

## **A Humble Tribute to my Friend, Professor Dost Mohamad**

### **Rest in Peace -- My Dost**

Professor Dost Mohammad, my classmate, colleague and above all a bosom friend, was an almost - complete human being ---- loving, caring, and level headed. A person with a tremendous commitment to the wellbeing of his family, extended family, friends, colleagues and students - a human being, par excellent, with a fine combination of head and heart qualities, he was always ready to render a helping hand to anybody and everybody. I was lucky to have a friend in him who would provide me much needed emotional and moral support, whenever I was in some difficult situation. Alas! I no longer have a Dost Mohammad physically present to provide me that succor.

I met Prof. Dost Mohammad first time on 15 September 1969, when we attended the first lecture delivered by Late Prof. B D Sharma to our Batch of Masters Degree Programme in Economics at the University of Kashmir, Srinagar. During our M A Programme, we just remained Classmates and our friendship started only after I joined the Department as a Lecturer in March 1980, where he was already a Faculty member. Our friendship grew with such pace and intensity that it became exemplary in the University of Kashmir. During early 1980s, after leaving the University at around 4 PM, almost— always together, avoiding the company of anybody else, we would go straight to our favorite eating joint “Ahdoos” at Residency Road, We would have our choicest non-veg snacks and tea. ( Prof. Dost Mohammad was ferociously fond of non-veg food ..... for him vegetarian food was meaningless..... it is a sort of an irony that after the start of the turmoil in Kashmir, when we met a few years later in Delhi along with our dear friend Prof. M S Bhat, we had lunch at a “pure vegetarian” restaurant “Sona Rupa” in Connaught Place, because Prof. Dost Mohammad had given up non-veg food on medical advice for a couple of years).After spending an hour there, we would stroll along the usually secluded Bund and sometimes, Boulevard. During this period, we would talk and discuss anything under the sun. The only constraint to this extravaganza optimization exercise was that I had to catch the last bus going to my place Khrew at 8 PM from Dalgate. This was an era, when we would spend more than 10 hours of the day together. However, this trend expectedly slowed down after his marriage followed by mine a couple of years later and finally came to a grinding halt after I left the University of Kashmir in mid-June 1989. And, then the catastrophe in Kashmir fallowed, not allowing us to meet physically for a few years. But our love, affection, concern and sense of sacrifice for each other did not climb down. These latent variables, I believe, will remain intact till eternity!

We were in touch telephonically till two months back. His last words spoken to me echo in my mind .... These were too personal, not to be mentioned here. My only guilt is that, in spite of my best efforts, I could not meet him, when I visited Srinagar three weeks back. I console myself by learning that during the couple of days, I was in Srinagar, he was hospitalized and no visitors were allowed to meet him. It appears that our meeting was not destined.

Dear Dost, you were a firm believer in the benevolence of Almighty. Whenever we were in some difficulty, you would always argue that *GOD WILL HELP US AND INVARIABLY YOU WOULD COME OUT TO BE CORRECT.*

Rest in peace, my Dost. There is nothing to worry about. He will take good care of your near and dear ones!

***R L Bhat***