

Dr. A. K. Singh, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor & Director, IARI, gives innovative insight on Orchid research at ICAR-NRC for Orchids, Pakyong

Dr. A. K. Singh, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor & Director, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi is amazed by the explicit and impressive genetic treasure of orchids being preserved, utilized, bred and multiplied through embryo and tissue culture for commercial floriculture, at ICAR-NRC for Orchids during his visit on 19 May, 2024.



He expressed that orchids occupy such an intriguing and fascinating domain in the plant kingdom that they not only mesmerize any common human being with their unique and out of world beauty but also offers several new avenues for the scientists to work on, which are still unexplored. He guided the scientists at the centre to explore the possibility of inducing male sterility in breeding programme to develop orchid hybrids with much higher flower longevity. He urged that application of advanced genomics, including whole genome sequencing, should be taken up as priority area of research to develop a clear understanding of huge diversity and relationship of orchids at species and generic level. Extensive cytological studies are also required to understand how very distant species and even genera get hybridized and produce explicit fertile hybrids with such a heterotic expression. Evolutionary genetics of orchids to survive under severe moisture stress due to special root modifications can be a very interesting area of allele mining for stress tolerant genes. Seeing the excellent effort being made by a very small team of scientists, he opined the Centre may have bigger mandate by including entire domain of Himalayan flowers, the centre may also be suitably renamed to encompass the complete domain of Himalayan floriculture.

Dr. S. P. Das, Director, ICAR-NRC for Orchids, Scientists, Research Scholars and other staffs made use of every minute of enlightening discourse and interactions during his tour to different

Orchidariums. Later he also interacted with all in a formal meeting. He was accompanied by his worthy wife Mrs. Dr. Renu Singh and the Head & Scientist I/C of IARI Regional Station, Kalimpong, Dr. D. Barman.

