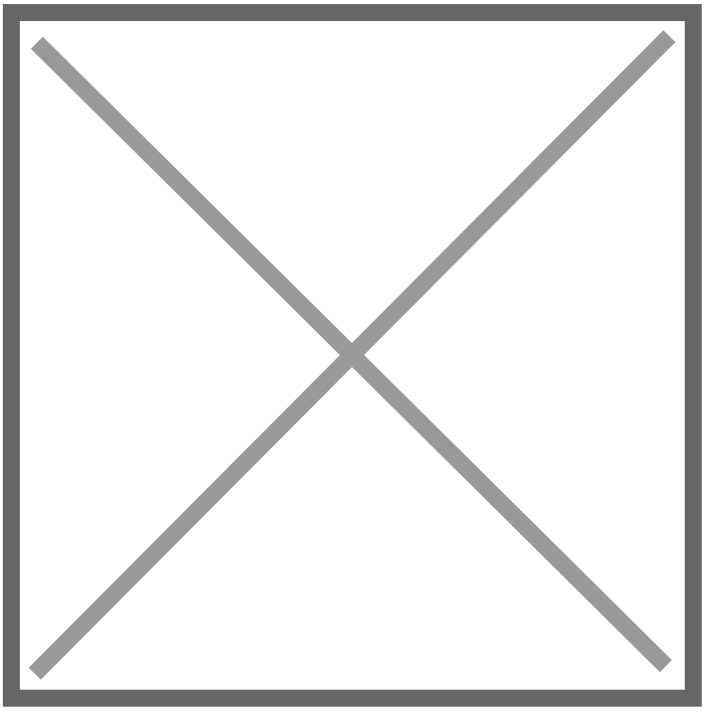
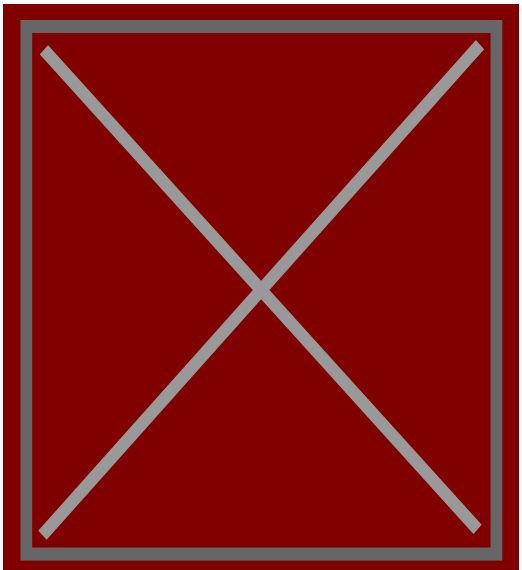
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Indian aquaculturist bags 2005 World Food Prize

07 July 2005 | News





Dr Modadugu Vijay Gupta displays a species of fish.

An Indian scientist, Dr Modadugu Vijay Gupta, has been named winner of the $250,000 World Food Prize. Dr Gupta's name was announced by the World Food Prize Foundation on June 10 at a ceremony at the US State Department at Washington DC. While making the announcement, Ambassador Kenneth M Quinn, president of the World Food Prize Foundation, said that through Dr Gupta's dedicated and sustained efforts in Bangladesh, Laos and other countries in Southeast Asia, he made small scale aquaculture a viable means for over one million very poor farmers and women to improve their family's nutrition and well-being.

As a result of Dr Gupta's efforts, freshwater fish production has risen dramatically in these countries by as much as three to five times. He developed unique methods of fish farming, requiring little cost while causing no environmental damage. As a result, landless farmers and poor women have turned a million abandoned pools, roadside ditches, seasonally flooded fields and other bodies of water into mini-factories churning out fish for food and income.

Dr Gupta, whose hometown is Bapatla in Andhra Pradesh, was till his recent retirement the Assistant Director General at WorldFish, an international fisheries research institute under the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research

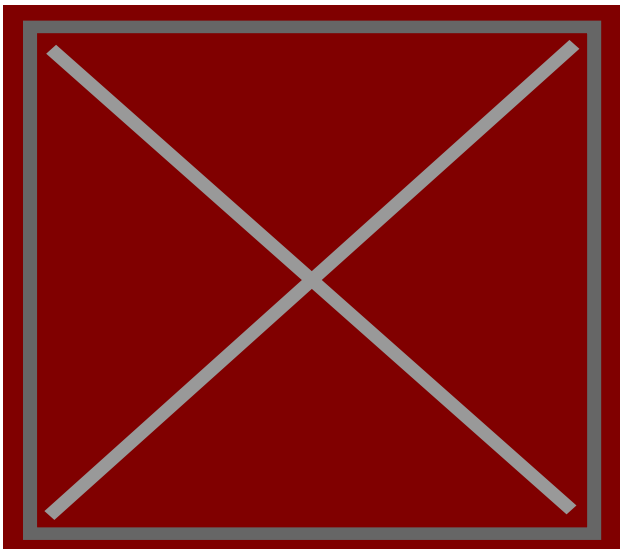
(CGIAR) based at Penang in Malaysia.

"The World Food Prize is a great honor for all those who work with improving fish production for reducing poverty and environmental protection," said Dr Gupta. "It is a recognition of the importance of fisheries for protecting the nutritional security of the world," he added.

According to Dr Gupta, research to increase fish production increases the availability of nutrition in poor families, increases their household income and also results in improved social status for women in the families. Since capture fishing in declining, aquaculture can be of significance in developing countries.

Dr Gupta is the sixth citizen of India to receive the World Food Prize since it was established in 1986. Previous recipients include: Prof. MS Swaminathan, 1987; Dr Verghese Kurien, 1989; Dr Gurdev Khush, 1996; Dr BR Barwale, 1998; and Dr Surinder K Vasal, 2000. The World Food Prize will be formally presented to Dr Gupta at a ceremony on October 13, 2005 in the Iowa State Capitol Building in Des Moines, USA.

Dr PK Seth honored with "Vigyan Gaurav Samman"



Dr PK Seth receiving the award from the UP chief minister Mulayam Singh Yadav.

The UP chief minister Mulayam Singh Yadav awarded the "Vigyan Gaurav Samman" on June 9, 2005 to Dr PK Seth, CEO, Biotech Park, Lucknow and former director of Industrial Toxicology Research Centre, Lucknow, for his valuable contribution to the research in biochemical toxicology, neuro-toxicology and development toxicology.

Receiving the award, Dr Seth said that this award would encourage scientists to take up more challenging tasks in the future. The way biotechnology has got support shows the commitment of the state government. The industry must come forward and exploit the biotech potentials of the state. Biotech is looking for innovators and he assured all possible help for the innovators who approach him.

This award has also been given to Dr M Bhandari, VC, King George's Medical University, Lucknow, Dr Javed Iqbal, senior scientist at Dr Reddy's Lab in Hyderabad, Dr MP Yadav, director, Indian Institute of Veterinary Research, Bareilly.