigious throughout the world. In her opinion, her in-law home had helped a lot for her going to study abroad.

But it was not easy. To get Medical license in England, one has to go for rigorous PLAB exam. The exam ensures that doctors have the knowledge and skills to work safely as a senior house officer in a UK hospital. It has two parts – a written multiple choice exam and a practical objective structured clinical exam. Masuda ad-



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mitted that she was never been fluent in English as she has all through read in the Bengali medium school. She has always got not more than 80 marks in that language despite her best effort. Before taking PLAB, she must pass the English Examination. So she went hammer and tongs, to get it through for a year. And she passed it. After that, in her first try, she also passed PLAB-1. She took coaching for PLAB-2 from Dr. Hamid. Doctors from different countries usually take coaching from there. She went to Manchester for the test and she passed it too. After passing these exams, she got her first job at renowned John Radcliffe Hospital under Oxford University. Later, she went to Poole, a beautiful port city in the Dorset County. It was a dream coming true. Poole is a touristy place; tourists flock there all through the year. From Poole, she travelled to the opposite side of the English Channel to France with her husband. They visited Paris and also the second smallest country of the world, Monaco. Also they visited several places of Europe like Barcelona, Spain.

But what more she had was a vibrant intellectual atmosphere. She had been an avid reader right from her school days. Despite her busy schedule, she found time to read some serious stuffs now, thanks to her husband. The works of Noam Chomsky or late French intellectual, Franz Fanon attracted her mind. She began to understand albeit slowly that for the enhancement of a backward community in socio-political, economic spheres, it is necessary to know theoretical works of eminent authors around the world. Simultaneously, she also studied the Islamic literatures. She read Quran with tafsirs; Tafsir-ul-Quran being her favourite. During the time of her maternal leave the world was locked down due to the pandemic. It brought her the opportunity of reading many more books. She began to read Md. Asad (Leopold Oasis) and Ali Shariati in Kindle. She was astounded reading 'The Road to Mecca' by Asad. According to her, it is not only a travelogue; it's more of a dialogue between



Al-Ameen Mission. February 2024.

civilizations. The Irani intellectual Ali Shariati's 'On the Sociology of Islam' too was invigorating. She also participated in workshops related to Deen. Once in London, she participated in one such workshop conducted by Yasmin Mogahed, an American educator and motivational speaker. Later on, she read "The Productive Muslim: Where Faith meets Productivity" by Mohammed Faris, which made her realize the power of concentration in the age of distraction. This book found a similar vein in her mind. She remembered the encouraging words of the General Secretary of the Al-Ameen Mission. When she was there, often he used to talk about the lofty ideals, which used to give morale booster. Subsequently, she sent a copy of that book, translated in Bengali, to Khalatpur.

The work-life balance for a medical doctor in U.K is fairly nice. Weekly holidays or any other leave would take Masuda to some other places of U.K and Scotland. She has visited Lake District and coastal places of North Yorkshire. Recently she has visited Morocco, where her husband teaches in a University. She was enchanted seeing the medieval Islamic architecture. She also enjoyed praying at a Masjid inside University of al-Qarawiyyin in Fez. This is one of the oldest universities of the world founded by Fatima al-Fihri. Masuda currently is working in Northern General Hospital in Sheffield.

The General Secretary of the Mission often used say; the students of Al-Ameen Mission will fly to different continents of the globe. It is true now. Students like Masuda have done it with all the hard works and sincerity. To serve mankind is a way to earn rewards from Allah. The students of the Mission are doing so by fighting against all odds. They are becoming an example to the whole community and Masuda certainly is one of them. ■



Banu Mushtaq's quietly powerful collection of short stories, translated by Deepa Bhashthi, shines a light on the lives of Muslim women in rural India. It is the first time that the International Booker prize has been won by a book translated from Kannada.



The Weight of the Lamp

Najib Anwar

WHEN THE INTERNATIONAL BOOKER Prize jury awarded the 2025 prize to Banu Mushtaq's *Heart Lamp*—a collection of short stories translated from Kannada by Deepa Bhashthi—it did something unusual: it placed a work of regional Indian literature, written by a Muslim woman from Karnataka, at the very centre of global literary attention. The decision was celebrated as a landmark moment for Kannada writing, for translated fiction, and for the short story as a form. Yet it also invites a more probing critical scrutiny—of the book's literary achievement, of its thematic ambitions, and of the politics that inevitably surround any prize-winning act of cultural translation.

Heart Lamp gathers stories written over several decades, most of them first published in Kannada literary magazines and later collected in Mushtaq's volumes *Haseena Mattu Itara Kathegalu* and others. The stories

concern themselves, with remarkable consistency, with the lives of Muslim women in southern India—their domestic confinements, their spiritual hungers, their negotiations with patriarchal religion and communal identity. Mushtaq herself has lived a life that shadows her fiction: a lawyer and activist as well as a writer, she has been at the receiving end of fatwa-like condemnation from conservative quarters for her unflinching portrayals of women trapped within religious orthodoxy. That the book exists at all is, in one sense, an act of literary courage.

To read *Heart Lamp* as a collection is to understand how silence can be a structural principle. Mushtaq's stories are, in the main, short—some no longer than two or three pages—and they tend to eschew conventional dramatic resolution. They do not build toward catharsis in the Aristotelian sense. Instead, they accumulate: image upon image, constraint upon constraint, small rebellion upon small rebellion, until the reader feels the particular weight of the lives described pressing down on the page.

