

In Memoriam

A tribute to Prof. M. Naseer Khan, S.I.

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Prof. M. Naseer Khan, S.I.—a life dedicated to science and education (1941–2006)

Prof. Khan was born in a remote mountain village of the North-West Frontier Province, Pakistan. His father, Haji Waris Khan, was a soldier in the Pathan regiment of the WW2 allied forces. It was his mother who instilled the value of education and hard work, ensuring that he and his brothers continued their further education.

His struggle and success cannot be captured in words. He showed what can be achieved by ability, determination and hard work.

Prof. Khan had a distinguished academic career with a M.Sc. from Pakistan and M.Tech., Ph.D. and D.Sc. from the UK. Although he was a Physicist, much of his work on semiconductors and superconductors had a strong Materials Science focus and theme. Out of 150 publications, almost 40 were published in this journal alone.

He received numerous national and international awards from the scientific community and the Government of Pakistan. He was a Fellow of the Institute of Physics and the Institute of Electrical Engineers, a member of numerous executive committees, including the Pakistan Engineering Council, and chairman of the United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP). He was ranked as the most productive scientist in Pakistan in the area of Engineering Sciences (source - Pakistan Council for Science and Technology, 2005). This is particularly impressive as he maintained his research group and activities, while serving as a Vice-Chancellor.

Prof. Khan's professional career was equally distinguished. The early and mid-years of his career in academia were spent in the UK, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. During this period, he authored a book on Thermodynamics, which is now the standard course text in many Universities.

He served as Rector and Professor at the GIK Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology, Pakistan. He then took up the position of Vice-Chancellor at the BZ University, Pakistan. He expanded the scope of scientific and technical collaboration, and played a key role in promoting excellence and high standards in every institution with which he was associated.

On 10th July, 2006, Prof. Khan passed away in a tragic airplane crash in Multan, Pakistan. He was en-route to Islamabad for a meeting with the Higher Education Commission (HEC). This was a profound loss for his family, academic colleagues and all those who knew him.

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Prof. Khan was an excellent example of a good scholar and a good human being. All those who knew him are better people for having him as an example in their lives.

“If I have seen further than others, it is because I have stood in the company of giants”. My father, Prof. Mohammad Naseer Khan, was a giant. May God grant him eternal peace.