

Baidya, Matilal (1936–1998)

MARY MILITA MITRA

Mary Milita Mitra, B.A. in Elementary Education (Spicer Memorial and College) and M.A. (Distance Learning Center of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Silang Cavite, Philippines). In 1991 she started working at Dhaka Adventist Pre-Seminary. She is married to Pastor David Dulal Mitra. They are blessed with two sons.

Matilal Baidya¹ was one of the pioneer Adventist workers in Bangladesh.

Early Life

Matilal Baidya was born on March 15, 1936 in a village called Kalikapur, Barisal, Bangladesh.² Matilal's father Akhoy Kumar was a farmer, and his mother Kamolini was a housewife.³ Matilal was the third child in the family. The names of his five siblings were: Monmoto, Monindro, Motilal, Sumoti, and Jotish. Matilal spent his childhood in Kalikapur and went to the village primary school.⁴ He was baptized in 1955.⁵

Matilal's great grandfather Vagai Baidya was a Hindu. He came to know about Adventism when Lal Gopal Mookerjee, a missionary from Calcutta, India, came from Gopalganj to his village Suagram to preach. Vagai was 21 when he accepted Jesus as his personal Savior. Because of his new faith, Vagai was disowned by his family and cast away from Suagram. He fled to Kalikapur village. With the little money he had, he bought a piece of land and settled there. Vagai shared his newfound faith in the new village.

Education and Marriage

Matilal came to Kellogg Mookerjee Memorial Seminary, Jalirpar, Faridpur (Gopalganj) in 1950.⁶ He completed high school in 1956 and started working. He married Aroti Rani Mridha, daughter of Rupchand and Prem Mridha, on June 11, 1962⁷ at Kellogg Mookerjee Memorial Seminary. Pastor Sarot Kamol Samadder was the officiating minister.⁸ Aroti was born on July 9, 1947.⁹ Motilal and Aroti were blessed with three children: Bernard Ashim, Brized Samoli, and Anita.¹⁰

Ministry

Matilal Baidya entered denominational service on June 11, 1962 as a teacher and evangelist at Suagram Seventh-day Adventist Church, East Pakistan Section. In 1970 he was transferred to Akonpara as teacher evangelist. In 1971 he was appointed as a teacher in Monosapara Adventist Seminary, North Bangladesh Mission, where he stayed until the end of 1972.

Starting from 1973 Baidya was assigned to Bangladesh Section. There he served as a district pastor and evangelist in Bisherkandi, one of the biggest church districts in South Bangladesh Mission. From 1980 to the end of 1981 he served in Narikeltola.¹¹ In 1982 he was appointed as evangelist in Utholi West.¹² Baidya was ordained to the gospel ministry on May 28, 1983.¹³ From 1985 to 1987 he served as boys' dean at Kellogg Mookerjee Memorial Seminary.¹⁴ The following year he was transferred to Akonparam East Bangladesh Mission and served as teacher and evangelist. From 1988 to 1992 he served as district pastor in South Bangladesh Region.¹⁵ In 1992 he was church coordinator at West Bangladesh Region and served in the same capacity the following year at East Bangladesh Region.¹⁶ In 1995 he was appointed as Dhaka Church pastor. From January 1997 until his retirement in May of the same year he served as Bangladesh Union Mission evangelist.¹⁷

Later Life

Matilal Baidya served the church for 35 years.¹⁸ In his retirement, he continued to conduct Bible Studies and baptized new members. With the financial help from his son, he sponsored four young people whom he had baptized to attend Kellogg Mookerjee Memorial Seminary in Bangladesh. He was actively engaged in various ministries until he died.¹⁹ His wife Aroti, died on August 18, 1998. He died on August 9, 2008 in Barisal Medical College Hospital, Bangladesh. He was buried in his birthplace Kalikapur.²⁰

SOURCES

Employee Service Record of Matilal Baidya, Far Eastern Division. Bangladesh Union Mission Archives, Mirpur 1, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Far Eastern Division Retirement Fund Application for Matilal Baidya. Bangladesh Union Mission Archives, Mirpur 1, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook, <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/>.

NOTES

1. In some local church records his name is entered as "Motilal Boidya." This article follows the name given in his Employee Service Record, Bangladesh Union Mission Archives.
2. Employee Service Record of Matilal Baidya, Bangladesh Union Mission Archives.
3. Bernard A. Baidya, son of Matilal Baidya, interview by the author, Dhaka, March 28, 2019.
4. Ibid

5. Ibid.; Employee Service Record.
6. Narattom Bayen, colleague and friend of Matilal, interview by the author, Dhaka, March 26, 2019.
7. Employee Service Record.
8. Swarnalata Rema, aunt of Aroti Baidya, interview by the author, March 25, 2019.
9. Ibid.
10. Employee Service Record.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Far Eastern Division Retirement Fund Application for Matilal Baidya, Bangladesh Union Mission Archives.
14. Employee Service Record.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid. cf. *SDA Yearbook* (1993), 107.
17. Employee Service Record.
18. Ibid.
19. Pastor Benedict Baroi, colleague of Matilal, interview by the author, Dhaka, April 29, 2019.
20. Bernard A. Baidya, son of Matilal Baidya, interview by the author, Dhaka, March 28, 2019.

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