



## Obituary

### Dr. Mahbub Ali (1923–2015)

Dr. Mahbub Ali was born in Gurdaspur, British India on 13th August, 1923. He was elected Fellow of the Pakistan Academy of Sciences in 1988. Dr. Mahbub Ali had the rare distinction of being a Scientist Emeritus of the Department of Agriculture, Government of Punjab and Pakistan Central Cotton Committee. He obtained B.Sc. (Agri.) in 1942 and M.Sc. (Agri.) in 1951 from Punjab Agricultural College & Research Institute, Faisalabad, Pakistan and PhD in 1955 from Agricultural and Mechanical College, Texas, USA. Also, he got Training in Cotton Cultivation from Russia in 1961.

During his illustrious career, Dr Mahbub Ali held various prestigious positions, including Managing Director, Punjab Seed Corporation, Govt. of Punjab, 1979-1985; Founding Director, Central Cotton Research Institute, Multan, 1970-1979; Cotton Botanist, Cotton Research Section, Multan, 1958-1970; Research Assistant, Cotton Research Section, Faisalabad, 1955-1958; Agricultural/Research Assistant, Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Pakistan, 1942-1955; Research Assistant, Plant Physiology, Agronomy, Crop Husbandry, 1942-1945.

In view of his significant contributions in the field of agriculture, Dr Mahbub Ali earned many honors and awards which included civil award of Pride of Performance by Government of Pakistan, 1971; Open Gold Medal by Pakistan Academy of Sciences, 1980; Award of Scientist Emeritus by the Punjab Government, 1985; Award of Scientist Emeritus by the Pakistan Government, 2000; and Shield of Distinction, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan, 1981.

Dr Mahbub Ali was Chairman, Working Group of Agricultural Enquiry Committee, Government of Pakistan, 1975; Pakistan Delegate for Seed Conference in Sri Lanka, February, 1987; Chairman, Cash Corps Committee of National Commission on

Agriculture (Pakistan), 1987; Member of USAID Team of Experts, USAID MART Project, 1993; Member, Federal Government's Review Team for PCCC Schemes, 1992-93; Member of several committees on Cotton Research, 1992-2000;

and Chairman/Member of several committees of the Govt. of Pakistan, Universities and Colleges, Agriculture Research Review Teams, since 1987.

Dr Mahbub Ali's areas of research included cotton R&D (evolution of new varieties and production technology), quality control, maximizing production and farm income; and seed industry, quality control, production and marketing; Potato seed production and marketing.

I had known Dr Mahbub Ali personally since mid 1980s. Being a founding father in cotton R&D and a mentor to the next generation cotton researchers, he was a legendary scientist in agricultural arena of the country. During the cotton season, one would witness Dr Mahbub Ali almost every day visiting the cotton fields at research stations as well as at farmers' fields. Thus, he remained professionally active till his last days in this world.

Dr Mahbub Ali possessed a pleasing personality. Despite being a hard task master, he was a very kind and humble person, with a smiling face. In the death of Dr Mahbub Ali, Pakistan in general and the Pakistan cotton community in particular have lost an eminent and committed research leader. May the Allah Almighty rest his soul in eternal peace and give fortitude to his family to bear this irreparable loss! Aameen.



**Dr. Abdul Rashid, FPAS**