

FFSF-NBRI organised Prof Sushil Kumar Memorial Oration & Prof Sushil Kumar Innovation Award Ceremony

The 4th 'Prof Sushil Kumar Memorial Oration' and 3rd 'Professor Sushil Kumar Innovation Award' (SKIA-2024) ceremony was organized by the Florafauna Science Foundation in association with CSIR-NBRI on December 14, 2024 at the Lotus Auditorium of the National Botanical Research Institute. Dr Ajit K Shasany, Director, CSIR-NBRI, welcomed the participants and Dr Viswanathan Chinnusamy, Joint Director (Research), ICAR-IARI, the speaker of Prof Sushil Kumar Oration. Dr Shasany expressed happiness that the legacy of a legendary teacher and former Director of CIMAP and NBRI was celebrated at NBRI with knowledge enriched deliberations on future of agriculture.

Dr Khanuja initiated the event with remembrance of Prof Sushil Kumar, as a mentor of many in the scientific spheres and highlighted his roles in various institutions and untiring guidance to students in basics of genetics leading to biotechnology stream in India and creating leaders of scientific fields in new frontiers.

Dr Viswanathan delivered the fourth memorial oration and remembered Prof Sushil Kumar's contribution at IARI. He highlighted his talk on plant genes that will be able to give a quantum advantage to Agriculture in productivity. He emphasized on genetic mechanism to enhance crop productivity in adverse conditions including abiotic and biotic stresses and genes that control photosynthesis leading to crop yields with examples of cutting edge technology of genome editing.

On this occasion, the 3rd 'Professor Sushil Kumar Innovation Award (SKIA-2024) was also announced by the Florafauna Science Foundation and Dr. Qutbuddin Ali Molla, the winner selected by the eminent jury, was awarded with a cheque of Rs. 11,000/- and a certificate at the ceremony. The award was presented to Dr. Molla in recognition of his innovative research and outstanding contributions in the scientific field of "genome editing tool development and rice genetic engineering for disease resistance, climate resilience and advanced photosynthesis". Dr. Qutbuddin Ali Molla

is working as a Senior Scientist at the National Rice Research Institute, Cuttack, Odisha.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also exchanged between CSIR-CIMAP and Florafona Science Foundation for joint activities and collaborative programmes in crops of aromatic and medicinal value. Dr Prabodh K Trivedi, Director, CSIR-CIMAP, expressed his hopes in the institute collaboration with FloraFauna Science Foundation, to make technologies and knowledge generated by CIMAP reach the villages with a synergy of teams and entrepreneurial startups emerging as the outcome.

Dr. Neeraj Jain, General Secretary of the Foundation introduced the Chief Guest and Speaker Dr Viswanathan, Dr. Anil Kumar Singh, VP, FFSF & Convener (SKIA-2024 Jury) coordinated the award ceremony and MoU exchange between FFSF and CIMAP and a team comprising Dr. Sunita Singh Dhawan and Dr Ashutosh Shukla from CIMAP and Dr Manish S Bhoyar from NBRI provided necessary support for organising the event. Ms. Palak Agarwal conducted the programme. A number of scientists, research scholars and students from NBRI and CIMAP and members of FFSF were present on the occasion.