

(April, 2026)

**TAAS Celebrates Dr Surinder K Vasal's 89th Birthday**

and

**Dr M L Jat's Anniversary as Secretary, DARE and DG, ICAR**

The Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS) recently hosted a distinguished gathering to honor two significant milestones in the Indian agri-food landscape: the 89th birthday celebration of Dr S K Vasal and the first anniversary of Dr M L Jat's tenure as Secretary, DARE and DG, ICAR.



While Dr Vasal's official birthday fell on April 12, the agricultural community came together on April 21, 2026, to celebrate the life and work of Dr S K Vasal.

Dr Vasal is best known globally for his transformative contribution to nutrition security through the development of Quality Protein Maize (QPM). His work, which earned him the World Food Prize in 2000, has saved millions from malnutrition by enhancing the essential amino acids (lysine

and tryptophan) in maize, proving that science can indeed solve the world's most pressing hunger challenges.

The day carried double significance as it marked exactly one year since Dr M L Jat assumed the office of Director General, ICAR. Under his first year of leadership, ICAR has seen a renewed focus on climate-smart agriculture and digital transformation, continuing the legacy of excellence established by his predecessors.



The event was graced by distinguished gathering, reflecting the deep respect the community holds for Dr Vasal. The celebration witnessed the gracious presence of Dr M L Jat (DG, ICAR), Dr RS Paroda (Chairman, TAAS), Dr A K Singh (Secretary, IAA), Dr Ch Srinivasa Rao (Director, IARI), Dr Anupama Varma (Eminent Virologist), Dr Bhag Mal (Secretary, TAAS), Dr JL Karihaloo (Treasurer, TAAS), Dr Anuradha Agrawal (PD, DKMA), Dr Yash Saharawat [(Director, Resilience and Environment (IFDC)], Dr BM Prasanna (MD, BISA), Dr Mahesh Gathala (Country Representative, CIMMYT-India), Dr V V Sadamate (Coordinator, AEPsA) , and other staff of TAAS.



Speakers highlighted how Dr Vasal's presence continues to inspire the next generation of researchers to bridge the gap between the laboratory and the farmer's field.

The dual celebration served as a bridge between generations—honoring the foundational breakthroughs of the past while looking forward to the innovative future of Indian agriculture under current leadership of Dr M L Jat.