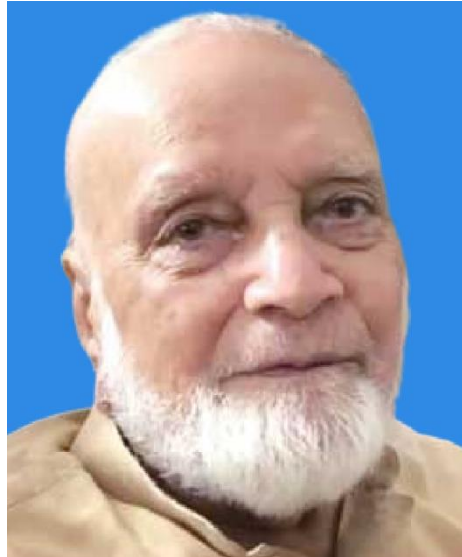


Special Obituary Bulletin



Mr Mahmood ul-Hassan Siddiqui

(British India, 25th April, 1926 – Lahore, 10th April, 2023)

Tamgha e-Imtiaz (Civil), 2003

National Excellence Award, IEP, 2012

B. Sc. (Civil) Engg, Aligarh Muslim University

Chief Engineer (Retd.), Irrigation Department, Punjab

Consultant to the Irrigation Department, Punjab

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Join PSCE

Rizwan Mirza, CE

Editor-in-chief

It was the morning of Monday, the 10th, April, 2023. For some, it was just another spring morning. But for the family of Mr Siddiqui as well as for Pakistan, it was the time to say goodbye to a noble soul who had been tirelessly working till his last day and was scheduled to attend a meeting at his office at the Irrigation Department, Punjab, where he had been acting as a consultant ever since his formal retirement, as a chief engineer, in early, 1991.

As a civil engineer, he learned and finally mastered the engineering and art of managing the huge and defiant dynamics of alluvial water system of the Indus basin. The uneven supply of water in the system reached its peak when the streams became a monster during the

monsoon months. The issue became challenging due to the meagre water storage systems in Pakistan – a fact that Siddiqui resented till his last. In its story titled, Water expert says one more dam needs to be constructed on urgent basis. Says Siddiqui:

As water shortage and scarcity continues to create a severe impact on crop plantations, a water expert has urged the construction of one major dam to ensure the requirements of all provinces are met. This was stated by Punjab irrigation Department's former chief engineer Mahmoodul Hassan Siddiqi while in conversation with the media.

As per Siddiqui, Sindh and Balochistan's water demand rises during March every year as the Kharif sowing season starts a month earlier than the province of Punjab. Due to the declining live storage capacity of the Tarbela Dam, it impacts the water supply situation adversely every year in the months of March and April.

He mentioned that after March 10, carryover stock is low in the reservoirs and run-of-the-river supplies are only available for utilisation at the start of summer. It tends to impact crops negatively in lower riparian provinces of Sindh and Balochistan due to low water availability, he stated.

Siddiqui highlighted that the Mangla Dam received water flows by the early melting of glaciers of lower and mid-level reaches and thus requires earlier filling. He mentioned that water tends to be stored in Mangla for later use in Rabi wheat sowing. Sindh protests with regards to the storage mechanism and demands water from March/April. He also mentioned that he had discussed and raised the issue of increasing water storage capacity on the Indus River with Sindh officials in a meeting held recently in Islamabad.

(Credit: Pakistan Today, dated 28th April, 2017)



Siddiqui served in many positions and participated in the Water Accord negotiations and was member of the team that finalised the water apportionment accord. As the foremost irrigation engineering expert, Mr Mehmood ul-Hassan had represented Punjab, for the past two-and-a-half decades, in the inter-provincial meetings regarding distribution of Indus Basin waters.

Similarly, he represented Pakistan in Indus Basin Treaty talks, with India.

Siddiqui also served as a teacher at the Government School of Engineering, Rasul – the counterpart of Rurki in independent Pakistan. These two schools were the only institutions that historically produced engineers who served the entire British India.



Figure 1: Super flood in Chenab, Credit: The Daily Dawn, 8th September, 2014

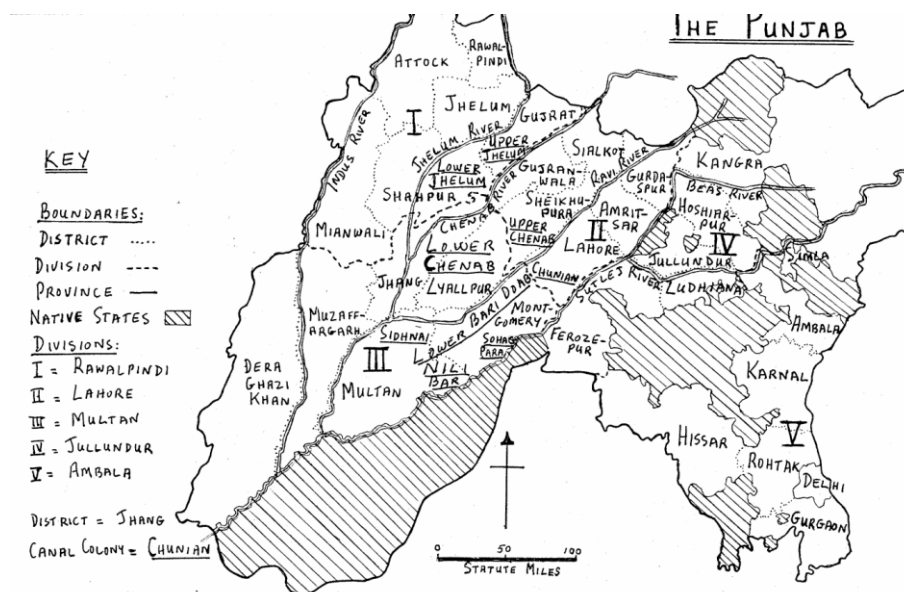


Figure 2: A sketch of the Punjab Canal colonies, Credit Imran Ali, The Punjab Colonies -- 1885—1940, doctoral dissertation, The Australian National University, Canberra

