

Obituary



Professor Muhammad Abdul Aziz Khan
(1931 - 2012)

Professor Dr. Muhammad Abdul Aziz Khan, a reputed botanist and Fellow of the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences passed away on March 28, 2012 at Ibrahim Cardiac Hospital, after illness, Dhaka due to old age complications. He was born in Ramnagar, P.S. Faridpur, Dist. Pabna in February, 1931 in a respectable Muslim family.

Prof. Abdul Aziz Khan had his early education in Pabna. He obtained M.Sc. in Botany in 1952 from the Dhaka University and Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge, England under Colombo Plan Scholarship in 1964. In 1977, he obtained Commonwealth Academic Staff Fellowship and conducted higher research in the Botany Department of St. Andrews University, Scotland, United Kingdom.

Dr. Khan joined the Department of Botany, Dhaka University as a Research Assistant in 1953 and became a Lecturer in 1955. From 1964 to 1969 he was Reader in Botany, DU. In 1974 he joined the Chittagong University, Department of Botany as Professor and Founder Chairman. He was Vice-Chancellor, Chittagong University from 1981 to 1985. Before joining as VC he worked as Dean, Faculty of Sciences, Chittagong University from 1980 to 1981. He also worked as Vice-President of Chittagong University Rural Development Programmer, a horticultural and agricultural programme of the University (1976-1981). He initiated the establishment of the Chittagong University Botanical Garden of about 300 acres of hilly land.

Professor Abdul Aziz Khan's research fields included plant metabolism, physiological ecology, horticulture and agronomy. He published 41 research papers in leading national and foreign journals. He was author of two text books and wrote a number of articles on the problems of higher education, research and agriculture of the developing countries. He supervised many M.Sc., M.Phil. and Ph.D. research students. Professor Khan initiated an NGO named Plantation Club Bangladesh (PCB) in the year 1996 in association with the teachers of the Chittagong University to stop forest destruction and decline of the forests due to population increase and ruthless damage of the homesteads forest areas. This club involved and encouraged students and younger groups in programmes of nursery making, transplantation and caring of the transplanted plants in the campus and homesteads.

Professor Khan was a Life member, Bangladesh Botanical Society; Life member of the Bangladesh Association for the Advancement of Science; President of the Botanical Society (1991-1992) and

Founder President of Bangladesh Biggani Samiti (1993-1997). He became a Fellow of the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences in 1992. On special invitation by Australia and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Sciences (ANZAAS), he attended a Science Conference held in Perth (Australia) in 1973. As Vice-Chancellor, he participated conferences and meetings of the Vice-Chancellors Association of Commonwealth Countries in UK and West Indies in 1983 and 1984. He acted as Chairman of Bangladesh Association of Universities (BAU).

Professor Abdul Aziz Khan served as a Member of the Committee for developing a new Department of Forestry and Wood Technology in Khulna University. He was a member of Session Jam Removal Committee set up by the Ministry of Education, Government of Bangladesh. He acted as an expert of Selection Committee of the Bangladesh Tea Board. He presented scientific and technical papers in various national and international seminars, academy meetings and conferences.

In the sad demise of Professor Abdul Aziz Khan, the country lost a dedicated administrator, academician and a scientist, and the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences lost a distinguished Fellow. He was a man of pleasing personality. May the Almighty Allah give courage to the bereaved family to bear the loss with fortitude and grant his departed soul eternal peace in *Jannat*. Amen.

– **Quazi Abdul Fattah**