The inaugural session of the Virtual 55th Annual Rice Research Group Meeting was organized by ICAR – Indian Institute of Rice Research, Hyderabad on May 11th, 2020 at 10.00 AM.

Dr. Dipak Maithi, Director, ICAR-NRRI welcomed the participant delegates including senior ICAR dignitaries, subject matter experts, scientists from cooperating centres, Private industry personnel and scientists of ICAR-NRRI and IIRR. He highlighted about the genesis of AICRIP and its contribution towards the service of rice farming community despite the challenges of climate change, low income and other issues. Dr. S.R. Voleti, Director, ICAR-IIRR briefly presented the highlights of research progress during 2019 under AICRIP. He also thanked for the support and cooperation of all the members of AICRIP who contributed to the success of AICRIP for more than five decades.

Dr. T. Mohapatra, Secretary (Agriculture) & DG, ICAR complimented IIRR for conducting first time the Virtual Annual Rice Group virtual meeting and pointed out the importance of digital platform in facilitating the much needed participation of senior officials of ICAR as well as experts in all the AICRP meetings ensuring effective outcome. He highlighted the country’s self-sufficiency in food production which ensured feeding the large population despite the serious COVID-19 situation. The enhanced rice production has also given the confidence to explore diversion of its use for bioethanol production. Dr. Mohapatra felt that Production Oriented Survey of IIRR should help in guiding policy makers in rice sector. He suggested to exploit hybrid rice production strategy to increase rice productivity and encourage young researchers towards hybrid rice research. DG, ICAR also emphasized the need to work more effectively in the areas of Nitrogen Use Efficiency, critical analysis of water use, pre-breeding as well as speed breeding, multiple pest resistance and harmonious integration of IPM research in different institutes. About 300 scientists from various parts of the country participated in the Virtual 55th ARGM.

Dr. L.V. Subba Rao proposed vote of thanks.