

TRIBUTE TO THE FATHER OF GREEN REVOLUTION
NOBEL PEACE LAUREATE PROF. DR. NORMAN BORLAUG
and
LAUNCHING OF THE ISAAA BRIEF 41/ PRESS CONFERENCE

The Pakistan Biotechnology Information Center (PABIC) has organized a major event to pay befitting tribute to the father of green revolution, Nobel Peace Laureate Prof. Dr. Norman Borlaug followed by a press conference to sensitize the media on issues relevant to biotechnology and to launch ISAAA Brief - 41, on Thursday, 10 June, 2010, at the video conferencing hall of Latif Ebrahim Jamal National Science Information Center (International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences, University of Karachi).

The event was organized to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) To pay tribute to the Life of ISAAA Founding Patron, Nobel Peace Laureate Prof. Dr. Norman Borlaug (1914-2009)
 - Father of the Green Revolution.
 - Champion of Small and Resource-Poor Farmers in the Developing World.
 - Founder of the World Food Prize.
- 2) To bring electronic and print media at a platform to discuss importance of biotechnology in national development and to achieve food security.
- 3) To launch ISAAA Brief - 41 (Global Status of Commercialized biotech/GM Crops: 2009 by Clive James (Founder And Chair, ISAAA Board Of Directors) in the presence of scientists, young scholars, renowned journalists and representative of electronic media.

Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary (Director, Pakistan Biotechnology Information Center, PABIC) in his welcome remarks and presentation highlighted the importance of judicious application of agriculture biotechnology to achieve food security and sustainable development. He also briefed the audience about the PABIC and ISAAA activities. Advisor Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture (MinFA) on wheat, Dr. A. Mujeeb Kazi was the chief guest at the event. Dr. Kazi has worked with Dr. Borlaug over 14 years as a close associate and co-worker. Dr. Kazi is currently leading a team of over 90 scientists at the NARC (National Agricultural Research Centre) to achieve sustainable growth in wheat production.

Dr. A. Mujeeb Kazi in his presentation highlighted the following points:

- a) Honoring Dr. Norman E. Borlaug: Memories over four decades.
- b) Biotechnology focused on some Wheat aspects: Its relevance as a Conduit to Food Security.

Prof. Dr. Tashmeem Razzaki (Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation) (SIUT), Founding chairperson of Department Of Biotechnology (University Of Karachi), the first biotechnology department in any university of Pakistan, delivered a lecture on "A critique of biotechnology development in Pakistan: challenges and possibilities".

In this event more than 60 participants including faculty members, research officers and M.Phil. & Ph.D. scholars of various Institutes have participated.

The seminar was followed by a press conference which was attended by a large number of print and electronic media representatives. In the press conference Dr. A. Mujeeb Kazi, Prof. Dr. Tashmeem Razzaki and Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary responded the questions of media relevant to food security and application of agriculture biotechnology. They also focused on the print and electronic media in raising awareness about biotechnology to solve major problems of the agriculture sector.

Dr. A. Mujeeb Kazi emphasized the need of conducting research in the field to produce various crops which are drought, salinity and pests resistance. He also said that wheat production can be increased by developing hybrid varieties and by encouraging appropriate management practices in agriculture.

Dr. Choudhary emphasized the need of access to affordable food to masses of peoples as the crime rate has increased in Pakistan due to shortage of foods for people to survive. Peace in Pakistan only possible with availability of foods items which are essential for survival, he also said that by developing indigenous capacity in biotechnology to grow more with less input and to protect the interest and livelihood of small farmers.

Prof. Dr. Tashmeem Razzaki encouraged media to show programs in field of science and technology, which increase the knowledge of people, and also there should be biotechnology related subject in mass communication department for future journalists which help them to develop understanding related to biotechnology.

