



Prof. Syed Aslam
MBBS, FRCP, FACC, FCPS

**Prof. Syed Aslam MBBS, FRCP, FACC, FCPS
(1928-2018)**

By Syed Ahmad Asghar

Professor Dr. Syed Aslam an eminent cardiologist and founder member of National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases died of aspirative pneumonia on Monday July 9th, 2018 at the age of ninety years. May Allah Almighty rest the departed soul in eternal Peace. Ameen.

Syed Aslam was born in Tonk, Rajasthan in undivided India. He passed his intermediate from Aligarh Muslim University and graduated from King Edward Medical College Lahore in 1954. He started his career as a medical officer and later had his specialist training in medicine and cardiology in the United Kingdom. He secured Membership of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCP) from Edinburgh in 1968, and was awarded Fellowship of the same college (FRCP) in 1983. He was also awarded Fellowship of the American College of Cardiology (FACC). He was a life member of the Pakistan Medical Association; of the Pakistan Cardiac Society and Pakistan Hypertension League

On return from the U.K. in 1969, he joined the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, Karachi the premier teaching hospital of Pakistan. When the cardiology department shifted to NICVD in its new premises he remained there till his retirement.

Professor Dr. Syed Aslam was one of the founding members of the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD). He contributed a great deal to the promotion and development of cardiology in Pakistan, the NICVD made tremendous progress and for many years, it was the only tertiary cardiac centre in the country which attracted cardiac patients from all over Pakistan.

Under the guidance and leadership of Maj. Gen. (R) Shaukat Ali Syed he helped recruit and train a well trained team of cardiac physicians to run and manage, the NICVD providing state of the art and free of cost cardiac care.

Prof. Syed Aslam retired from NICVD after a distinguished service in 1991. He then joined the Liaquat National Hospital Karachi and completed his term as Head of the cardiology department. He continued to practice for some time at his clinic, but was spending more time in medical writings in Urdu, he was leading a quiet life keeping, himself busy. God Almighty had blessed him with numerous qualities of head and heart. He was very quiet, humble, gentleman who was respected by his patients as well as his professional colleagues. He loved Urdu literature, and had respect for his own heritage and traditions.. He was a very kind hearted physician who earned his patients' lifelong love and respect.

His medical career spanned over six decades. He practiced medicine till he reached the age of 86. He had a passion for his profession. He was a lifelong learner and regularly collected and studied many books on medicine, history, religion, philosophy, politics and literature. He deeply respected and admired those who valued knowledge, His library was in fact the place where he enjoyed most. It was very rare to see him without a book or a newspaper in his hand. He used to carry a pile of books with him to his clinic.

For the last forty five years he contributed more than one thousand articles related to medicine and cardiology and allied topics in Urdu in different magazines and newspapers of the country for public health education and awareness. He had a passion to educate the masses and to create awareness in the prevention of diseases. He wrote his first book *Qalb* 'in 1982 which were followed by *Jism O jan*, *Ehtiyat*, *Ghiza Tandrusti*, *Sheeraza e Dil*, *Sehat Sab ke liye*, and *Diabetes* all in Urdu. His medical dictionary, his last work, is currently under publication.

He abhorred any publicity and praise. For many years he used to write articles in a leading Urdu daily, using the name

Dr. Syed, He was a self-effacing and unassuming person given to very simple living; he paid little attention to his attire, besides his family two things were very important for him, his patients and his writings. He would make sure to see the patient the same day, there was no tomorrow as regards the patient.

Prof. Syed Aslam was a thorough gentleman. He leaves behind a large number of relatives, friends and well-wishers to mourn his death. May his soul rest in eternal peace!

Condolence meeting by PHL: Pakistan Hypertension League organized a condolence meeting on Saturday July 21st 2018 at PHL office. It was chaired by Prof. Syed Hamid Shafqat another distinguished cardiologist and a colleague of late Prof. Syed Aslam. Others who were present on this occasion included Prof. M.Ishaq, Prof. Asal Khan Tareen, Prof. Mansoor Ahmad, Dr. Najma Patel, Dr. Tariq Ashraf, Prof. Ishtiaq Rasul, Dr. Asad Abbas, Mr.Shaukat Ali Jawaid and others.

Speaking at the occasion Prof. S. H. Shafqat said that late Syed Aslam graduated from King Edward Medical College while I was a graduate of DMC. We both did MRCP and returned to Pakistan and got a job at JPMC in August 1961. At that time there used to be nine Resident Medical Officers and we had to do everything as there was no proper cardiology ward. The pay of RMO in those days was just Rs. 300/- and since we had done MRCP we got the maximum pay of Rs. 450/- A Central Heart Clinic was established at JPMC in 1952. When the then PM of Pakistan fell sick in East Pakistan, a cardiologist had to be called from Calcutta to examine him, that is how the Government of Pakistan realized that they need to establish a cardiac center in the country. Col.M.H. Shah was asked by the Government to help establish a first class cardiac center at which he said that it is possible but for that we will have to appoint people on merit. The government agreed and both Dr.Aslam and I were selected through the Federal Public Service Commission as Assistant Professor. We were interviewed by late Col. M.H.Shah and Dr. A.R. Piracha.

Though we both qualified the same year but I was a little senior to late Syed Aslam in service. After the death of Dr. Qasim, Prof. Shaukat Ali Syed was appointed to head the cardiac center. I and Dr. Aslam worked as RMO for a very long time before we were selected as Assistant Professors. Late Dr. Syed Aslam, had a great command and love for Urdu language and when after the establishment of NICVD, we were shifted here, Dr. Aslam continued to write in Urdu and published numerous books with the objective to educate the patients. He wished that the patient should be educated in good health habits as well as how to use healthy diet. He also used to spend lot of time with the patients to educate them. In those days the Medical Officers used to be very dedicated and since Dr. Aslam used to live in the hospital, he was always called when there was some cardiac emergency. Patients were always very grateful. Our parents never said anything bad about Pakistan hence we all came back to serve our own country.

Prof. Ishtiaq Rasul, Dr. Najma Patel and Prof. Ishaq also paid rich tribute to late Dr. Syed Aslam and admired his simple living style, simple dress, his good clinical manners while examining the patients and looking after the patients even during night rounds in NICVD in the initial days. It was further stated that in those days, NICVD had a very small but highly dedicated and devoted faculty which worked hard to build the image of this institution as a center of excellence in cardiac care. Late Dr. Syed Aslam also played a great role in it being one of the founder members. The good moral values and clinical skills which these devoted physicians in those days carried should be promoted. They were part of the excellent teachers that we had.

Later Fateha was offered for the departed soul. May Allah Almighty rest the departed soul in Peace? *Ameen.*

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