

## Two South Asians from UNEP shared the first YP Abrol Memorial Award

New Delhi, June 04 (India Science Wire): The first ever international South Asian Award on Nitrogen management was announced in a special virtual event held on 3 June 2021, as a part of the 8<sup>th</sup> triennial Conference of the International Nitrogen Initiative (INI2021). The award is shared by Dr. Anjan Datta from Bangladesh and Mr. Mahesh Pradhan from Nepal, for their work as the founding architect and the current-coordinator, respectively, of the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management (GPNM). It is a unique multistakeholder partnership of governments, academia, industry and civil society that addresses global nutrient pollution through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), where both the awardees have been employed.

The awardees were congratulated by GPNM Chair, Prof. Ramesh Ramachandran, Director of the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management, Chennai and the INI Chair, Prof. N. Raghuram, President of the Sustainable India Trust. “The ‘Prof. YP Abrol Memorial Award for Excellence in Science and/or policy towards Sustainable Nitrogen Management’ was established by the Sustainable India Trust in 2020 in the memory of its founder, who passed away on 26 July 2020. We regard him as the father of Indian agricultural nitrogen research, said Raghuram. “This award signifies the emergence of South Asia on the global stage of nitrogen management and is a fitting tribute to him” he said.

“Prof. Abrol developed nitrogen fertilizer recommendations for green revolution from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi. He also founded the Indian Nitrogen Group, South Asian Nitrogen Centre of INI and the Society for Conservation of Nature in New Delhi. They hosted the 5th INI Conference in New Delhi that led to the Indian Nitrogen Assessment (2017) and the ongoing South Asian Nitrogen Assessment”, said Prof. Himanshu Pathak, Executive President of the Society for Conservation of Nature and Director of the National Institute of Abiotic Stress Management (NIASM-ICAR), Malegaon, Baramati, Maharashtra. He award committee was chaired by Prof. Tapan Adhya, former director of the National Rice Research Institute, Cuttack and currently a biotechnologist at KIIT University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha. He is also the current director of the INI South Asian Centre.

In his acceptance speech, Anjan Datta said, that valuable nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus that are crucial for food security often end up in the wrong place causing water air pollution, illhealth, biodiversity loss and climate change. “The establishment of GPNM promoted international efforts towards closing the nutrient cycles. Its efforts at UNEP led to the UN resolution on Sustainable Nitrogen Management piloted by the Indian government and more countries are monitoring and developing mitigation targets for nitrogen pollution now than ever before. The Indian initiative is a result of the decade-long efforts of Prof. Abrol and the Indian Nitrogen Group. I am fortunate to have known him and I am honoured and humbled to receive this award”, he said.

Mahesh Pradhan said, “I am fortunate to inherit GPNM from Anjan Datta, who did all its ground work on nitrogen with INI, Prof. Abrol and others. The UN resolution gave us the impetus for Colombo declaration to ‘have nitrogen waste by 2030’. The emphasis of this INI conference and the Berlin declaration on nitrogen management for sustainable development goals is very timely. This will be followed by the special nitrogen session tomorrow as a part of the World Environment Day celebrations being hosted by the government of Pakistan. This event connects nitrogen with the UN decade of ecosystem restoration” (India Science Wire)

Keywords: UNEP, YP Abrol Memorial Award, Nitrogen Management, International Nitrogen Initiative, INI2021, Global Partnership on Nutrient Management, GPNM, Nutrient pollution



Dr. Anjan Datta (L) and Mahesh Pradhan (R)