



## Obituary

### Dr. G.M. Khattak (1924-2012)



December 13, 2012 brought the sad news of the demise of Dr. G.M. Khattak, one of Pakistan's most respected intellectuals, natural scientists, and educationists. Dr. Khattak belonged to a respectable family of Lachi in the district of Kohat, KP. He was born on January 3, 1924, at Nushki, Balochistan, where his father was serving as a Police officer.

Dr. Khattak obtained BSc in 1943 from Islamia College, Peshawar, which was affiliated to the Punjab University then. He joined the Royal Indian Navy, but later on resigned and took admission in Aligarh Muslim University in law. Thereafter, he joined the Indian Forest Service and completed training at Dehra Dune. After partition, he joined the Department of Forestry in Pakistan and served in Balochistan for several years.

Dr. Khattak joined Pakistan Forest Institute, Peshawar, in 1952, and obtained MS (1966) & PhD (1967) in Forestry from Michigan State University, USA. He served the Institute in different capacities, including Chief Conservator of Forests, and was raised to the position of Director General. He continued serving as such until 1981, except for a short break (1975-76) when he served as Vice Chancellor of the University of Peshawar. He was appointed as Vice Chancellor of the University of Agriculture, Peshawar, for two terms, i.e., 1981–1983 and 1985–1989. In between (1983-85), he

served as Chairman, University Grants Commission of Pakistan. During his second term as Vice Chancellor of University of Agriculture, in 1986 he earned the mega-project TIPAN (Transformation and Integration of Provincial Agricultural Network), jointly sponsored by USAID and Government of Pakistan. In addition to the huge infrastructure development, more than 120 scientists were sent to US for PhD and MS degrees and nine text books on various subjects of agricultural sciences were published under TIPAN.

Dr. Khattak was also engaged for many years (1998-2012) as a Consultant, Sustainable Development of Renewable Resources. As Advisor IUCN, he framed the 'Sarhad Conservation Strategy'. Additionally, he remained a member of the governing bodies of many institutions. He was elected to Fellowship of the Pakistan Academy of Sciences in 1977. His services for higher education, natural sciences (especially Forestry) and environmental conservation were acknowledged by the Government of Pakistan through the award of *Sitara-i-Imtiaz* (2001).

Dr. Khattak was buried in the graveyard of the University of Agriculture, Peshawar. He has left behind a widow, a son and two daughters.

The legacy of Dr. Khattak will remain a source of inspiration for scientists in Pakistan. He was a noble scholar endowed with unusual characteristics, a man of lofty principles and high moral values. May his soul rest in peace! *Ameen*.

**Prof. Dr. M. Qasim Jan**