

C.R. Rao is among the world leaders in statistical science over the last six decades. His research, scholarship and professional services have had a profound influence in theory and applications of statistics. Technical terms such as, *Cramer-Rao inequality*, *Rao-Blackwellization*, *Rao's Score Test*, *Fisher-Rao Theorem*, *Rao distance*, and *orthogonal arrays* (described by *Forbes Magazine* as "new manthra" for industries) appear in all standard books on statistics. Two of his papers appear in *Breakthroughs in Statistics* in the last century. C.R. Rao is the author of 14 books and about 350 research papers. Three of his books have been translated into several European and Chinese and Japanese languages.

Rao received MA degree in mathematics from Andhra University and MA degree in statistics from Calcutta University and started doing research at the ISI (Indian Statistical Institute). He was invited to work on a project at the Cambridge University, UK, which required the statistical methodology he developed at the ISI. Based on the work he did he earned his Ph.D. and Sc.D. degrees of the Cambridge University, and up to date he has received 29 Honorary Doctoral degrees from universities in 17 countries around the world. He held several important positions, as the Director of the Indian Statistical Institute, Jawaharlal Nehru Professor and National Professor in India, University Professor at the University of Pittsburgh and Eberly Professor of Statistics and Director of the Center for Multivariate Analysis at the Pennsylvania State University.

As Head and later Director of the Research and Training School at the Indian Statistical Institute for a period of over 40 years, Rao developed research and training programs and produced outstanding students which "put India not far from the center of the statistical map of the world". During this period he also directed the training programs at the International Statistical Educational Center which led to the development of statistics in the South East Asian region. Rao was the Chairman of a UN Committee, which examined the demand for statistical personnel in Asian countries and recommended the establishment of an Institute for statistical development in South East Asia. On the basis of his recommendation ASI (The Asian Statistical Institute) now know as Statistical Institute for Asia and Pacific was established in Tokyo to provide training to statisticians working in government and industrial organizations.

Times of India dated 31 Dec 1988 chose C.R. Rao as one of the 10 top scientists of India; the list includes the outstanding scientists, S.N. Bose, S. Ramanujan, Harishchandra, H. Khurana, C.V. Raman, S. Chandrasekhar and G.N. Ramachandran.

For his pioneering contributions to statistical theory and applications, Rao received numerous awards. He has been elected to the National Academy of Sciences, USA, American Academy of Arts and Science, Royal Society (UK Academy of Sciences, FRS), Indian National Science Academy, Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and Third World Academy of Sciences. He was made an Honorary Member of the International Statistical Institute, International Biometric Society, Royal Statistical Society (UK), Finnish Statistical Society, Portuguese Statistical Society, Institute of Combinatorics and Applications and World Innovation Foundation, and Honorary Life Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, UK. He has been the President of the International Statistical Institute, Institute of Mathematical Statistics, USA and the International Biometric Society. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the National Institution for Quality and Reliability, Chennai Branch, for his contribution to industrial statistics and the promotion of quality control programs in Indian industries.

He received numerous medals: Gold Medal of Calcutta University, Wilks Medal of the American Statistical Association, Guy Medal in Silver of the Royal Statistical Society, Megnadh Saha Medal and Srinivasa Ramanujan Medal of the Indian National Science Academy, J.C. Bose Gold Medal of Bose Institute and Mahalanobis Centenary Gold Medal of the Indian Science Congress. He received Bhatnagar award of CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) in India. At the Berlin

conference of the International Statistical Institute held in 2003, Rao received the prestigious *International Mahalanobis Prize for lifetime achievement in statistics and the promotion of best statistical practice*.

Rao was honored by the President of the USA with the prestigious National Medal of Science “*as a prophet of new age*” with the citation, “*for his pioneering contributions to the foundations of statistical theory and multivariate statistical methodology and their applications, enriching the physical biological, mathematical, economic and engineering sciences*”.

The Government of India honored him with the second highest civilian award, *Padma Vibhushan* for “outstanding contributions to Science and Engineering/Statistics”, and also instituted a cash award in honor of C.R. Rao, “to be given once in two years to a young statistician for work done during the preceding 3 years in any field of statistics.

Rao spent 40 years of his prime life in India in promoting the study of statistics and its applications for socio-economic development, improving the quality of industrial production and decision making in general. After moving to the United States, he has been active during the last 24 years teaching and doing research work at American universities. He produced 50 Ph.D. students who in turn produced about 250 Ph.D.’s.

For his outstanding achievements Rao has been honored with the establishment of an Advanced Institute of Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science (AIMSCS) for doing basic research, named after him in the Osmania University Campus, Hyderabad, India.