

OBITUARY



**Prof. Dr. Surayya Khatoon
(1957-2020)**

We belong to ALLAH and to Him we shall return!

It is with deep sorrow to share the news that Prof. Dr. Surayya Khatoon (January 21, 1957 – December 06, 2020), Professor of Botany, and an eminent Taxonomist; University of Karachi is no longer with us. Her death is a great loss to the scientific community of Pakistan as well as International community of Plant Taxonomists.

Prof. Dr. Surayya Khatoon was a leading scientist and scholar in the field of Taxonomy especially Cyto-taxonomy from Pakistan. She had a long and brilliant service in teaching and research at University of Karachi. She served the Department of Botany for long 37 years with utmost dedication and enthusiasm. She played a key role in building and strengthening the Department's role in international collaborations and promoting international scientific engagement, particularly at the regional level.

Dr. Surayya had an excellent, admirable academic record, throughout 1st division in her academics. She completed her B. Sc (Hons.) with 1st position and M. Sc. in Plant Taxonomy with position and obtained the degree in 1978 from Department of Botany, University of Karachi.

Dr. Surayya joined Department of Botany and started her career as a Full-Time Cooperative teacher in 1981 and appointed as regular faculty member as Lecturer in October 1982, she completed her Ph. D. under supervision of Prof. Dr. S. I. Ali in 1992. She was upgraded to Full Professor in January 2001, elevated to chairperson of department of Botany (October 2008 – September 2011). She was founder in-charge of Department of Agriculture (January 2004 to June 2006). She also served as secretary Landscape and gardening council (2004 – 2005) and finally retired on January, 2017 after long, professional and meaningful service.

She represented Pakistan in various meetings, conferences seminars and symposia in the field of Plant Taxonomy and delivered several lectures on national and International level and attended International symposia, received national and International Trainings in Taxonomy by visiting various research institutions. She was a regular member of various national and international societies such as Life member, Pakistan Botanical Society and Members, International Association of Plant Taxonomy (IAPT – Vienna), The Botanical Society of America (St. Louis, MO), Botanic Gardens Conservation International (Richmond, Surrey), The American Society of Plant Taxonomists (Laramie, WY) and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF – Pakistan), 1995 - 2003

Dr. Surayya completed 13 projects funded by University of Karachi whereas 01 Project was sponsored by World Wide Fund (WWF), Pakistan.

Her competent supervision produced 08 Ph.D. scholars and 13 M. Sc. research thesis/projects. Moreover, various BS project theses were produced; she designed and introduced 08 new courses in department of Botany. She was a founder of Plant biodiversity in the university and in the country as well. She contributed in the preparation of the Biodiversity Action Plan of Pakistan, a number of popular articles and letters to the editor in national newspapers and magazines for creating general awareness in people about biodiversity and environment issues. She delivered popular lectures and talks on biodiversity and importance of natural flora at various forums (Horticultural Society of Pakistan, Karachi 1996, Bazm-e-Sciency Adab, Karachi 1997, Radio Pakistan, Karachi 1998, Amateurs Gardeners Club, Karachi 1999, Pakistan Television 2001, Rotary Club of Pakistan, Karachi 2004); Member, Panel of experts in

the Selection Board of Cohort – 8 trainees, LEAD – Pakistan, Karachi 1999; Prepared report on “Invasive Species” for IUCN-Pakistan, 2000

She published two books, reviewed several books and articles, contributed in Flora of Pakistan and published dozens of research papers in national and internationally reputed scientific journals. Her outstanding performance is distinguished by her continued commitment to excellence in science, research and academic leadership.

May Allah Almighty bless the departed soul through His infinite mercy with eternal peace and give courage and fortitude to her family, friends and the scientific community to bear this irreparable loss. Ameen.

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