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Obituary

Dr. Firoza Kazi (June 26, 1953 – September 30, 2025)

It is with profound sorrow that we announce the passing of Dr. Firoza Kazi, a distinguished nematologist, devoted teacher, and respected scholar, who left this world on September 30, 2025. Her life was a testament to academic excellence, scientific dedication, and unwavering commitment to the advancement of agricultural sciences in Pakistan.

Born on June 26, 1953, in Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan, Dr. Kazi demonstrated academic brilliance from an early age. She pursued her higher education at the University of Karachi, where she completed her B.Sc. (Hons.), Master's degree, and Ph.D. Her academic journey laid the foundation for a remarkable career in nematology, a field to which she devoted her life's work.

Dr. Kazi was widely recognized for her extensive research on plant and soil nematodes in Pakistan, with particular emphasis on *Hoplolaimus* species and their impact on agriculture. Her research significantly contributed to understanding nematode biodiversity, ecology, and management strategies in Pakistan's agro-ecosystems. Through her scientific rigor and dedication, she played a vital role in strengthening nematological research in the country.

A celebrated nematologist, Dr. Kazi received numerous awards and honors in recognition of her outstanding contributions. In 2024, the Pakistan Society of Nematology (PSN) honored her with a Gold Medal, acknowledging her lifelong dedication to research, education, and service to the scientific community.

Her scholarly output was extraordinary. Dr. Kazi authored eight books, published over 150 research manuscripts, and contributed numerous book chapters and articles in reputable national and international journals. Her work remains a valuable resource for researchers, students, and professionals in the field of nematology and agricultural sciences.

Beyond her research accomplishments, Dr. Kazi was a passionate mentor and educator. She supervised and guided numerous M.Phil. and Ph.D. scholars, many of whom now serve as academics and researchers, continuing her legacy of excellence. Her students remember her not only for her intellectual guidance but also for her kindness, discipline, and encouragement.

Dr. Kazi also rendered valuable editorial services to the scientific community. She served as Associate Editor of the Pakistan Journal of Nematology and the PSN Newsletter from 2002 to 2024, contributing significantly to maintaining the quality and integrity of scientific publications in the field.

Dr. Firoza Kazi's passing is an immense loss to the academic and agricultural community of Pakistan. Her contributions to nematology, her mentorship of generations of scholars, and her dedication to scientific advancement will be remembered with deep respect and gratitude.

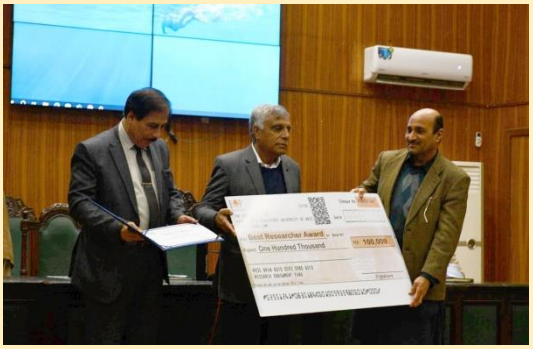
She leaves behind a legacy of knowledge, integrity, and inspiration that will continue to guide and influence future generations of scientists.

May her soul rest in eternal peace.

Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro urged AI-driven industrial transformation to promote sustainable growth in developing countries while addressing WSTDF-2025 in Beijing.

He stressed that development must prioritize people's welfare alongside economic growth.
Despite global commitment to the SDGs, he noted many developing nations lag due to weak ecosystems and infrastructure gaps.
Highlighting the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), he said it offers major opportunities for trade and industry through digital innovation.
He emphasized integrating AI with STEM education, policy support, and institutional readiness.
Without skilled human resources, he warned, AI-led industrial growth cannot be sustained.
His address was widely appreciated at the forum organized by CAST under the theme "AI for Science and Development."
Prof. Soomro is a former PSF Chairman and internationally recognized scientist with several global honors.

Prof. Dr. Tariq Mukhtar Receives Best Researcher Award 2025



The academic community proudly celebrates the remarkable achievement of Professor Dr. Tariq Mukhtar, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, on being honored with the Best Researcher Award 2025 in recognition of his outstanding contributions to agricultural research and academic excellence.

