

Obituary

Veteran Islāmic Economist, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, Passed Away

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Renowned Islāmic economist, professional central banker, a seasoned policy maker, and a pioneer of Islāmization of banking and finance in Pakistan, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad passed away on July 6, 2014 after protracted illness. He was among a few personalities in the world who initiated efforts to practically introduce Islāmic economic system in the world in modern age.

Born on 4th August 1930, Dr. Ziauddin accomplished his formal education at Harvard University, USA, from where he did M.A. in 1963 and Ph.D. in Economics in 1964. During his distinguished career he held the positions of Deputy Governor, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) from 1978 to 1983 and Director General, International Institute of Islāmic Economics (IIIE), Islāmabad from 1983 to 1988. He remained member of the Council of Islāmic Ideology, Pakistan (CII). His personal accomplishments at SBP raised him to the position of member, Board of Governors, IMF and consultant/adviser to a large number of national and international organizations.

Dr. Ziauddin pioneered the work on Islāmic Banking & Finance in late 1970's when Islāmic finance was not yet taken up by the governments as a needed dimension in their public policies nor it was a commercial enterprise pushed by the financial institutions. His very important contribution was his work on preparation of the structure of fiscal and monetary system of Islām as Member, Council of Islāmic Ideology, Pakistan, and as Convener, Panel of Economists and Bankers set up by the CII to suggest measures for re-modeling the economic and financial system on Islāmic lines. This led to bridging of the gap and transforming of the theory into policy making space.

Dr. Ziauddin actively participated in almost all pioneering conferences, seminars and colloquia organized in those days on Islāmic economics, amongst which the first International Conference on Islāmic Economics held in the Holy City of Makkah in 1976 and the two seminars on the Monetary and Fiscal Economics of Islām held at Makkah (Oct. 1978) and Islamabad (Jan. 1981) were prominent. His another major contribution for promoting Islāmic economics in its infancy is

establishment of International Institute of Islamic Economics (IIIE) in the IIU, Islamabad. He served as a luminary for research scholars, speakers at conferences, academicians and the policy makers in the areas of economics and finance. His style of extempore speaking in seminars and conferences seemed as if he was reading from his carefully worded paper with full care of punctuation marks. He produced many papers and books on different aspects of Islāmic economics and was co-editor of the books, "*Money and Banking in Islām*" and "*Fiscal Policy and Resource Allocation in Islām*". His book, "*Islām, Poverty, and Income Distribution*", published in 1991 portrays the Islāmic approach to issues of poverty and income distribution in the perspective of Islām's overall scheme for the establishment of a just socio-economic order. He also authored a number of papers / monographs that have been referred immensely in the literature on Islāmic banking and finance. The most important of them are: i) The Present State of Islāmic Finance Movement, IIIE, Islāmabad, 1985; ii) Some Misgivings about Islāmic Interest Free Banking, IIIE, Islāmabad, 1985; and iii) Islāmic Banking: State of the Art, Islāmic Economics Studies (IRTI), Vol. 2; No. 1, December, 1994.

Dr. Ziauddin rendered invaluable services for the economy of Pakistan, the Central Bank of Pakistan and for Islāmic economics as an evolving discipline. He was one of the architects of the Research Department in the State Bank of Pakistan set up in 1948. He initiated and encouraged the work not only on monetary aspects – the main area of any central bank, but also on the Islāmic economic system as a whole.

In addition to his distinctive contribution as a pioneering Islāmic economist, he will also be remembered for his piety, quest for knowledge, hard work and *ḥalāl* income and, most importantly, extreme humbleness. He did not like fame and preferred to be unnamed. He lived a simple life of an unknown soldier in the last decades of his life when he progressed in age with Parkinson's disease; as Almighty tested him more, the more he became patient with Allah's decree. His close associate, Dr. S.M. Hasanuz Zaman remarks about him, "*I have rarely found persons who are naturally incapable of committing a vice. Dr. Ziauddin was one of them.*" His efforts were recognized in several ways. He got the IDB Prize in Islāmic Banking and Finance for the Year 1411 Hijri (1991). Also, the SBP instituted Ph.D. Scholarship in Economics in the name of Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad for deserving students at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad.

May Allah rest the departed soul in eternal peace (*Āmeen*) !