

(18 September 2026)

National Symposium on "Harnessing Plant Genetic Resources of Peninsular India", an Initiative of ISPGR - hosted by ICAR-IIHR

The National Symposium on **"Harnessing Plant Genetic Resources of Peninsular India – From Biodiversity Hotspot to Sustainable Bioresource Hub"** was jointly organized by ISPGR, ICAR, TAAS, and many other organizations which was inaugurated on 18 September 2026 at ICAR-IIHR, Bengaluru. The inaugural session was graced by Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka, as Chief Guest, along with Dr RS Paroda, President, ISPGR & Chairman, TAAS; Dr DK Yadava, DDG (Crop Sciences), ICAR; Dr TK Behera, Director, ICAR-IIHR; and Dr Anuradha Agrawal, General Secretary, ISPGR.



Dr TK Behera, Director, ICAR-IIHR, welcomed the dignitaries and participants and highlighted the significance of the symposium.

Dr DK Yadava, Deputy Director General (Crop Sciences), ICAR, called for greater utilization of conserved genetic resources for effective crop improvement through novel breeding strategies and appreciated the role of the National Gene Bank in conservation.

Dr RS Paroda, President, ISPGR & Chairman, TAAS, emphasized that genetic resources are the heritage of mankind. He called for greater exploration and decoding of genetic resources for the benefit of humanity, recognition of farmers and local communities as custodians of natural resources, and state-level missions for their conservation, documentation, and effective utilization.



Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka and Chief Guest, emphasized that Plant Genetic Resources are the biological foundation of future agriculture, food and nutritional security, ecological balance, and rural livelihoods. He called for a continuum from conservation to characterization, evaluation, utilization, and commercialization, with an emphasis on Farmers'

Rights, equitable benefit sharing, and sustainable use. He highlighted the potential of millets, pulses, and traditional crops for climate-resilient agriculture and stressed integrating traditional knowledge with modern science, including genomics, digital phenotyping, bioinformatics, pan-genomics, and genome editing. He also encouraged young researchers and called for stronger partnerships and biosecurity to protect agricultural biodiversity.

Dr Anuradha Agrawal, Director, ICAR-DKMA and General Secretary, ISPGR, proposed the vote of thanks, bringing the inaugural session to a close.


