Mrs Zubeida Dossal

By Prof Anita Ghulam Ali

Mrs Zubeida Dossal’s reputation always preceded her. Being one of the icons in Education and the Head of the Sindh Madressah’s Fatima Jinnah School for Girls; I used to hear how good she was. All whose lives she touched; could approach her anytime and discuss about everything and anything. She had no attitude problems. She was like an open book, always forthright and very powerful. Absolutely nobody, whether from the Government or any bigwig could stop her from saying what she thought was right. Above all she was very pleasant, especially in difficult circumstances.

As the Head of the Teachers’ Association, problems from colleges and high schools were brought to me. That is how I first met her. I started visiting her home and it was a place open to all. Among other things we would invariably talk about the Teachers’ Association and I began admiring her for her frankness.

I learnt Time Management from her; she would be doing her job but simultaneously be doing voluntary work in other organisations and institutions. Even when I went to her home; with twin daughters to manage and being very house proud, she had plenty of time to give. I was never made to feel I was encroaching on her time.

Her husband was always there for her and I could see the strong respect and love that she had for him. He gave impetus to do a lot of things.

Her love for children and their upbringing made her labour for perfection in writing stories for them. She took great trouble to research for her books. These books are now part of numerous libraries in different schools.

One particular occasion that comes to mind about Zubeida Dossal and the Habib Girls’ School was at the inception when she had the courage to believe and insisted that ‘normal’ Urdu, not the ‘easy’ Urdu, be taught even though the school was English medium. Later the Government followed suit.

Wherever she went she took her hard-work, her sincerity and her pleasant personality with her. I feel sorry we have not done it yet but people like Zubeida Dossal should have been put on a pedestal.