

Obituary

Prof. Dr. Khushnood Ahmed Siddiqui (1937-2009)



Prof. Dr. Khushnood Ahmed Siddiqui, Fellow of the Pakistan Academy of Sciences, breathed his last on March 18, 2009. He was HEC Eminent Research Scientist and Professor of Biotechnology, Genetic Engineering and Environment Sciences, University of Sindh, Jamshoro and President, International Association for Promotion of New Genetical Approaches to Crop Improvement, Tando Jam, Sindh, Pakistan. He was a world-renowned scientist who was active in contemporary Macrobiology and Microbiology, mainly involving Biodiversity, Biotechnology, Functional Genomics, Proteomics and Plant Biotechnology, Plant Breeding and Sustainable Agriculture. Following undergraduate education at the University of Sindh, Jamshoro, he proceeded to New Mexico from where he obtained M.Sc. degree in Plant Taxonomy. Later, he joined University of Reading, England from where he received Ph.D. degree in Cytogenetics in 1964. He did postdoctorate work in Plant Genetics, and Radiation Biology & Induced Mutagenesis, respectively, at National Research Council, Canada (1964-66), and Danish Atomic Energy Commission (1970-72).

Prof. Siddiqui was the Chief Research Coordinator, International Association for the Promotion of New Genetic Approaches to Crop Improvement (PANIGACI). He had the unique distinction of capturing the First D.Sc. in the New Millennium in 2001 from the University of Reading, England, for his Futuristic Visions and Revision of Paradigms of Information Technology connected with Environmental Issues and Efficient Sustainable Development of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Genetic

Engineering for 21st century. He was Member of Senate of Sindh Agriculture University, Tando Jam and also Member of Senate, University of Sindh, Jamshoro. He served Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission as Chief Scientist and Director, Atomic Energy Agricultural Research Centre, Tando Jam.

Prof. Dr. Khushnood Siddiqui was elected to the Fellowship/Membership of various prestigious Scientific Organizations. He was elected Member of Agricultural Institute of Canada in 1966. In 1967 he was elected Fellow of Linnean Society, London, Royal Horticultural Society, London, and British Society for Philosophy of Science, London. He received Norman Borlaug Award in 1968, Open Gold Medal, Pakistan Academy of Sciences (PAS) in 1988. He received, AFRC Underwood Award, U.K. in 1993, Commonwealth Science Council Award 1994, Al-Khwarizmi International Award by President, Islamic Republic of Iran 1995, TWNSO (Trieste Italy) International Award in Agriculture by President, Federal Republic of Brazil 1997, Chancellor / Governor of Sindh Award 1998, International Man of Millennium Award, Cambridge, England 1999. He was also an elected Member of the Kyoto Prize in Biological Sciences (Evolution, Behaviour, Ecology, Environment), Nominating Committee, the Inamori Foundation, Japan from 1999 until his death, World Food Prize Nominating Agency, USA from 2000 onwards, Pakistan Academy of Sciences (PAS) Golden Jubilee Commemorative Medal 2002, American Medal of Honour, USA, 2003 and Selected Nominator of the Royal Society of Glaxo Smith Kline Prize, 2005.

Prof. Siddiqui presented his work in International Symposia in Holland and Sweden in 1963, and up to 2007 participated in 60 International Symposia and Conferences. The scientific value of his publications can also be assessed by his International Citation Index (203) and Selected Utilization Index (502). Of more than 253 publications, over 250 have been published in front line, peer refereed journals such as *Hereditas*, *Euphytica*, *Canadian Journal of Genetics and Cytology (Genome)*, *Caryologia*, *Cytologia*, *Genetica Agraria*, *Environmental and Experimental Botany*, *Z. Pflanzenzuchtung and Naturwissenschaften* (in which Albert Einstein frequently published).

Dr. Siddiqui contributed Chapters in *Genetic Diversity in Plants*, Plenum Press New York, London 1977, *Biotechnology in Agriculture and Forestry*, Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Barcelona 1990. He also contributed a Chapter in *Frontiers in Biology: the Challenges of Biodiversity, Biotechnology and Sustainable Agriculture*, jointly published by International Union of Biological Sciences, Paris and

Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan. He successfully opened new trends in advanced research in Botany, Microbiology, Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering and was busy in organizing advanced research leading to Postdoctoral and D.Sc. programmes at the University of Sindh.

Professor Siddiqui was a very fine human being. He had a good sense of humor. He had excellent memory. He was a straightforward person, who never shied away from calling “a spade a spade”, and often impressed one as being blunt at times, though truthful in analyses of situations. He would always combine this with appropriate poetic recitations. He was a poet himself, and was very spontaneous in his poetic utterances.

The Fellows at the Pakistan Academy of Sciences remember him with fondness, and share the grief of his family members. May his soul repose peacefully in Jannat-ul-Firdaus (ameen).

Prof. Dr. M. A. Hafeez
Fellow, Pakistan Academy of Sciences