

Kazi Masum Akhtar

18 August, 1971

Kazi Masum Akhtar is a courageous educationist from Kolkata, widely recognized for promoting secular education, social reform and women's rights in his community. He passed from the college in 1993. As headmaster of the government-aided Talpukur Aara High Madrasa, he attempted to introduce patriotic and progressive changes — including teaching students the national anthem and encouraging girls' education — efforts that stirred opposition from radical elements. Despite numerous threats and brutal assaults, he continued to advocate for educational reform and social justice. He also worked extensively among the Muslim community to stop child marriages. In recognition of his steadfast commitment to education and social change, the Government of India honored him with the civilian award *Padma Shri* in 2020 under "Literature and Education." Kazi Masum Akhtar remains an emblem of bravery and conviction — a teacher who stood firm for secularism, equal opportunity and children's right to a broad-based education even under threat.

