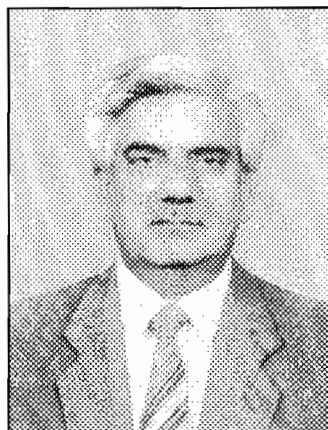


## OBITUARY



**DR. ALTAF-UR-REHMAN RAO  
(1936-2000)**

Dr. Altaf-ur-Rehman Rao died peacefully on 19th of Ramzan i.e., 16th December, 2000 at Bahawalpur, Pakistan. May God Almighty shower his choicest blessing upon the departed soul and may his soul rest in peace in heaven. Aameen.

Dr. Altaf-ur-Rehman Rao s/o Rao Mashooq Ali Khan was born on December 12, 1936 at Chak No. 452/G.B. (Rahmay Shah), Tehsil Sumundari, Faisalabad. He obtained the B.Sc. (Agri) degree in 1957 and M.Sc. (Agri) degree in 1962 from the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan and was awarded **Silver Medal** for obtaining First Class First in M.Sc. degree. He also obtained M.Sc. degree in Botany (1971) and Ph.D. (1974) from the University of Wales, Bangor, U.K., specializing in Agricultural Botany/Plant Genetic Resources.

Dr. Altaf-ur-Rehman Rao served at the Department of Botany, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad as Demonstrator/Instructor (October 1957 to April 1963), Senior Lecturer/Lecturer (April 1963 to May 1970), as Assistant Professor (May 1970 to August 1975), Associate Professor (August 1975 to May 1987) and as Professor of Botany (August 1987 to August 1996). After retirement Dr. Altaf-ur-Rehman Rao joined the Cholistan Institute of Desert Studies, Islamia University, Bahawalpur as Director from March 1998 to December 2000.

Dr. Altaf-ur-Rehman Rao also served as Chairman, Department of Botany, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (1975 - 1977 and 1989 - 1992) and Dean, Faculty of Sciences (1993 - 1996). He also served as Principal Investigator of several research projects in connection with agricultural pursuits in different agro-ecological zones of Pakistan. He explored almost *all major agro-ecological zones of Pakistan* for the collection of germplasm and emerged as a pioneering Bio-resource Scientist of eminence excelling in the field of his specialization. He completed a study on Seed Regulatory Framework in Punjab (Pakistan) for ODA London. Dr. Altaf-ur-Rehman Rao has published over 70 scientific research articles in books and journals of international repute originating from USA, Britain, Australia, China, Italy, Cyprus, India, Thailand, Kenya

and Pakistan. Dr. Altaf-ur-Rehman Rao also published a book on "Grass Germplasm Resources of Cholistan Desert and its Phytosociology" in 1989.

On the invitation of Islamia University, Bahawalpur Dr. Altaf-ur-Rehman Rao has been working as Guest Scientist with Cholistan Institute of Desert Studies for the last 12 years with the main object to scan the Cholistan desert for its bio-resources, guiding the research staff and developing the research projects for the Institute in order "to green" the vast Cholistan desert confronted with multiple stresses such as drought, salinity and high summer temperature. The Cholistan desert has been studied for its flora, germplasm resources, multiple stress resistance ecotypes of grasses, seed bank eco-physiological traits, medicinal values and better traits of endemic range species for future exploitation.

He has left behind his wife, two daughters, four sons and a large number of his students. He is remembered for his devotion to the subject of Plant Genetic Resources and Desert Ecology, for his affection, kindness and love to his associates.

**DR. MOHAMMAD ARSHAD**  
Deputy Director,  
Cholistan Institute of Desert Studies  
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