Great Men are Born Once in a While

Prof. M. Salihu

I am extremely happy to learn that a commemoration volume is to be brought out in connection with the Birth Centenary of Janab A.Thangal Kunju Musaliar, a fitting tribute to the noble soul on this memorable occasion. I have personally known him for quite a long time as a faculty member (1962 - 1983) of the TKM College of Engineering. Not only to me, but to many people also he was the spirit behind their success. It was a fact that he did not get enough formal education at his early age and started his career as an ordinary working class member of the society. But this lack of education and his low-level economic status never stood in his way to come up in life.

He was a fine specimen of the human race endowed with the capacity for hard work and intellect which earned him name and fame. His far-reaching vision and sense of commitment paved the way for the educational and industrial development of Kollam and the surrounding area. The T.K.M. College of Engineering, the first of its kind in the private sector in Kerala, which he established as early as 1958, when the idea of starting colleges by private individuals had not taken its roots in the mind of the public, stands today as a monument of his vision and boldness. He has also founded the Arts and Science college to impart higher education to the young men and women of the area.

His business acumen was so sharp and entrepreneurial ability so undeterred that he established several cashew factories and tile manufacturing units providing employment opportunities to thousands of people in and around Kollam. He was not only an employer but also a labour leader true to the saying that only a good worker can become a good master. On many occasions he was very understanding and sympathetic while approaching problems of the workers and succeeded in finding amicable solutions with ease and grace.

He had a great respect towards the teaching community and was much concerned about their welfare. He arranged for the disbursement of full salary to the teachers working in his educational institutions and commanded their respects in every way. His ambition was to provide quality education to the younger generation and towards achieving this goal he spent enormously in updating the college library and laboratory and improving the teaching by appointing good faculty.

He never compromised in his efforts to achieve things. This aspect of his trait was manifest in all his deeds and deliberations. A philan-

thropist by nature, he donated generously for various causes to alleviate human sufferings by way of helping widows and orphaned children. His reverence towards Allah, the Great was unshakable and he was instrumental in building a few mosques in Kollam.

Great men are born once in a while but live in the hearts of the people forever by their love for fellow beings. When they are born they bring nothing with them but when they die they leave behind a legacy for the benefit of future generations. Janab A. Thangal Kunju Musaliar was one fine example of such great sons of our motherland. I am really happy to share my reminiscences with you all on this historic occasion.

An Ideal Businessman

K. Ravindranadhan Nair

Janab A. Thangal Kunju Musaliar was an ideal businessman, an inspiration for the generations of industrialists to come. When I began my career in the Cashew Industry, it was Janab Musaliar who was my model. He had proved to the world that it was possible to reach the highest peaks without taking shortcuts, that it was possible to achieve everything without giving up values. In the cashew industry, Janab Musaliar's name stood at that time, stands today and will always stand for dedication, reliability, accountability, far-sightedness and above all a concern for the future. May it continue to be a source of inspiration for all of us forever.

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