

## Egypt Connection

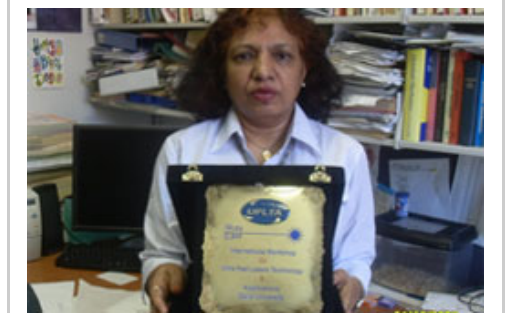
### Sultana N. Nahar

I traveled to Egypt in April to attend the international workshop on Ultrafast Laser Technologies and Applications (UFLTA), visit universities and participate in several important events.

The National Institute of Laser Enhanced Sciences (NILES) in Egypt has been one of the main sponsors of UFLTA. This 4<sup>th</sup> UFLTA was held both at Cairo University and in Luxor during April 8-12 and I delivered an honorary keynote speech on the application of X-ray lasers to cancer theranostics (a process of diagnostic therapy). Participants came from various universities and institutions in Egypt, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Korea.

It was announced at the conference inauguration ceremony that the Chair, Professor Ahmed El Kharborly, was the first *elected* Dean of NILES. Before the Egyptian revolution, all high administrative positions were *appointed* by the government. The Program Chair, Professor Lotfia El Nadi, wore a red hijab, outside her usual black or white one, in support of the revolution.

During my visit the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Ohio State University (OSU) and Cairo University (CU) was completed at the signing ceremony headed by the Vice President for Graduate Studies and Research, Dr. Gamal Esmat of CU. I represented OSU. This MOA covers the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, and Engineering. Work is in progress to extend it to the Medical College. I was the initiator and coordinator for the MOA at OSU. The collaboration between the two institutions was formulated after the international conference on Modern Trends in Physics Research (MTPR-08) held in Egypt in 2008 and was based on the research areas of common interest of atomic astrophysics and laser science. It required several years



At the closing session of the UFLTA conference I received a "Shield of UFLTA" award.



For my successful efforts on the MOA I was awarded the prestigious "Shield of Cairo University" by the CU Vice President.

On April 8, the Topical Society of Laser Sciences (TSLs) celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary at Nady El.Kwat Al.Bahria on the river Nile. Internationally known and prominent scientists from Egypt and a number of other countries were invited. Several of them were recognized for contributions to laser sciences and 14 (including myself) were recognized with the Highest Honor Medal. The cultural channel of the national TV NILE covered the event and broadcast it on April 15, 2012. I was interviewed by the TV channel regarding the importance of research and on the contributions by the Egyptian researchers.



Audience listening to my seminar on atomic astrophysics at Al-Azhar University. At my request, the students and faculty members of the female branch were invited to my presentation at the male branch.

For some time I have been in communication with Al-Azhar University in Cairo, known as the oldest university on earth (founded in 970). During this trip I spent one day there. The university has male and female branches with adjoining campuses. Each has its own faculty members but with the same academic curriculum. There are also some joint projects for Ph.D. or Masters level research.

The audience was enthusiastic on the topic of spectroscopy and the solar abundance problem. The astronomy department chair, Professor Nader, commented that they were very much behind concerning the advanced research that I presented and also that their internet communication was not up to the date. Faculty members, from both male and female branches expressed difficulties in getting the right components for experimental research and in obtaining funding. They showed a keen interest in possible future collaboration in advanced research.

At another meeting with the male and female groups at Al Azhar University, we discussed STEM programs, research, teaching, funding, and collaborations. We spoke about promoting both teaching and research with students and prepared a draft proposal to submit to the Deans of Sciences of the male and female branches. I incorporated their input into the final proposal and submitted it to Al Azhar University. I will be sponsoring the program.



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