



Tributes to

Dr. Ish Kumar

Globally Renowned Hybrid Rice Breeder

Dr. Ish Kumar born on April 1, 1945, He earned his B.Sc in Agriculture and Animal Husbandry and M.Sc in Plant Breeding degrees in 1966 and 1968, respectively, from PAU. He later worked as a rice breeder at PAU from 1968 to 1988, earning his Ph.D in Plant Breeding in 1979 as an in-service candidate. He also worked at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Philippines as a Visiting Scientist in 1984-1986. Thereafter, he joined in the Directorate of Rice Research (DRR) on deputation and worked as Principal Scientist and National Programme Leader, Hybrid rice from 1989-1992. Besides he led a joint collaborative ICAR / IRRI / Asian Development Bank funded project on the Development and use of Hybrid Rice Technology in India. He was also a rising scientist at the University of Birmingham in 1992 and hybrid rice breeder at IRRI, 2002-2004. He worked in many private companies in Senior Positions *viz.*, Pro Agro / Bayer, Syngenta, Nath Bio-Gene for almost three decades.

He was instrumental in the development and release of basmati rice variety Punjab Basmati 1 and played a leading role in the evolution and commercialisation of various leading rice hybrids for South and Southeast Asia. He was also a Visiting Scientist at the University of Birmingham, UK in 1992 Dr Kumar was awarded the most prestigious International Award, the “10th Yuan Long Ping Prize in Agricultural Science and Technology” at Changsha, China in 2018 and the “Lifetime Achievement Award” in 2020 by the Nath Bio-Genes and Bayer Bioscience.

Dr Ish Kumar, a well-known name in the Indian seed industry and possessing more than 50 years of experience in varietal and hybrid rice breeding, has died on 11th January, 2024 at the age of 78. Considering his immense contributions, it is appropriate that Dr. Ish Kumar is called the “Globally Renowned Hybrid Rice Breeder”.

(Dr. RM Sundaram)

President, SARR, Hyd