This formal economy is both a strength and, at times, a limitation. At its best—in stories such as the title piece, or

in those depicting women navigating the ritual aftermath of divorce—the compression achieves a kind of lyric intensity. The restraint feels earned, the unsaid more eloquent than any explicit statement could be. The lamp of the title is itself a figure for this: a modest, domestic source of light, carrying within it the heat of an entire interior life.

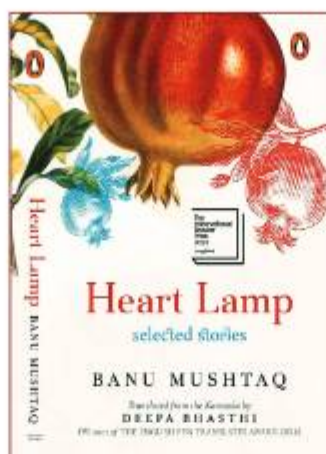
Mushtaq understands that the most devastating truths often announce themselves quietly. But the brevity occasionally works against the stories. Some read less as complete artistic objects than as sketches or parables—morally clear but narratively thin. The women in these pieces risk, at moments, becoming emblematic rather than individuated: figures of suffering, yes, and figures of resilient endurance, but not always fully rendered as singular human beings with contradictions and private jokes and complicated desires. The danger in writing from within a tradition of social protest fiction—and Mushtaq is, in the best sense, an heir to that tradition—is that the argument can sometimes overpower the person.

The thematic heart of *Heart Lamp* is the relationship between Muslim women and the institutional structures—religious, familial, communal—that govern their lives. Mushtaq does not write from outside these structures looking in; she writes from within them, and this positioning gives her work a texture of intimacy that purely documentary or polemical fiction lacks. Her women pray, fast, observe, and love their faith even as they chafe against its applications.

The critique is not of Islam as a spiritual practice but of the patriarchal interpretation and enforcement of Islamic law—the triple talaq, the restrictions on women's movement and speech, the valorisation of feminine self-abnegation.

This is a necessary and courageous subject, and Mushtaq handles it with more nuance than a reductive summary might suggest.

Nevertheless, certain critical questions remain worth posing. The collection presents, with very few exceptions, a world in which religion functions primarily as a mechanism of female oppression. The men in these stories—fathers, husbands, brothers, mullahs—appear largely as agents of constraint rather than as fully explored human actors. This is not simply a failure of artistic sympathy; it is arguably a deliberate rhetorical choice, a way of insisting on the structural rather than the individual nature of the problem. But it does narrow the imaginative world of the book, and it can give the collection an almost allegorical flatness at its weaker moments.



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Furthermore, while Mushtaq's feminist critique is acute within its own community, the stories rarely situate Muslim women's lives within the broader social landscape of Karnataka—its caste hierarchies, its Hindu-Muslim communal tensions, its class divisions. The relative absence of this wider social context is not a flaw exactly, but it is a limit, and critics who wish to understand these lives in their full historical and political complexity will need to look elsewhere for that wider frame.

No assessment of *Heart Lamp* in its English incarnation can avoid the question of translation. The International Booker Prize, uniquely, is awarded jointly to the author and the translator, and in this case the prize ceremony

foregrounded Deepa Bhashti's contribution with unusual explicitness. Bhashti, herself a writer in English, has spoken in interviews about her approach: she was not attempting a neutral or transparent rendering but rather a translation that preserved the particular grain of Mushtaq's Kannada—its rhythms, its proverbs, its way of embedding the sacred within the domestic.

The results are impressive. Bhashti's English is neither exoticised nor domesticated in the crude senses those terms are sometimes used. Kannada words and phrases are retained where their translation would flatten meaning, and the prose has a texture—slightly formal, emotionally direct, inflected with the cadences of oral

storytelling—that feels genuinely derived from a source culture rather than smoothed into global literary English. This is a translation that trusts its reader to encounter differences, to sit with the unfamiliar.

Whether it fully succeeds in capturing what must be lost—the specific musicality of Kannada, the cultural resonance of certain religious formulae, the way a particular proverb lands differently when you have grown up hearing it—is impossible for a reader without Kannada to judge with certainty. What can be said is that, reading this English text, one is rarely aware of strain or inauthenticity. The language feels inhabited. ■



Deepa Bhashti.

NEET (UG) 2025

Success Uninterrupted

Above 500 marks

474

Marks **550** & above
Within AIR 12394

68

Marks **530** & above
Within AIR 24287

180

Marks **520** & above
Within AIR 32319

254

Marks **510** & above
Within AIR 41676

361

Congratulations to our Rankers



Syed Md Tamjeed



Arafat Hossain



Sarif Hasan



Safiul Islam



Samima Biswas



Md Moynuddin Hassan



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Md Ariful Islam



Samina Khatun



Sk Niloy Islam



Rafik Hassan



Ainal Kabir



Rasel Sk



Altamas Kabir Halder



Riwanul Arefin



Saim Molla



Abdul Rajeb Sk



Lubna Farhad Mondal



Ahammad Hasan Ansari



Roni Mondal



Samim Akhtar



Saharul Sk



Md Akhtaruzzaman



Safikul Molla



Poyar Ali



Md Nasim Reja



Rahima Khatun



TOUSIF AHAMED



Seifuddin Hoque



Md Sadik Ali



KAZI SURABUDDIN