

Rema, David Paul (1931–1988)

MITA DAS

Mita Das

David Paul Rema was an Adventist teacher, pastor, evangelist, and administrator from Bangladesh.

Early Life

David Paul Rema (Pranesh) was born on May 14, 1931, in Village Monosapara, District Mymensingh, Bangladesh. His father was Ibrahim Rema, and his mother was Swarna Lota Mrong.¹ His father was a preacher, and his mother was a housewife. David was the second child in the family, and he had three brothers and one sister: Pran Kumar Rema, Provash Rema, Dipty Rema and Edwin Pranjol Rema. David spent his childhood in Monosapara and went to the village primary school at Birishiri. He was baptized at Kellogg-Mookerjee Memorial Seminary, Jalirpar, Bangladesh.²

Education and Marriage

David Paul Rema completed his education at the Raymond Memorial Training School in Falakata, India, and Pakistan Union Seminary and College. He taught at the elementary and secondary schools during the summer at Spicer Memorial College, Pune, India.

Rema married Swarna Lota Madhu on March 25, 1955, at Buruabari, Bangladesh.³ The officiating minister of the wedding was Ashu Halder. Swarna Lota Madhu was born on January 12, 1938, at Suagram. She is the daughter of Shital Chandra and Prohashine (Arinda) Madhu. David Paul and Swarna Lota Rema were blessed with four children: Anubha Rema, Anup K. Rema, Anuj Rema, and Anuprova Rema.⁴

Career/Ministry

David Paul Rema joined the Seventh-day Adventist denominational work on June 1, 1951, as a teacher at Monosapara School and worked there until December 31, 1951. From January 1, 1952, to December 31, 1954, he worked as a teacher at Kellogg-Mookerjee High School (now Kellogg-Mookerjee Memorial Seminary). On January 1, 1955, he was transferred to Lengura Church School, and he taught there until December 31, 1957. On January 1, 1958, he was transferred to Monosapara School, where he taught until June 30, 1958. Then on July 1, 1958, Rema went to Pakistan, where he was sponsored to study at Pakistan Union High School in Chuharkhana.

After completing his junior college at Pakistan Union High School in February 1960, he returned to Kellogg-Mookerjee High School on March 1, 1960, where he served as teacher and registrar until December 1964. In 1965, he served as an office assistant at the section office in Dhaka. Then he went to Monosapara School, where he served as principal from January 1, 1966, to December 31, 1966. Then he again went to Kellogg-Mookerjee High School in January 1967 and served as a teacher until December 31, 1969.

On January 1, 1970, he became the principal of the same school. In addition to the leadership as principal, he served as a teacher up to December 31, 1970. He then went to the Goalbathan Seventh-day Adventist Academy (now Bangladesh Adventist Seminary and College) to serve as principal, and he served there from January 1, 1971, to December 31, 1972.⁵

Rema was elected as the secretary for the Bangladesh Section (now Bangladesh Union Mission) on January 1, 1973, and he served as secretary for nine years, until December 31, 1981. Bangladesh Section became Bangladesh Union Mission in 1980.⁶ He was elected as president of the Bangladesh Union Mission, and he served in that office for five years, from January 1, 1982, to December 31, 1986.⁷ After serving the Seventh-day Adventist denomination in Bangladesh for 36 years and 8 months, he went to Bangkok on January 1, 1987, where he worked with Adventist World Radio (AWR) until December 31, 1987.⁸

Later Life

David Paul Rema passed away on January 31, 1988, in Bangkok Hospital, Thailand.⁹ He faithfully served the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Bangladesh for more than 36 years.¹⁰ His wife, Swarna Lota Rema, served the Church in Bangladesh and retired from the Bangladesh Union Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.¹¹

David Paul Rema will be remembered by many as a dynamic and dedicated leader and preacher.¹²

SOURCES

David Paul Rema Service Record. Bangladesh Union Mission archive, Mirpur 1, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Southern Asia Tidings, April 1982.

Southern Asia Tidings, November 1973.

NOTES

1. David Paul Rema Service Records, Bangladesh Union Mission archive, Mirpur 1, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

2. Edwin P. Rema, brother of David Paul Rema, interview by author, March 27, 2019; Gleen Dango, relative of David Paul Rema, interview by author, March 27, 2019.
3. David Paul Rema Service Records; personal interview with Swarna Lota Rema, wife of David Paul Rema, interview by author, Mirpur, Dhaka, March 16, 2019.
4. Swarna Lota Rema, interview by author, Mirpur, Dhaka, March 26, 2019; and David Paul Rema Service Records.
5. David Paul Rema Service Records.
6. David Paul Rema Service Records; *Southern Asia Tidings*, November 1973.
7. David Paul Rema Service Records; *Southern Asia Tidings*, April 1982.
8. David Paul Rema Service Records.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Personal knowledge.
12. Mary Mitra, church employee, and Gleen Dango, relative of David Paul Rema, interview by the author, March 29, 2019.

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