

OBITUARY

Bravo Raja Sahib

(1923-2010)



On Friday May 7th 2010 Raja Mumtaz Quli Khan passed away peacefully at his home in Lahore. Physically debilitated but mentally active and alert till his death. His death is most acutely felt by his family but poignantly experienced by all with whom he was associated as he was deeply admired by his students, patients, colleagues and friends. In him we have lost a giant in ophthalmology and the father of Ophthalmological Society of Pakistan. His sad demise marks the end of an era.

It is difficult to adequately document and narrate the characteristics and qualities which made him such a dedicated teacher, organizer and most of all a great friend known as Raja Sahib to all of us. He was an inspiration to his colleagues, to his students and children of his students who ultimately became his students.

Raja Sahib was born in a wealthy, land owning family in a remote village of Gadari near Jehlum on July 16th 1923. He went to a local school which was a few miles from his village and he used to walk to school as there were no roads in that area, although with his personal effort and influence he got a road built but many years after leaving school when he had become Raja Sahib. Did metric in 1938 and B.Sc. from F.C College Lahore in 1943 and joined Galancy Medical College Amritser (Pre-partition) and after creation of Pakistan joined K.E. Medical College Lahore. After completing his MBBS in 1948 from KEMC he did his house job with Prof. Ramzan Ali Syed and then went to England and did his FRCS in 1953 and came back to join his alma mater in 1956-57 as an Assistant Professor and he retired from the same institution in 1983. He also served at FJMC and PGMI (As Professor of Ophthalmology) and was Medical Director, LRBT till his death.

Raja Sb. established the ophthalmological society almost single handedly in 1957 which has branches all over the country now. His efforts were instrumental in establishing the Institute of Ophthalmology Lahore and Al Shifa Trust Eye Hospital Islamabad and certainly none of these would have been possible without his endurance and persistence. Pakistan Journal of Ophthalmology was started in 1984 at Lahore and, he was the pioneer Chief Editor. He had been President Ophthalmological Society of Pakistan and was patron of Lahore Branch till his death.

Man of his caliber could not have gone un noticed and same was true for him. He received Nuffield Traveling Scholarship for one year advanced training in UK. He was awarded the President of Pakistan Ramzan Ali Syed gold medal in 1986 for his meritorious services. He was Secretary, Surgeons' Society Lahore branch. He received the distinguished services award from APAO in 1981 for outstanding services in Prevention of Blindness.

He was elected Vice President APAO 1974-84 and was President APAO Congress Pakistan 1979.

He was chief guest and guest of honor at various congresses held in different parts of Pakistan. Life member Oxford Congress and also life member PMA Lahore.

Perhaps not known to many people he had won medals and certificates in sports including Javelin Throw, Basket ball, Weightlifting, Body building, and Volley Ball, record holder in some sports at Glancy Medical College Amritsar.

Raja Sb had one brother and one sister but unfortunately both died in their early childhood and being the sole survivor of the family he inherited all the land holdings. But this was to be the only inheritance, as unlike most land owners he was more interested in helping others and he did so by generously donating his inheritance and his earnings to people in need.

He established a girls high school at his village and donated generously towards libraries, schools, Mosques and other charities. He helped post graduating doctors as well as people in his village so that financial constraints could not become a hurdle to progress for people around him. Before his demise he was very concerned about Raja Mumtaz Trust, Eye society and scholarships that he had started for needy and deserving.

Many highly placed government officials and wealthy businessmen used to come to Raja Sb for treatment of their eye problems and along with the prescription each one received an earful of requests for betterment of the society and profession, for establishment of new Institutes and Hospitals for the needy poor people. He never asked anything for himself.

When his friends, colleagues, students and patients gathered at KEMU hall to pray for his departed soul every word spoken was about his honesty, integrity, dedication commitment to profession and his untiring struggle to help those who are in need. He was a good man. He really lived his life and he will long be remembered by everybody who ever came across him.

He is survived by his caring wife, a loving adopted daughter and two lovely grandsons. May Allah bless his soul in heavens, and give perseverance to the bereaved family to bear this great loss.

Raja Sahib you have been our hero we will miss you but we will never forget you and we will try to follow your footsteps.

When a great man dies, for years the light he leaves behind him, lies on the paths of men. (Quote).

**Dr. Dil Muhammad Mirza and
Members of Ophthalmological Society of Pakistan**