

AN OBSESSION WITH PERFECTION
— A TRIBUTE

“Perfection is our goal, excellence will be tolerated” - J. Yahl



SHRI PARKASH LAL MALIK
24-11-1924 — 18-2-2007

Few men aspire to achieve heights of greatness, fewer still seek to achieve it scrupulously through honest means, even fewer are yet uncompromising in their standards meant to achieve perfection, yet fewer ensure that their principled work so delineated continues even after they have laid down the oars. Such a man was Shri P.L. Malik, head of the Eastern Book Company group, who passed away on February 18, 2007.

Time did not deter him for he had immense patience to learn and adapt, seasons did not matter for he could work in all climes and climates, adversity could not stop him for he had faith in his objectives, success and achievements could not

distract him for he had already set new goals for himself, and wealth could not spoil him for he had so few needs and wants. Indeed he was a man with a mission and a purpose.

On November 24, 1924 he was born in the small town of Sargodha in Punjab, now in Pakistan. Barely out of college, in 1942 he joined his elder brother Shri C.L. Malik in the business of distributing law books and journals at Lucknow. Came Independence and they saw the opportunity that free India could give and fashioned a purpose to be part of constructing a new and vibrant India. Law publishing was taken up in right earnest and that started an unending process of encouraging new authors to fill new needs. Enterprise and innovation imbued each new publication. Eastern Book Company became a hallmark for quality and reasonable price. Not only was perfection desirable in itself but what was keenly felt was a desire to give the legal fraternity works of the highest standard possible.

Realising the critical importance of accurate text of statutory law to the legal system, Shri P.L. Malik himself took up the task of preparing accurate and authentic compilations, most celebrated amongst which is *Industrial Law*, the Golden Jubilee 19th edition of which was released by him in 2004 and the next edition saw completion just before his demise. His other celebrated works include *Criminal Court Handbook*, *Law Relating to Weights and Measures*, *Customs Act, 1962*, *FERA*, *Arms and Explosives*, *Handbook of Electricity Laws*, *Labour Laws in U.P.*, etc. In every EBC publication he himself ensured accuracy of the text of statutory law. Painstaking attention to detail, and meticulous referencing and research of original sources to ensure authenticity formed the invisible underlying basis of his works. What was visible was equally pleasing to the user for the value and precision that lay in the arrangement and selection of the material. Not only did he enrich legal literature with his many works, but he enriched law publishing itself both by laying down the standard that all works had to meet thereafter and by providing a model for emulation.

To enable easy access to changes in statutory law, especially through subordinate legislation, he founded *Lucknow Law Times* in 1960 and *Current Central Legislation* in 1976. For accurate and prompt law reporting he founded *Supreme Court Cases* in 1969. Alongside, many excellent commentaries and text books for students were continuously published. The aim was to make excellent legal publications available at an affordable price. Together with his elder brother, Shri Chunni Lal Malik, he conceived EBC as an institution of legal research and law publishing of international standing. All this would have been quite impossible without the unflinching support and companionship of his beloved wife, Smt Janki Rani, who ever stood by him and with him.

He himself as a precept inspired his children and grandchildren to achieve the highest possible in excellence. Armed with the best of education and learning his eldest son Surendra Malik, LL.M (Columbia) took over the Editorial Section, while his second son Vijay Malik, LL.B, MBA (FMS, Delhi) took Production, Marketing and Distribution to new heights, and the youngest son Sumain Malik, MBA (IIM, Calcutta) modernised the organisation by introducing computers and created electronic publishing in law with the SCC OnLine range of products on CD Rom and the Internet. His grandsons have equally done him proud. Sumeet with an LL.M from Franklin Pierce after National Law School; Sudeep with an MA in law from Cambridge after graduating in Economics from St. Stephens; Raghunandan with an MBA from NUS, Singapore and Vanderbilt; Abhinandan currently at Toronto for an LL.M after NALSAR; and Karan still in school, are all set to ensure that the vision and dreams of Shri P.L. Malik continue to be realised in varied forms and hues.

His unassuming nature and humility touched one and all. For him his commitments mattered most, which saw him at his desk even a few days before his demise. His family and staff loved and respected him immensely for all the love, care and concern he showered upon them. For them he carried on

working relentlessly and tirelessly despite his debilitating Parkinsonism. Finally he bid adieu with a gentle, smiling and serene expression on his face, just the way he lived his life.

We salute him for all that he lived and worked for, and shall always remember and cherish him for all his qualities of head and heart, and would strive to live upto the rich legacy of his great personality.

In God's grace we seek peace for his soul and solace for all of us who cannot but miss him ever so much.
