

PROF. DR. SHAHINA FAYYAZ
(1959-2020)

It is with intense feeling of grief to write that March 20, 2020 was the fateful day when my very dear family friend, long standing professional colleague and an eminent Nematologist of Pakistan, Meritorious Professor Dr. Shahina Fayyaz breathed her last and left for her eternal abode- *إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ*, 'innā li-llāhi wa-'inna 'ilayhi rāji'ūn [*Indeed, to God we belong and to Him we shall return*]! She was suffering from a lung ailment for a few months.



Professor Shahina Fayyaz was born on April 4, 1959 in Karachi-Pakistan. She served the National Nematological Research Centre (NNRC) for long 38 years with utmost dedication and enthusiasm. She played a key role in developing and strengthening the NNRC which led to its recognition by the FAO-UN as the Centre of Excellence in Nematode Taxonomy in the Near East Region in 1992. The Centre gained ISO Certification 9001:2015 for Diagnostic Services and Educational Programs in Nematology under her leadership.

Dr. Shahina did her M. Sc. (Plant Pathology) in 1980 from the Dept of Botany, University of Karachi, Pakistan and joined the NNRC's original team as Research Fellow in 1981. She was appointed as Research Officer in the PL-480 project in 1982 and was selected as Scientific Officer in the Centre in 1988. She earned her Ph. D. from the University of Karachi in 1989 under the supervision of Dr. M. A. Maqbool. Shahina became Senior Scientific Officer in 2000 and began to lead the Centre as In-charge in 2002 after the retirement of her mentor/Director, Dr. Maqbool; she was appointed as Director of NNRC in 2003. In 2009, she was appointed as full professor and in recognition of her contributions, she was elevated as Meritorious Professor in 2013. She retired as Director of NNRC and as an accomplished professional nematologist on April 3, 2019, though continued supervision of her Ph.D. students till her death.

Dr. Shahina Fayyaz had established herself as very accomplished researcher and had won & undertaken 33 research projects as Principal Investigator (20 projects) and as Co-PI (13 projects) funded by various agencies like; International Foundation for Science (IFS), Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF), Pakistan Agricultural Research Council- (PARC), Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan and World Wide Fund for Nature, Pakistan (WWF-P). She also won the European Commission's post-doctoral fellowship for research at CAB International labs at St. Albans in the United Kingdom. She pioneered research on entomopathogenic nematodes (EPN) in Pakistan and added a state of the art EPN laboratory at the NNRC. She obtained a US patent and 17 Pakistan national industrial patents on EPN techniques and EPN use as bio-pesticides. She published over 200 research papers in peer reviewed journals of international repute; besides numerous books, booklets and proceedings. Professor Shahina had been a leader and organizer of various conferences and capacity building workshops in the field of Plant and Insect Nematology. Prof. Shahina was the Secretary General of Pakistan Society of Nematologists (PSN) and Managing Editor of Pakistan Journal of Nematology (PJN) published by PSN till her departure. She was the winner of the competitive "Dr. Z. A. Hashmi R&D Gold Medal" of Pakistan Science Foundation in 2013 and also served as Member of the Technical Committees and Board of Trustees of the Foundation.

Her rather early departure from this world is a great loss for all of us- her friends, colleagues & students, farmers and anyone who has had a privilege of knowing her. But above all, the greatest loss is to her husband Engr. Bilal Ahmed, her son Mr. M. Rafe Bilal (who is still pursuing his bachelor degree) and her siblings, who we all sympathize with. For any condolence messages, her husband and/or son can be reached on the email address of Prof. Shahina: shahinafayyaz@gmail.com with a copy to me on manzoorhsoomro@gmail.com please. Her family can also be reached via Cell No. +92 333 2316 79.

May God bless the departed soul in heavens and rest her in peace. Aameen!

Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro
President PSN/ Chief Editor, Pakistan Journal of Nematology (PJN)