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Abdur Rahim Khan Corner

Memories left behind

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Abdul-Rahim Khan was born on 20th December, 1918 at Amritsar, India. He was graduated in 1938 and obtained his degree of MA English in 1940 from the University of the Punjab. He joined as Registrar, University of the Punjab. He was honored by Colombo Plan scholarship to study in Canada where he did his graduation in Library Science (BLS) in 1954. During this administrative post, he was given the responsibilities of Chief librarian and Head of the Department of Library Science from 1950 to 1979. He was founder member and vice president of Pakistan Library Association (Sabzwari, 2011, p. 111). He served as Head of the Department of Library Science for 10 years (1963-1973). After that Professor Dr. Mumtaz A. Anwar took over the headship of the department.

Years ago, it was my first day in class at the Department of Library Science, University of the Punjab. Malik Bashir Ali Khan introduced Sir A. Rahim as our teacher of management course. He was slim, tall gentle man. He started his lecture in English and in Urdu as well. He had full command on the subject, I was fascinated like a kid who was listening to a fairy tale in such a beautiful way looking upon him. I remember that he was talking and walking, walking and talking. It was his method of teaching. Undoubtedly, he was a great teacher, a thorough gentle man and knew how to communicate the subject to the class. He was a milestone in our profession and he contributed to the profession a lot. I have no words to pray him. Very soon he left us but the whole class missed him very much and remembered him with the core of the heart.

Two years passed I joined my service in the Punjab University Library. Somehow, my colleagues were facing some problems in the institution. They discussed me and requested me to submit their application and plead their case to Mr. Abdur Rahim Khan. When I went to him he was very busy at the time. He looked at me and allowed me with the gesture of his eyes to come in. I gave that paper to him taking request. He just touched the paper and looked at me saying that you had put the common pin on wrong side. I was just confused, he then again looked at me and corrected the pin himself and told me very gently and politely the right way to pin up the paper correctly. He was such a nice mentor to all. I remembered his way the rest of my life. This was unforgettable moment in my life. He was a pure professional with dignity and grace.

A long time ago, Sir Afzal Haq Qarshi told me that he was not well and residing in PCSIR. We went to see him, he was on bed, he was happy to see us. We requested him to visit the department on getting recovered and he promised to visit us. Despite of his illness he came to the door to say goodbye. This showed his generosity and love to his colleagues.

In early days of Pakistan history, he represented Pakistan in the International Conference on Public Libraries for Asia at Delhi in 1955. As (Chief) librarian, Punjab University Library, Lahore with Mr. Khawja Noor Elahi, (Chief) Librarian, Punjab Public Library, Lahore and Mr. Farhatullah Baig, Chief Librarian, Khairpur Public Library, Khairpur, Sindh. He submitted a report on the status of public libraries

in Pakistan. It was quoted in UNESCO public libraries manual (1956). Mr. L. C Key also contributed to that conference as a representative of Australia (UNESCO, 1956).

Professor Dr. Mumtaz Ali Anwar stated that Abdur Rahim Khan was fully involved in the creation of the Pakistan Library Association right from the beginning. He was elected as one of its three vice presidents in its first elections (Anwar, 2011).

He contributed many articles for the development of profession in different professional journals and attended many national and international conferences. Some of his articles are the following:

- Libraries in West Pakistan: Their needs and problems. *PLA Journal*, 1(1), 18-21, July 1960.
- Our school libraries. *Pakistan Library Bulletin*, 2(3-4), 97-99, March-June 1970.
- Our school libraries. *PLA Journal*, 2(3-4), 1-3, July-Oct, 1968.
- Universities libraries: Functions and organization. *Pakistan Library Review*, 3(2), 51-56, June 1961.
- Welcome Address (Urdu). *PLA Journal*, 2(1), 5-9, January, 1968 (Samdani & Mahmood, 1999).

Today many professionals think that they are doing excellent for the development of the professional education. No doubt they are doing well but when we went into past there were many pioneers who have done a lot for professional development and made the platform for the coming generations. We must remember those personalities who laid the foundation of today's profession and professional education.

No wonder if there will be a memorial on the name of A. Rahim Khan be established in main library building in the University of the Punjab, Lahore.

He lived his life like a thorough gentleman with peace of mind and satisfaction. He will live in the hearts of students, colleagues and his family. He will see the world with the eyes of his grand children. May Allah shower his blessings upon him and rest his soul in peace and eternity. Ameen.

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