

## ***Obituary***

### **Prof. Dr. Syed Irtifaq Ali (1930-2021)**

Prof. Dr. Syed Irtifaq Ali was a renowned botanist, Fellow PAS, former Vice Chancellor of Karachi University (KU), and Professor Emeritus. Prof. Ali passed away on February 18, 2021, after a brief illness. He was born in Lucknow, India, in 1930, completed his matriculation from Allahabad in 1946. In 1950, he received his Bachelor of Science degree and Master's degree in botany in 1952 from Allahabad University and later migrated to Pakistan. He completed his Ph.D. in botany in 1958 and DSc in 1979 from the University of London.

Dr. Irtifaq Ali also worked as a Professor of botany at the University of Tripoli, Libya from 1972 to 1976. He was also the pioneer and co-editor of *Flora of Libya*. The distinguished professor joined KU in 1958 as a lecturer at its botany department and later served as its chairman. He continued to work at KU's Plant Conservation Centre till his death. The professor also served as the Director General of Dr. A.Q. Khan Institute of Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering and the dean of KU's science faculty (1981 to 1990).

He was a renowned top-ranking (plant) taxonomist in the region and considered an authority on the plants of Southeast Asia in general and Pakistan in particular. One of Prof Ali's greatest

contributions as a researcher was *The Flora of Pakistan*—the most comprehensive and authentic scientific work ever on Pakistan's flora. Initiated over four decades ago and completed in 2020, the book has 224 volumes

containing details of over 6,000 indigenous and commonly cultivated plants. He has contributed to the field of plant sciences at the national and international level and provided basic information on the plant wealth of Pakistan, which is widely used by phytochemists, pharmacists, ecologists, agriculturists, and foresters.

For his contribution and distinguished career, he was conferred with Sitara-e-Imtiaz in 1988 and honored with the Emeritus status in 2011. He was also awarded the title of the Higher Education Commission Distinguished National Professor in 2004. He will be missed by the PAS Fellows.

*May the departed soul rest in eternal peace.  
Aameen!*



