

Adya shraddha tribute to Munin Barkotoky

A scholar passes away

Munin Barkotoki's death on November 6 is a heavy loss to the people of Assam. Looking back on his life's work we hold the opinion that his talent and output, ideas and experiences were all linked with his name.

Barkotoki started writing since his early days and his work drew the attention of the young generation for his creative style and consistency of views. As a journalist his role was full of humour and understanding. He won over everyone with his thoughts and experiences. He helped his readers gain a better understanding of social and political events while giving them the freedom to form their own judgements.

As a literary critic, Barkotoki's place in our society was unique. His criticisms covered a wide range of

subjects. He was free from fear, and came out openly against such writing which were considered harmful to society. He wrote regularly in newspapers and magazines. His style was original and popular, although some called him cynical as he never compromised with quality.

For his constructive writings, literary circles always recognized his great talent and artistic sense. True, his writings in book form were few. Yet, he was awarded, the Assam Prakashan Parishad's Literary prize for his only book, *Bismrita Byotikrom*. In this book, he built up a well-rounded picture of contemporary life by narrating several isolated interesting events and incidents. Though he pointed out new trends in Assamese society, he did not dwell over their negative aspects. His writings were marked by intermingling of tradition with

modern attitudes.

I was in constant touch with him when I was librarian of the State Central Library. He was a regular visitor and spent hours at a stretch in the reading room reading all the newspapers thoroughly. My impressions of this great writer are naive, yet his charm and genius never failed to impress me.

Barkotoki, never pursued his profession with the hope of material gain — it was more of a dedication to his interest. Barkotoki's many splendid qualities were, in many ways, symbolic of various aspects of humanity. It will be difficult to find another such delightful personality for many years to come. Today, on his *Adya Shraddha* day, we remember him and pray for his eternal peace.

Ram Goswamee