Salman Rashid recalls a day from the life of Siddiqui:

“One day Mahmood ul Hassan rang the bell to see if his staff knew what each man was supposed to do in the event of a flood crisis. Only vague memory of actual procedures remained and the men tripped over each other. The good man ordered an Urdu translation of the Standing Operating Procedures to be displayed thence onward.” (Salman Rashid, Fellow of Royal Geographical Society, Travel Writer)

Salman Rashid recalls another day from the life of Siddiqui:

“Juggu being the fourth and last level crossing on the UJC was also the last place where flow could be regulated. If ever a flood at Juggu caught the crew napping, the flood would pass down the UJC as a possible and serious peril. And that is what happened one day in July 1967. Mahmood ul Hassan Siddiqui, an officer of the old school (now retired) who served in the Jhelum irrigation division over the years in various positions remembers the telephone call in his office at Jhelum to say that the gauge at the Serai Alamgir bridge was reading eleven feet of water as against the stipulated ten, the alarmed caller said. ‘As if I had received an electric shock, I jumped up from my seat, got into my car and sped off even forgetting to take my driver along,’ recalls Siddiqui.

By the time he arrived, the UJC was washing over the rails of the railway bridge. He was downstream of the last level crossing; the only way to reduce flow was to let the canal drain into any of the fifteen minor channels that take off direct from the UJC between Serai Alamgir and its outfall into the Chenab at Khanki. He opened the gates of the nearer ones and telephoned his sub-divisional officer at Rasul to drive up the canal undoing the ones on his way. Next Siddiqui drove upstream to the Juggu level crossing only to discover that all was in order. The crew was all present, the gauge was steady at just below the designated level, and everything looked fine.

Cloudbursts and flash floods in the Pabbi hills are not an unknown phenomenon. Siddiqui concluded that a sudden and massive fall of rain somewhere in the hills had brought down a swift flood that had passed into the level crossing and finding the gates of the Nalla side closed, drained down the canal. So rapid and short-lived was this passage of the flood that the gauge, which is simply a stepped masonry well with a foot ruler painted on one wall, simply could not register the rise. However, swift action on the part of Mahmood ul Hassan Siddiqui had saved the day.” (Salman Rashid, Fellow of Royal Geographical Society, Travel Writer)



Figure 3: Canal rest house, Jaggu, Credit: Salman Rashid, Canal Journey

Salman Rashid's writing reveals the working of the razor-sharp mind of the hero that Mr Mahmood u-Hassan, Siddiqui was.

The demise of Mr Mahmood ul-Hassan Siddiqui is undoubtedly a national loss. He leaves behind a legacy of a selfless engineer who served the motherland with a skill and passion that the posterity would be well-advised to adopt as a role-model to adopt.

PSCE offers formal condolences to his family. including his son Dr Arif Siddiqui.



Figure 4: Tamgha e-Imtiaz (Civil)



Upcoming Event

The 54th and next lecture of Continuing Education Initiative of PSCE is schedule to be held on Saturday, 13th May, 2023, **Saturday, 13th May, 2023**, 14:00 to 16:00, Pakistan Standard Time (PKT); 9:00 to 11:00, Universal Time Coordinated (UCT). The official announcement is as follows:



Pakistan Society of Civil Engineers

Licensed, by the Pakistan Engineering Council, as a Professional Engineering Body

▶ Continuous Professional Development Initiative ◀

PSCE LECTURE No. 54

Technical Lecture Counted Towards CPD Points Under
Professional Development of Engineers Bye- Laws, 2008 of the PEC

Design of Concrete Slabs – An Introduction



Rizwan Mirza, CE, APSCE, MIEP

B. Sc. Civil Engineering (University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan)
Consulting Civil and Structural Engineer

Saturday, 13th May, 2023

14.00 to 16:00, Pakistan Standard Time (PKT)

9:00 to 11:00, Universal Time Coordinated (UCT)

On-line lecture to be joined through ZOOM.

Details would be sent, by email, to the registered applicants, a day before the lecture.

For obtaining CPD points, live appearance of every participant is mandatory during the lecture.

Registration Fee:

PSCE associates: Free

Other engineers and allied professionals: PKR 500

Bank Details:

Account title: Pakistan Society of Civil Engineers

Account Number: 2008209912

Bank: Silk Bank Limited

Branch: Egerton Road Branch, Lahore 54000, Pakistan

Branch Code: 0003

IBAN: PK39 SAUD 0000 0320 0820 9912

Swift Code: SAUDPKKAXXX

Contact person for registration:

Mrs Sadia Naveed, Administrator

+92-42-3571 3362, +92-42-3571 3363 & +92-42-3571 3364

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PSCE Newsletter



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