

# The doyen of the Association



Dr. K.K. Iya

### Birth and Early Life

Dr. Krishnaswamy Kilara Iya was born on June 26, 1920 in Mumbai and received his early education at Baroda and Ahmedabad. He joined the Indian Dairy Diploma (I.D.D.) a two-year undergraduate course at the then Imperial Institute of Animal Husbandry and Dairying at Bangalore. In 1939, he passed the I.D.D. with Honours and Distinction securing a Gold Medal for standing first. In an autobiographical piece entitled "My life and mission in Dairying", Dr. Iya mentions that he ventured into the field of dairying at his father's suggestion and was quite oblivious of what it entailed. However, later in life, his innate love for the subject saw him reach dizzying heights in his chosen profession. After clearing I.D.D. he did his B.Sc. in Microbiology from St. Xavier's College, Bombay. He requested Dr Davies of Indian Dairy Research Institute to permit him to enroll as Honorary Research Worker (HRW) to gain insight into bacteriology of "dahi", which

made him knowledgeable on the subject. For the next three years, i.e. from 1942-45 he was at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore and specialized in Fermentation Technology. He also trained in Human Nutrition under Prof. W.R. Ackroyd (who later became DG of FAO) at the Institute in Coonoor, India. Thereafter, a two-year scholarship from the Government of India saw him pursue his Doctoral degree from the University of Wisconsin Madison, USA during 1946-48.

### The Journey Begins.....

Dr. Iya's tryst with dairying, however, had begun much earlier. In 1943, he was a research assistant on a project to recover ghee from high acid stock with the army during the 2nd World War. Later, he worked as Chief Biochemist in Masulipatnam in 1944 on a Madras State Project. Dr Iya entered into wedlock with Mrs Sharada on 28th April, 1944. He next joined as Head of the Division of Dairy Bacteriology at the then Indian Dairy Research Institute, Bangalore in 1948. He was the first fully trained and qualified Dairy Microbiologist in India. For the next 7 years he was actively engaged in microbiological research pertaining to milk production and contamination. A person with a rich repository of knowledge and experience, he was then appointed the first Director of NDRI, Karnal at the young age of 35 in the year 1955. The credit for establishing the new Institute at Karnal goes largely to Dr. Iya.

Further, his expertise and pioneering approach were utilized by the Government of India by appointing him as Dairy Development Advisor in 1965. In 1966, he took over as the Deputy Director General (Animal Sciences) of ICAR. After an inspiring 4-year as the first DDG, Dr. Iya decided to seek voluntary retirement in 1970 at the age of 50.

He joined the Coca Cola Export Corporation office in New Delhi as the Technical and R & D Manager. Soon, he was selected by the FAO (UN) as Team Leader of a Regional Livestock Development Project covering 9 countries of South and South-East Asia. He worked on this project from 1973 to 1976. He was also appointed UNICEF coordinator of Dairy Education and member of WHO/FAO Milk Sanitation and Hygiene Panel.

**As we go to press we learn of the sad demise of Dr K.K. Iya who passed away on 6th Dec, 2011 in Bangalore. Dr. Iya was the 9th President of Indian Dairy Association and held office in 1967. His bond with the Association remained as strong as ever till his last days. He was one of the foremost founder members of IDA. The Indian Dairy Industry rightly acknowledged him as the living legend of our times. We take you through the scintillating life and career of Dr. Iya, who, though no longer with us, continues to shine bright on the Indian dairying firmament.**

Upon his return to India in 1976, Dr. Iya taught for over 10 years at the University of Agricultural Sciences in Bangalore. He also worked on ICAR Panels, Taskforces and Quinquennial Review Committees on special assignments. Dr. Iya gave up active work in 1992.

**Dr. Iya and IDA**

Dr. Iya was the President of IDA in the year 1967 and was a founder member of the Association. He became a Life Member of IDA when it was established in 1948. He was also Honorary Secretary of the Association for 2 years.

Dr. Iya was a member of the Editorial Board of IDA in 1953-54 and contributed greatly to the improvement of Indian Dairyman. In the very first edition of the journal which came out in July 1949, he wrote an article from IDRI, Bangalore entitled "Recent Advances in Butter Manufacture". With the establishment of IDSA in 1948 Indian Dairyman took the place of the earlier publication "The Monthly Bulletin of the Bangalore Dairy Cattle Society". As DDG of ICAR, Dr. Iya wrote an article for the magazine in 1967 called "Research Promotes sound Dairy Industry".

