

of IR8 seed from IRRI, which the Philippine Seed Growers Association headed by its President Abel Silva then multiplied it in Laguna farms. It was then spread to various parts of the rice growing regions of the country. This was done under a program called Masagana 99 that made the Philippines self sufficient in rice production in about three years' time. This was a promise made by President Marcos to the nation which he fulfilled during his Presidency.

### **Spread of IR8 across the rice-growing regions of Asia**

IR8 was introduced to many countries including India within that period, where the farmers in the south India were very happy to get more than 9 tons of rice per hectare. The IR8 was then firmly established as the miracle rice as it spread rapidly from South India to the rest of the country.

I was working in Vietnam in 1967 with my rice farmers and soon heard of this Miracle Rice when I visited IRRI in early 1968. IRRI at that time started testing IR8 in an area north of Saigon but I was able to get some seeds to plant in TayNinh that later spread to many farmers.

The cultivation of IR8 spread rapidly in tropical Asia because of its high yielding characteristics but its cooking quality was not very good so the scientists kept working on developing better quality grain and succeeded in breeding and releasing many rice varieties later on but none surpassed the high yield of IR8. The rest is history. For his research findings, Dr. De Datta was awarded the Norman Borlaug Award in 1992 for the Green Revolution and for Outstanding Contribution to Agricultural Sciences in India by the Vice President of India who later became the President.

Later in 2004, in recognition of his great contribution to the self sufficiency in rice in the Philippines and as a pioneer in the Green Revolution, Dr. De Datta was awarded the Presidential