



ICRISAT  
Science with a human face

# Happenings

In-house Newsletter

INTERNATIONAL CROPS RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE SEMI-ARID TROPICS

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## ICRISAT celebrates 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Day at Patancheru

ICRISAT celebrated its 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Day on 16 December at Patancheru by honoring staff, scientific achievements, partnerships, loyalty and team spirit. Cultural programs added color to the celebrations that were held on 15 and 16 December.

Mr Cornelis M Keur, American Consul General in Hyderabad,

was the Chief Guest. Lauding ICRISAT, Mr Keur said that the Institute along with the other CGIAR Centers has given the world the technical ability to feed itself. "They have largely succeeded in their role," he added.

The Consul General also mentioned that one of ICRISAT's greatest milestones is in the

application of cutting edge science, from that of Mendel to that of Watson-Crick, from cross-breeding to gene splicing.

In addition to enhancing food and nutritional security, ICRISAT is also involved with environmental protection and mitigating the effects of climate change, Mr Keur added. New methods of farming to prevent



*Mr Cornelis M Keur, American Consul General in Hyderabad, speaks at the Annual Day function.*



*Dr Dar delivers his Annual Day address.*

*A bouquet for the Chief Guest.*

desertification, preserve scarce water resources, control crop pests and other agricultural innovations are constantly being developed and shared.

Agri-Science Park at Sadoré; and started work for the establishment of a Platform for Translational Research on Transgenic Crops at Patancheru.

Asia's Best Incubator Award given by the Asian Association of Business Incubation. ICRISAT also shared the King Baudouin Award with eight other Centers.

"I am proud of the continued contribution of America to ICRISAT and other institutes devoted to feeding the world, increasing the welfare of the rural poor, preserving our environment, coping with the effects of climate change and preserving the natural world for our progeny," Mr Keur said.

To address the availability of quality seeds to poor farmers, ICRISAT scaled up activities in sub-Saharan Africa through the West Africa Seed Alliance (WASA) and the Eastern and Southern Africa Seed Alliance (ESASA). "We are also waging a global media campaign to promote our flagship products and innovations," Dr Dar said.

Dr Dar said that the global food and financial crisis has once again focused attention on agricultural research. "We must capture opportunities to showcase our work and its impacts to the poor of the dry tropics. By doing this, we assert ICRISAT's scientific excellence and relevance. We also position its role as the apex global organization for research in semi-arid agriculture."

Encouraging Team ICRISAT, Mr Keur said, "I am also extremely proud of the work of Director General William Dar and the staff of ICRISAT for the selfless effort they continue to make on behalf of us all. They deserve our applause."

Dr Dar said that 2008 yielded more feathers to ICRISAT's cap, by being rated as 'Outstanding' by the CGIAR. ICRISAT's Agri-Business Incubator also bagged

The Annual Day celebration honored ICRISAT's scientific achievements. Said Silim

Highlighting ICRISAT's achievements during 2008, Director General William Dar said that ICRISAT released the world's first CMS-based hybrid pigeonpea, Pushkal, for commercialization; inaugurated the first crushing-cum-syrup making unit from sweet sorghum at Ibrahimbad, Andhra Pradesh; initiated the operations of the NutriPlus Knowledge Center; laid the groundwork on the establishment of an



*Said Silim, R Vijaya Kumar and CLL Gowda receive the Doreen Mashler Award from Mr Cornelis M Keur.*

collected the most number of awards – for himself and also on behalf of colleagues in eastern and southern Africa. Team ICRISAT in Bulawayo was the recipient of one of the Doreen Mashler Awards for overcoming challenges in the host country. KB Saxena and Said Silim also bagged the award for their research on pigeonpea.

Through the Millennium Science Awards, the Institute recognized those who were nominated for the CGIAR Science Awards. Rajeev Varshney received the Promising Young Scientist Award (received by Vincent Vadez on his behalf). The Outstanding Scientist award

went to Said Silim; Outstanding Scientific Support Team to Andre van Rooyen and team; Outstanding Partnership to Pooran Gaur, Said Silim and partners; Outstanding Scientific Article to SP Wani and team; and Outstanding Agricultural Technology in sub-Saharan Africa to Ramadjita Tabo (received by Rex Navarro on his behalf).

A web-based scientific article series – State of the Art on Semi-Arid Agriculture (SASA) – was launched by Mr Keur. Three books on sorghum improvement, biotechnological approaches for pest management and the role of livestock in the mixed farming

systems of South Asia were launched. Also launched was a CD on all ICRISAT publications.

The Resource Mobilizer Award was won by Bettina Haussmann and team for WCA; Richard Jones and team for ESA; and Kiran Sharma and team for Asia.

The cultural activities enlivened the rest of the afternoon with special talents from Team ICRISAT with their songs, dance and drama.

Loyalty Day was celebrated on 15 December, with the recognition of those who had completed 5 to 35 years of service with ICRISAT. R Vijaya Kumar and P Humayun won the Best Safety Warden Team Award.