Prof. Dr. Mukhtar, President PSN a distinguished scholar and mentor, has consistently demonstrated excellence in research, innovation, and leadership within the agricultural sciences. His extensive work, particularly in the field of nematology and sustainable crop protection, has significantly contributed to advancing scientific knowledge and strengthening Pakistan's agricultural sector.

Under his dynamic leadership, numerous research initiatives have flourished, and many young researchers and postgraduate scholars have successfully completed their M.Phil. and Ph.D. studies. His dedication to high-quality research publications, project development, and academic mentorship has earned him national recognition and respect across the scientific community.

Colleagues, students, and researchers have extended heartfelt congratulations, acknowledging his tireless efforts, visionary guidance, and commitment to promoting research culture and innovation in agriculture.

This prestigious award reflects Prof. Dr. Mukhtar's unwavering dedication to academic excellence and serves as an inspiration for emerging scientists and researchers across the country.

The Faculty of Agriculture and the wider academic community congratulate Prof. Dr. Tariq Mukhtar on this well-deserved honor and wish him continued success in his future endeavors.

Internship program

The National Nematological Research Centre (NNRC), University of Karachi has been offering a structured internship programme throughout the year for undergraduate and postgraduate students of biological sciences from the University of Karachi as well as other universities and research institutions across Pakistan. This programme is designed to strengthen students' academic and practical understanding of nematology by providing hands-on exposure to the study of nematodes, their agricultural significance, associated plant disease symptoms, and techniques for their identification and characterization. Through laboratory demonstrations, supervised practical work, and interactive sessions with experts, interns gain foundational skills in nematode morphology, extraction, slide preparation, and diagnostic identification.

During 2025, several groups of students successfully completed four-week internships at NNRC. In July 2025, students from the Department of Microbiology, University of Karachi underwent intensive training on the basic morphology and identification of plant-parasitic nematodes. This was followed in August 2025 by students from the Balochistan Agriculture College, who received similar training and practical experience in nematode diagnostics and identification methods. Later, in December 2025, students from Department of Biotechnology Department of Zoology and Department of Agriculture and Agribusiness Management, University of Karachi also completed a four-week internship at NNRC, where they were trained in the fundamental morphological features and identification procedures of plant-parasitic nematodes relevant to agricultural systems.

Upon successful completion of their respective training programmes, all participating students were awarded internship certificates by NNRC, University of Karachi, in recognition of their active participation and acquired competencies in applied nematology. The NNRC internship programme continues to play an important role in developing skilled human resources in nematology and promoting awareness of nematode-related agricultural issues among emerging biological scientists in Pakistan.

🌍 Major Nematology Conferences - 2026

- **Society of Nematologists Annual Meeting (SON 2026)**
  🗓 6–10 July 2026
  📍 Baltimore, USA
  Theme: *Legacies and Futures: Nematodes in a Changing World*
  ☞ Main International Nematology Meeting (plant, soil, molecular, ecology). (Society of Nematologists)
- **European Society of Nematology Symposium**
  🗓 1–5 June 2026
  📍 Egmond aan Zee, Netherlands
  ☞ Largest European Nematology Congress Society of Nematologists)
- **Brazilian Nematology Congress (40th CBN)**
  🗓 31 Aug – 3 Sept 2026
  📍 Recife, Brazil
  Theme: *Tropical Agriculture and Nematology in Focus*
  ☞ Major Latin-American nematology event Society of Nematologists)
- **WG Nematology Meeting (Germany)**
  🗓 11–12 March 2026
  📍 Freiburg, Germany
  ☞ Specialized European working-group meeting (plant protection nematology). (Phytomedizin)

🔬 Related Conferences with Nematology Sessions (2026)

These are useful for interdisciplinary exposure (soil biology, pathology, microbiology):

- Joint California Nematology Workshop & Soilborne Plant Pathogens
  📅 24–26 Mar 2026 | California, USA (Society of Nematologists)
- Global Soil Diversity Initiative
  📅 12–15 Apr 2026 | Canada (Society of Nematologists)
- International Congress on Invertebrate Pathology & Microbial Control
  📅 2–6 Aug 2026 | Netherlands (Society of Nematologists)
- World Congress on Microbiology (nematology track)
  📅 27–28 Jul 2026 | Paris, France (clocate.com)