

OBITUARY

Professor Khursheed Begum



It was August 1983 when I joined as house surgeon later to be the junior most medical officer of the Anaesthesia Department of Services Hospital Lahore then affiliated with Allama Iqbal Medical College Lahore. The department was headed by Prof. Khursheed Begum. I had joined the specialty of Anaesthesia, and today after working for almost thirty five years in the specialty, when I look back the strength, devotion, learning, mutual bondage and respect we earned under her leadership has no match even to this day. Though it was not a long tenure served under her, it was very effective and impressionable one.

She was not only a professional head of department but more of a mother to us all. A very congenial atmosphere existed in the department in her days. We worked selflessly and were willing to undertake critical cases always despite limited resources compared to armamentarium of today. She was very protective to all staff members and stood by us through thick and thin. Punctuality was foremost, not just for her own staff but for surgeons as well. We seldom waited for the surgeons as is the practice nowadays; they had to be in the theatre on time. She ruled the theatre out of sheer respect.

She had a command and passion for regional anaesthesia, performed blocks boldly and smoothly

which even today cannot be performed by many. It was due to her guidance that we had had thorough training, and confidence that enabled us to work under all odds in various institutions later in life.

There used to be closed door administrative scolding sessions whenever needed, but never to be revealed outside her office to non-anesthetic fraternity. It gave us remarkable pride and fondness. What an outspoken, bold, straight forward soul! Very fair and just lady, not influenced by any position or pressure, who upheld dignity of even the junior most staff. Above all, she was approachable to seniors and juniors alike.

Once a respected ENT professor asked his staff which department was the strongest in Services Hospital Lahore; that no professor of any specialty dared touch even a house officer of that Department? The unanimous roar was "Anesthesia Department" - a victorious bliss for us even today.

May Allah (ST) reward Professor Khursheed Begum the highest ranks in Jannat-ul-Firdaus. Ameen! You will always be missed Ma'am.

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