NARO scientist Pariyo hailed for cassava research

By Christopher Bendana

His was described as a successful journey from rural Arua to the laboratories of the National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI) Namulonge, a NARO affiliate.

Anthony Pariyo, 47, the former head of the horticulture programme at NaCRRI, who died on Friday at IHK hospital in Kampala was described by former classmates, colleagues in NARO and scientists from across the region of East Africa as a humble scientist who made things work.

He had been spotted in rural Arua by NARO scientists doing research at Abil Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute while he was working as an extension worker in the 1990s.

Dr. Titus Alicai, the head of roots programme at NaCRRI, where Pariyo worked from 2006-2016, described him as humble but serious while at work.

He told mourners at St John's Church of Uganda Namulonge, of a time when they worked upto 3:00am on a proposal to the Gates Foundation to help establish a cassava seed system in the country.

"He has left a legacy of ensuring that farmers receive clean planting materials," Alicai said yesterday

"There is a system for production and delivering of high quality cassava planting materials."

Alicai, his former supervisor on the roots crops programme, said the system that run from 2013 helped train 60 cassava model farmers, who are currently multiplying cassava on a commercial basis in Fort Portal, Nakasongola, Lira, Arua and Soroti districts.

Unlike seeded crops such as maize, the cassava seed system had not been exploited by the seed companies.

Dr. Godfrey Asea, the director at NaCRRI, said the institute had chosen Pariyo to unlock the potential in the horticulture programme because of his expertise.

Dr Yona Baguma, the deputy director general who represented the NARO director general, Dr Ambrose Agona, and NARO governing council chairperson Prof. Joseph Obua, asked Makerere University to award Pariyo his doctorate posthumously.

The deceased was supposed to graduate last week, but missed because of the review in his thesis. Baguma, who was his supervisor on this programme, described Pariyo as an excellent student.

Dr. Bonane Pariyo, said his a brother (Pariyo) who had been admitted at International Hospital Kampala, died of a brain complication.

"There was sudden bleeding in the brain, which was not related to the initial complications," he revealed. He said while Pariyo was admitted in August for the removal of gall bladder stones, he later developed some problems in one of the kidneys, which later extended to the pancreas. He had two surgical operations and had been in intensive care for the last three months.

He is survived by four children and a widow. Burial is scheduled tomorrow in Arua.

BETWEEN THE LINES: PARIYO'S LIFE

- Pariyo was born in Vurra County in Arua district.
- He attended St. Joseph's College Ombaci Secondary School and Mvara Secondary School for his A'level.
- He pursued a Bsc. (Agriculture) at Makerere University between 1993 and 1997.
- He continued with his master's degree in crop science at Makerere University (2004-2007)



Mourners viewing Dr. Pariyo's body in front of St. John's Church of Uganda in Namulonge, Wakiso district yesterday. Inset is Pariyo. Photo by Badru Katumba

CamScanner