

## The Bangladesh Times

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## Abul Mansur Ahmed

The unremitting icy hands of death have once again taken away from us a noble soul—one in whose achievements we could take pride and from whose words of wisdom the nation could benefit. Abul Mansur Ahmed, elder politician, prominent journalist, and eminent litterateur passed away on Sunday at the Dacca Medical College Hospital after prolonged illness leaving behind the nation to mourn his loss (Innalillah .....). His departure has snapped another of the very few links with that generation which saw this region pass through phases of history-making over nearly three-quarter of a century. And Abul Mansur Ahmed was not only a participant in events during much of this period but had watched and recorded history too.

His contribution in any of the varied fields in which he worked could earn him a place in the country's annals yet it is perhaps as an eminent journalist and remarkable litterateur that he will be remembered most. Abdul Mansur Ahmed had worked in different capacities with at least eight journals and newspapers. He eventually became editor of the Daily Ittehad. Sharpening his pen in journalism, Abul Mansur Ahmed shot into fame with his satirical works "Food Conference" and "Aina". Of these two books the first one was on the malfeasance of the government of the day during the great Bengal famine. As journalist, political worker and notable politician he had the unique advantage of watching statesmen, governments and the people from close range. What he saw and thought of these found adequate expression in his books and commentaries. The book "Fifty Years of Politics—As I Saw It" authored by him gives us valuable historical insight. His autobiography "Atmakatha" launched on this March 7 is "rich in information about our social, economic, political and cultural life." His commentaries and writings will be remembered for their forthrightness and wisdom. To Bangla journalism Abul Mansur Ahmed gave a unique style of prose-writing flavoured with the use of local vocabulary.

In politics he started work as an organiser of the peasants and had been associated with the Congress, Krishak-Praja Party, Muslim League and Awami League. He held ministerial posts in the then East Pakistan and later became the Minister for Commerce and Industries of Pakistan. He always upheld the interests of this region and had a big hand in drafting the 21-Point Programme of the United Front in 1954. But he will shine more as an unflinching champion of the cause of democracy for which he suffered imprisonment in 1958 and 1962.

Abul Mansur Ahmed has passed into history. We mourn his demise along with his kith and kin, his colleagues and admirers. May his soul rest in peace.