

## 2020 Awardee



### **Life Time Achievement Award**

**Amb. Islam A. Siddiqui**

Ambassador Islam A. Siddiqui, Id no. 134, Batch 1960 graduated from the G.B. Pant University of Agriculture & Technology with B.Sc. (Honour's) in Agriculture & Animal Husbandry. He was awarded the Wright Fellowship in Plant Pathology in 1964 by the College of Agriculture, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, U.S.A. to complete his M.S. degree in Plant Pathology in 1966 and he went on to receive his Ph.D. degree in Plant Pathology with specialization in Nematology from the same institution in 1969.

Dr. Siddiqui joined the California Department of Food & Agriculture, Division of Plant Industry, as an Assistant Nematologist in 1969 and held several managerial positions between 1969 and 1984 before being promoted to become the Director of the Division of Plant Industry with statewide responsibilities to manage California's plant protection and pest prevention program. During his tenure as Division Director for 13 years, he led many high-profile efforts to eradicate many exotic plant pests and diseases from California and thus preventing crop losses to farmers estimated in hundreds of millions of dollars. He was recognized by the California Senate and Assembly for his leadership in pioneering an area wide non-pesticidal program to eradicate the Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly) from California, using the aerial release of millions of sterilized Medflies over Southern California instead of weekly aerial pesticidal sprays. In 1997, President Clinton appointed Dr. Siddiqui as Deputy Undersecretary of Agriculture for Marketing and Regulatory Programs in U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Washington, D.C., where he was responsible for all plant and animal health, agricultural marketing and grain inspection and regulatory programs throughout the U.S. In 1999, he was appointed by President Clinton as Undersecretary of Agriculture for MRP and thus becoming the highest-ranking Indian American serving in the U.S. Government. Between 2001 and 2010, Dr. Siddiqui worked in the private sector with Crop Life America, a national trade association representing agricultural crop protection chemical and biotechnology companies in the U.S. as Director of Biotechnology & Trade and later as Vice President for Science & Regulatory Affairs. On September 22, 2009, President Obama nominated Dr. Siddiqui to be the U.S. Chief Agricultural Negotiator with the rank of Ambassador. He joined the Executive Office of the President, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, on February 2010, and thus becoming once again as one of the highest ranking Indian American to serve in the U.S. Government.

During his early career as nematologist, Dr. Siddiqui published over 30 scientific papers internationally renowned journals. He also served as an Associate Editor of the Journal of Nematology. After leaving the Obama Administration, he served as Senior Adviser for Global

Food Security at the Center for Strategic & International Studies in Washington, D.C. and is a member of the Council of American Ambassadors, Council on Foreign Relations and Board Member, Indian Council of Food & Agriculture. He was also member of various committees.

During his distinguished career in academia and governments at the state and national levels, Amb. Siddiqui was the recipient of many awards and honours: Doctor of Sciences Degree (Honorary) awarded by his alma mater, the G. B. Pant University of Agriculture & Technology, Pantnagar in 2011; International Agricultural Leadership Award received from Prof. M.S. Swaminathan at the Indian Agricultural Leadership Conference; University of Illinois, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environment Sciences Alumni Association Award of Merit; California Senate and Assembly resolutions commending his leadership in Protecting California Agriculture; U. S. Secretary of Agriculture's Distinguished Service Award for Leadership in Plant Protection; U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's Distinguished Service Award for Eradicating Medfly from California; Appointed by Governor Ronald Reagan as an Associate Lecturer at the California Management Development Institute. Amb. Siddiqui delivered numerous speeches and made many presentations at both national and international scientific conferences. He has testified on numerous occasions before city councils, county boards of supervisors, Agriculture and Budget Committees of the California Senate and Assembly in Sacramento, California. In addition, he testified before the U.S. Senate Committees on Agriculture and Finance and the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture in Washington, D. C. at the World Trade Organization in Geneva, Switzerland.