

Professor Dr. Syed Abrar Hussain Gilani in Memoriam (1938- 2026)

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Abstract

This memorial article pays tribute to the life, character, and professional contributions of Professor Dr. Syed Abrar Hussain Gilani (1938–2026), one of Pakistan's distinguished scholars in animal science and higher education. Drawing upon more than seven decades of personal friendship and professional association, the article highlights his outstanding services as a teacher, mentor, researcher, academic administrator, and pioneer in the development of Pakistan's poultry industry. It reflects on his leadership in higher education, his dedication to nurturing future scholars, and his contributions to scientific research and professional organizations, particularly the Pakistan Agricultural Scientists Forum. The article also portrays his personal qualities of humility, integrity, compassion, and selfless service, which earned him the respect and admiration of colleagues, students, and the wider academic community. By documenting his achievements and enduring legacy, this tribute seeks to preserve the memory of an exemplary scholar and to inspire future generations of teachers, researchers, and students to uphold the values of knowledge, ethical leadership, and public service.

مَوْتُ الْعَالِمِ مَوْتُ الْعَالَمِ

(The death of a scholar is the death of the world.)

With profound sorrow and deep grief, we bid farewell to Dr. Syed Abrar Hussain Gilani, an exceptional teacher, mentor, and scholar whose lifelong contributions have left an enduring mark on Pakistan's academic and scientific community. As the poet laments.

مَقْدُورٌ هُوَ تَوَّ خَاكٍ سَعَىٰ بِوَجْهِهِ كِيَّ لَنِيْمٍ

تو نے وہ گنج ہائے گراں مایہ کیا کئے

"If only I could ask the dust what it has done with such priceless treasures." His passing is not merely the loss of an individual but the departure of a remarkable personality whose influence will continue through the countless lives he touched.

Looking back over more than seven decades of friendship, it is difficult to believe how swiftly time has passed. It seems only yesterday that we entered the Animal Husbandry College, Lahore, as young students. During our first year, a new group joined the college,

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the first batch admitted on the basis of F.Sc. Medical). Among them was a quiet, slender young man named Syed Abrar Hussain, whose ancestral roots traced back to Gilan, near Baghdad, although his family had settled in Sahuwala, Lyallpur (now Faisalabad).

At first glance, he appeared physically delicate, but it soon became evident that his true strength lay in his intellect, determination, and unwavering commitment to learning. While his modest appearance remained largely unchanged over the years, his intellectual growth and professional stature continued to rise. The young student we first met went on to serve with distinction as Professor, Chairman, Dean, and Director of Research at the University of Agriculture, making outstanding contributions to teaching, research, and academic administration. Throughout his career, he guided hundreds of students, supervised more than dozens PhD scholars, and inspired generations of academics and professionals.

This tribute is a humble attempt to honour not only an outstanding scholar but also a trusted friend whose companionship enriched my life for more than seventy years. I also hope that these reflections will inspire younger teachers and students by highlighting the values of sincerity, dedication, humility, and service that defined his life.

Dr. Gilani was a man of many qualities. He was an inspiring teacher, a thoughtful mentor, an efficient administrator, a visionary planner, and, above all, a compassionate human being. His services extended well beyond the university, benefiting farmers, researchers, and Pakistan's poultry industry. He treated his students with exceptional care and regarded their success as his own achievement. I personally witnessed the extent of his commitment when he postponed an academic visit to Japan so that he could continue supervising one of his doctoral students until

the completion of the thesis. Such devotion reflected his deep sense of responsibility as a mentor.

One of Dr. Gilani's greatest strengths was his ability to recognize talent and nurture it with patience and wisdom. Many of his students later assumed leading positions in academia, government, Department, research institutions and the livestock & poultry industries. Distinguished professionals including Dr. Musaddiq Asif, Dr. Muhammad Sadiq, and Dr. Abdul Rahman Ghazi became prominent figures in Pakistan's poultry feed industry and earned recognition beyond the country's borders. Likewise, Dr. Muhammad Aslam Dar's served as President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce demonstrating the leadership qualities that Dr. Gilani consistently cultivated in his students. Their achievements stand as a lasting reflection of his vision, guidance, and commitment to developing future leaders.

Dr. Gilani's influence extended far beyond his own department and students. His guidance shaped the careers of numerous distinguished scholars, university administrators, researchers, and professionals who later served in leading academic and scientific institutions across Pakistan. Among them were renowned personalities such as Dr. Bashir A. Sheikh, former Chairman of the Pakistan Science Foundation and Vice Chancellor of Khairpur University, and Professor Dr. Basit Ali Shah, former Vice Chancellor of the University of Peshawar. Many of his students went on to become professors, Directors General, senior researchers, and academic leaders, carrying forward the values and professional standards they had learned from their mentor.

Dr. Gilani also made significant contributions to the development of Pakistan's poultry industry. During the early years of commercial poultry farming in the 1960s, the country faced a severe shortage of qualified

animal nutritionists. Working closely with eminent scientists such as Dr. Raja Muhammad Akram and Professor Dr. M.B. Sial at the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF), he played an important role in developing scientific feed formulations and providing technical guidance to the emerging poultry sector. The remarkable progress of Pakistan's poultry feed industry owes much to the dedication and vision of these pioneers. Despite his invaluable services, Dr. Gilani never sought personal financial benefit from the industry, reflecting his lifelong commitment to selfless service.

As a teacher and administrator, he was respected for his fairness, integrity, and impartiality. Students and colleagues alike trusted his judgment because it was always guided by honesty and merit rather than personal interest. He remained deeply committed to the welfare of his students, helping many secure academic and professional opportunities through his guidance and recommendations.

Equally admirable was his noble character. He was free from resentment and never spoke ill of others, even those who had not treated him fairly. Instead, he responded with dignity, generosity, and forgiveness. His humility, respect for his seniors, and compassion for others reflected the ethical values he practiced throughout his life.

Dr. Gilani was equally devoted to the advancement of scientific research. He played a leading role in strengthening professional organizations, scholarly journals, and scientific conferences. As President of the Pakistan Agricultural Scientists Forum (PAS Forum), he encouraged young researchers by promoting quality scientific publications and fostering collaboration among scientists. He also supported several educational and professional organizations, including the Pakistan Veterinary Medical Association

and various institutions working for academic and social development.

I had the privilege of working closely with him as General Secretary of the Pakistan Agricultural Scientists Forum and as Secretary-Editor of its quarterly research journal, *JAPS*, in 1990. This experience allowed me to witness firsthand his dedication, professionalism, and unwavering commitment to promoting scientific research in Pakistan.

His personal life reflected the same simplicity that characterized his professional career. He lived with humility, avoided unnecessary luxury, and welcomed everyone with warmth and generosity. Supported by his devoted wife and children, his home embodied the values of modesty, hospitality, and contentment.

Dr. Gilani's life was a practical reflection of the Quranic principle.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

"Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example." (Qur'an 33:21)

He devoted his life to knowledge, service, and humanity, leaving behind a legacy that will continue to inspire future generations. We pray that Almighty Allah grants him the highest place in Paradise, as promised in the Holy Qur'an. He devoted his life to knowledge, service, and humanity, leaving behind a legacy that will continue to inspire future generations. We pray that Almighty Allah grants him the highest place in Paradise, as promised in the Holy Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً

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Note: I am grateful to the Editor of this journal for inviting me to record these personal recollections in memory of Professor Dr. Abrar Hussain Gilani. It is a privilege to pay tribute to a dear friend, an inspiring teacher, and an exceptional scholar whose legacy will remain alive through his students, colleagues, and the institutions.