Dr Iya was actively involved in the organization of XIV-DIC at Bangalore in 1978. His paper on Dairy Development in South East Asia-Problems and Challenges" was published in Indian Dairyman in May 1978.

In recognition of outstanding services rendered to IDA and to the dairy industry, Dr Iya was conferred



*Dr. Iya receiving the Patronship of IDA*

the Patronship of the Association. It was presented to him by Dr Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning commission during the 34th DIC at Bangalore in 2005. The Patronship was a befitting tribute to the genius of the great dairyman and his immense contribution to the industry.

Dr. Iya was also the President of IDA (South Zone) during 1984 and was recently honoured by the Association. IDA (SZ) organized the 1st Endowment Lecture in honour of Dr. Iya at Bangalore on 29th July 2011. The respected nonagenarian was visibly pleased at the presence of so many eminent dairymen around him

and observed that dairying in India had undergone a major transformation. He pointed out that for enhancing milk production relying on only crossbreds was not enough. We need to concentrate on indigenous breeds of the country as well. He also stressed on rethinking the marketing strategy of milk and milk products, besides production of unique functional dairy products.

**Multifarious Responsibilities**

Throughout his career, Dr. K.K. Iya was actively involved in the national and international dairying arena. He attended the World Food Congress in 1962, the World Dairy Education Conference at Paris in 1963 and the International Dairy Congress in 1966 and 1974.

He was the founder editor of the Indian Dairy Industry Yearbook and was elected the President of Alumni Association of NDRI Bangalore in 1967. During

# Our Presidents

the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of NDRI, the Alumni association of NDRI, Bangalore conferred on Dr Iya the 'Illustrious Alumni Award' in 2000. NDRI, Karnal, a deemed University conferred on Dr Iya a D.Sc during the second convocation in 1998.

## A Visionary and a Thinker

Dr. Iya's stupendous achievements were based on some very well-grounded beliefs and philosophy of life. As he says, "To change everything simply change your attitude, so it is imperative to have positive thinking and be helpful to others." He believed in a total sense of commitment towards one's profession with adherence to high standards of quality.

Although intelligence and professional competence plays a role in the attainment of one's goal it can never substitute for sound ethics, pleasant behavior and high moral standards. Dr Iya was a great orator, voracious reader and a person with prodigal memory.

## Family as a Pillar of Strength

Dr. Iya remained as devoted to his family as he was to his vocation. His wife passed away in 1996. His



*Dr. Iya being honoured at the 1st Endowment Lecture organised by IDA (SZ) in 2011*

family consisted of elder son Dr. Arun Kilara, a Food Scientist in USA; younger son Dr. Gurnath Kilara, a Radiation Oncologist and grandchildren Tanaya and Ameya. His daughter, Dr. Sandhya Iya is a Doctorate in Management from IISC, Bangalore. Dr. Iya resided with his younger son at Bangalore.

As Dr. Iya fondly looked back upon a satisfying and fulfilling career he was happy that it had been a life well-lived. Although he failed in the Intermediate of Science examination it proved a turning point for him to choose his future vocation-one in which he excelled. As he says the career which he found himself in was

ultimately very 'rewarding, besides being challenging'.

*IDA salutes the spirit of this towering dairyman who bid us adieu a few days back at the age of 91 years. He personified the principle he believed in - "one must live, sleep and dream about his work, such should be the level of passion." For all of us the dearly loved Dr Iya leaves behind a rich legacy as also a gnawing void which would be impossible to fill.*



## Indian Dairy Association

### APPEAL



### DEAR MEMBERS,

Greetings from Indian Dairy Association.

For information/enquiry related to "Membership & Subscription", members are requested to send their e-mails on [admin@indairyasso.org](mailto:admin@indairyasso.org)/[idahq@rediffmail.com](mailto:idahq@rediffmail.com) OR contact Ms. Aarti Talwar (Executive), Indian Dairy Association on Phones 26179781, 26165237.

### Secretary (Establishment)

IDA House, Sec-IV, R.K. Puram, New Delhi-110 022

Phones: 91-11-26179781 Fax: 91-11-26174719

Web: [www.indairyasso.org](http://www.indairyasso.org)