

Obituary



National Professor Dr. MR Khan
(1928-2016)

Internationally reputed Paediatrician and distinguished Fellow of the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences, National Professor Mohammad Rafi Khan popularly known as MR Khan passed away on Saturday, 05 November 2016 in the Central Hospital, Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

Professor M R Khan was born on 1st August, 1928 in a respectable Muslim family. His father Al Haj Abdul Bari Khan was renowned for his voluntary social services. His mother Zaira Khanam was also a helping hand for the destitute and woman-folk in Satkhira.

Dr. Khan was a student of Calcutta Presidency College as a Mohsin Scholar. He graduated (MBBS) from Calcutta Medical College in 1952. He got his post graduation degrees viz. DTM&H (Edinburgh, 1957), DCH (London, 1957), MRCP (Edinburgh, 1962), FCPS (Bangladesh, 1974), FRCP (Edinburgh, 1978). In 2011 he obtained a Ph.D. degree from BSMMU.

Dr. M. R. Khan was an Associate Prof. of Medicine, Dhaka Medical College, 1963-64; Associate Prof. of Paediatrics, Rajshahi Medical College, 1964-69; Associate Prof. of Paediatrics, Dhaka Medical College, 1969-70; Prof. of Paediatrics, Dhaka Medical College, 1970-73; Prof. & Joint Director, Institute of Postgraduate Medicine & Research (IPGM&R), 1973-88. He was Prof. of Paediatrics and Director, Dhaka Shishu (children) Hospital, 1978-79. He retired from Public services in August, 1988. He is the Founder President of Bangladesh Paediatric Association and has been rightly called "Father of Paediatrics in Bangladesh". He was Senior Visiting Professor at ICDDR,B since 1989; Professor and Founder Director and Chairman at the Institute of Child Health and Shishu Hospital, Mirpur, Dhaka, Bangladesh. He was the Vice-Chairman, Jatiya Samaj Kalyan Parishad of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Chairman of Polio Eradication Certification Committee of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It may be mentioned here that he first introduced vaccines against Polio,

Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus in Bangladesh in January, 1965 using 'Quatro Virelon' a combined vaccine, produced by the Hoechst.

A number of social voluntary development organizations have been established by Professor Khan. Among those are (1). Shishu Sasthya Foundation, Bangladesh: It was established in 1983, through which some 0.5 million women and children are receiving direct services in the field of health, nutrition, education, micro credit, environment etc through its field and centre-based programme. Under this organization, a number of institutions have been established, such as (a) Shishu Hospital (ICH-SH), Mirpur, Dhaka: Established in 1995. (b) Institute of Child Health, Mirpur, Dhaka: Since 2006, the institute is conducting postgraduate diploma course in child health i.e. DCH. (c) Institute of Nursing, Mirpur, Dhaka: Established in 2008 to provide diploma in nursing to about 20 students each year, aimed to fill-up the gaps in nursing services in the country. (d) Shishu Hospital, Jessore: A 50-bed children Hospital established in 2000. (e) Vocational Training Centre (VTC), Satkhira: Each year some 165 working children are being graduated in 8 vocational trade courses viz. Electrical, Turning, Carpentry, Dressmaking and Light Engine, Audio Visual, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration and Computer courses since 2000. (f) Support Centre for under privileged children in Satkhira: To provide microcredit, health and nutrition- supported non-formal functional education, the centre was established in 1995. He established a number of educational institutions including Rasulpur Secondary School and Medical College for Women, and Hospital College, Uttara, Dhaka. This first Women Medical College in the country was established in 1992. Dr. Khan established hospitals including Nebedita Nursing Home, Dhaka and Central Hospital Ltd. Dhaka- one of the largest & modern hospitals in the private sector.

With all his pensions and gratuity fund after his retirement from public service, Dr. Khan established this Trust. Through this, trust assistance is being provided to different mosques, schools, hospitals and a number of destitute women & children in Satkhira and other places as well as different social welfare activities. This Trust Fund is awarding Gold Medal to the individuals for their outstanding contribution in the field of social and economic development in the country. Some of the awardees are Dr. Muhammad Yunus, Grameen Bank; Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, BRAC; Ms Velori Taylor, CRP; Ms. Angela Gomez, Banchte Shekha; Dr. Sultana Zaman, Kalyani Foundation and Late Tahera Kabir. Shishu Bandhu Gold Medal (In the name of National Prof. M. R. Khan) has been given to Prof. Nazmun Nahar, a well known paediatrician and President BCPS.

For outstanding social work and contribution to child health, Prof. Khan has been awarded the following: 1986 Gold Medal by Satkhira Children Hospital; 1992 Gold Medal by Sher-E-Bangla Jatiyo Smrity Sangsad; 1993 Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam National Award and Gold Medal; 1993 Moulana Tarko Baghis Gold Medal Award; 1994 Moulana Bhashani Gold Medal; 1995 Ex Chief Minister Abu Hossain Sarker National Award and Gold Medal; 1997 Poet Sorojine Naidu Gold Medal; 1998 Khan Bahadur Ahsanullah Gold Medal; 1999 March, Ibn Sina Gold

Medal; 1999 Gold Medal by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Govt. of Peoples Republic of Bangladesh; 2006 Gold Medal by-“DHARA” a Social & Cultural Organization in Bangladesh; 2006 Gold Medal by Association of Physician Bangladesh; 2008 Sandoz Gold Medal for valuable contribution in health sector; 2009 Ekushey Gold Medal Award for Social Service; and 2011 Gold Medal from Bangladesh Academy of Sciences.

Prof. Khan’s Biography has been included in the International WHO is WHO of Intellectuals (7th edition, 1987) published by Biographical Centre (IBC) Cambridge, U.K; 1990-award by Satkhira Press Club; 1991-award by Satkhira Jono Samity; 1991-award by Association of Paediatrics from South East Asia Region, Manila; 1992-award by World Astrological Society; 1994, 2006 award by Bangladesh Paediatric Association; 1995-award by Government of Bangladesh as National Professor; 2006-Nawab Salimullah Award; 2007-Awarded Scholar of the Year, 2007 by Non Resident Bangladeshi (NRB); 2008- award by Destiny.

About 38 research work of Professor Khan has been published in different Scientific Journals. He is author and co-author of 9 Academic and popular books on child health.

Professor Dr. M.R. Khan and his wife Mrs. Anwara Khan is blessed with only one daughter Dr. Mandy Karim. Dr. M R Khan is survived by his only daughter Dr. Mandy Karim, family and friends.

In his sad demise, the Academy lost a valued fellow scientist and the nation a great son. The Fellows of the Academy of Sciences expressed heartfelt sympathy to the members of his bereaved family. We pray to the Almighty Allah, Most Gracious and Most Merciful, to grant eternal peace to the departed soul and to give strength and courage to the members of his family to bear the loss with fortitude. *Amen.*

– KM Sultanul Aziz