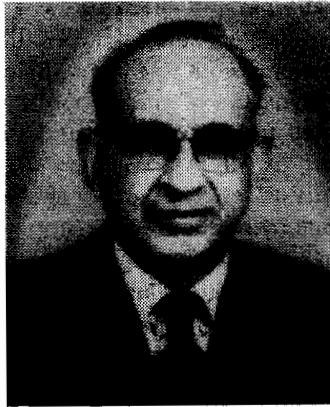


Shahid
Majeed

OBITUARY



**PROFESSOR MAJEED AHMAD
(1916-1987)**

Professor Majeed Ahmad was born on May 16, 1916 at Unnao in Lucknow, India. He received his school and college education in Lucknow and obtained M.Sc. degree from Lucknow University (India) in 1938 and Ph.D. degree in 1948 from the University of Cambridge, England.

Professor M. Ahmad joined the University of Dhaka on August 18, 1943 as a Demonstrator and was subsequently appointed as a Lecturer, Reader and then Professor of Botany. As a Professor and Head of the Department of Botany from 1955 till 1971, he worked zealously for imparting studies and carrying out researches in Plant Sciences on modern lines in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). In addition to revamping the syllabus of Botany at College and University levels, he placed emphasis on researches at the University level for which a University is recognized and reputed all over the world. No doubt, the credibility and image of Dhaka University as a seat of higher learning and research is entirely due to the efforts of dedicated teachers like him who devoted whole heartedly their life time in the dissemination of knowledge. His painstaking pursuit in researches for revealing the action of the genes (gene-master molecule of life made up of DNA, RNA or both) of yeast was so intense that as a biologist with God in his mind, he was probing the mysteries of nature, a frontier where religion and science complement one another.

Professor M. Ahmad received many academic distinctions, scholarships, fellowships, invitations and to deliver specialist lectures from almost all over the world. He was awarded Leader Specialist Grant by the State Department of the USA (1962) and was a guest scientist of the Govt. of France at Pasteur Research Institute in Paris (1964). He received Nuffield Foundation Fellowship of the United Kingdom (1967-68), Senior Scientist Fellowship of US-National Science Foundation (1969-70) and was made member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He was invited as a Fellow Commoner Churchill College, University of Cambridge (1972), UNESCO Consultant (1974), a Senior visiting Fellow at the University of Belfast, N. Ireland (1976), a Fellow of Pakistan Academy of Sciences and was a recipient of Open Gold Medal in Biological Sciences in 1973.

Professor M. Ahmad visited many research laboratories, attended seminars, conferences and symposia in many parts of the world as a delegate from Pakistan. The noteworthy among those being a visit to the Universities and Research Institutes in Denmark (1948), CENTO Conference on teaching of Science in Tehran (1963), presentation of his researches on the genetics of yeast at the Xth International Botanical Congress in Edinburgh (1964) and for delivering lectures at International Congress on Science teaching and Economic growth in Senegal (1965).

Professor Majeed Ahmad was selected on national basis to be appointed Professor and Director, National Institute of Biology, University of Islamabad in 1971 where he continued as Professor and Chairman, Biology Department till 1976. He was made Professor Emeritus, Islamabad University (Quaid-e-Azam University) on retirement.

Professor Ahmad's main interest of study and research was in the structure and regulation of gene action in yeast (*Saccharomyces* spp.). He also worked extensively on the gene controlling bio-chemical reactions and bio-synthesis of Leu-2 & 3, Trp-1,2,3,4 & 5 and Lysine-3,4 & 5 of *Neurospora crassa*. He contributed over 100 research papers and scientific articles in reputed scientific journals of the world and in scientific moots held from time to time.

As an Administrator of Botanic Garden, Dhaka University, he took keen interest in tree plantation, floriculture and in Botanical Excursions. His only hobby was playing Lawn tennis and he was seen riding a bicycle to and from Dhaka Club in the evenings for this purpose though he had a car at his disposal. He was very kind and courteous to his students and staff members and no one heard any thing against him throughout his professional career.

Professor M. Ahmad was one of the founder members, one of the Vice -Presidents of Pakistan Botanical Society and a member of the Editorial Committee of Pakistan Journal of Botany (1969). He was elected as the President of Pakistan Botanical Society in 1973.

Professor Majeed Ahmad died on 5th May 1987 in London. His amiable disposition and manner was marked by the gentility of behaviour and calmness of temper. He left behind his wife, a son and a daughter, many relatives and innumerable students now present all over the world on important positions to mourn his death. May Allah shower the best of blessings on the departed soul and may his soul rest in eternal peace. Ameen.

(M. JALALUDDIN)