

Prof. Dr. Abdul Khader Hisham – An Eminent Academician and Phytochemist



The late Prof. Dr. Abdulkhader Hisham (1957-2014) was an eminent academician and an internationally reputed phytochemist. Dr. Hisham started his research and academic career in 1982 as a Lecturer in the Department of Chemistry, Government Victoria College, Palakkad, Kerala. Prior to this academic appointment he had been an active researcher at the Department of Chemistry, University of Calicut working in the area of phytochemistry. Later, he proceeded to University of Antwerp, Belgium to work with Prof. Dr. A. J. Vlietinck and Prof. Dr. R. Dommisse and obtained his doctoral degree in 1990 based on his dissertation entitled “Phytochemical Investigations on *Uvaria narum* and *Elephantopus scaber*”. Subsequently he continued his academic appointment in Kerala and later at Sultan Quaboos University, Muscat, Oman. During his very productive career as a phytochemist, he had identified and characterized several new molecules from plants, and published more than 60 research papers in high impact journals and could train several scientists/academicians in Kerala and abroad in plant chemistry. His ardent efforts and international collaborations, coupled with his vast expertise in the area of structural elucidation using multidimensional NMR spectroscopy, catalyzed a paradigm shift in the conventional phytochemical research prevailed in Kerala. His major contribution was in the phytochemistry of Annonaceae plants, particularly in the chemistry of acetogenins. His contributions were not limited to identification of novel molecules, but had extended to multi- disciplinary scientific research, where he could offer his expertise to researchers from other fields as well.

Being the grandson of the renowned journalist and Muslim social reformer of pre-independent India, ‘Vakkom Abdul Khader Moulavi’, and son of the writer, journalist Vakkom Abdul Khader, Dr. Hisham Abdulkhader continued the tradition as a prolific writer as well, who intervened not only in scientific issues but also in socially relevant issues. He had been a contributor to popular magazines and newspapers.

To commemorate the contributions of late Prof. Dr. Hisham Abdulkhader in the field of science, particularly in plant chemistry, an endowment award has been instituted under the aegis of Kerala Academy of Sciences (KAS) by the support of family members, disciples and friends of late Prof. Dr. A. Hisham, along with the phytochemistry fraternity of Kerala.